



Queen Elizabeth High School
Ysgol Uwchradd y Frenhines Elisabeth



Learning Pathways

2023 -2025



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PREPARING FOR YEAR 10

Dear Student

You have come to a very important point in your school career. Up until now you have studied a wide range of subjects, but the time spent on each has been limited. From now on you will be preparing for external examinations and assessments and in order to achieve the necessary standard, you will spend more time studying some subjects. Consequently, you will be taking fewer courses.

You will continue to study a broad based programme in accordance with the requirements of the National Curriculum but you will have a measure of choice. This is explained fully in this booklet. Making choices is part of a wider process in preparing to leave school and taking up further training or employment. Making choices is difficult, and you will be guided by your teachers in this process. *They will help you to choose the most appropriate LEARNING PATHWAY for your career needs and future goals, but also help you to make personalised choices that suit your ability, skills and give you the best chances of being successful.*

You must remember that you will ultimately be judged, not only on your academic achievements, but also on your punctuality, your regularity of attendance, your appearance and attitudes and your contribution to the life of the school and community. New forms of assessment will mean that you can be given credit for your achievements in voluntary work and involvement in the community, even through sport and leisure and part-time jobs. These are the vital personal and learning skills that employers, colleges and universities value and which help to set you apart from the rest.

Society is rightly becoming increasingly selective in its choice of candidates for higher and further education and for worthwhile employment, so it is important that you maintain good standards in everything you do in school. So it is up to you to ensure that when you leave school, your record is a good one.

THIS HANDBOOK IS ESSENTIAL READING. YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO NEGLECT IT FOR THE SAKE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THE WORLD – YOU!

Dear Parent,

Please take some time to read through this booklet with your child and discuss the various options with them to assist in making these important decisions. Our aim is to provide every pupil with a curriculum package that is personalised to their individual needs, aptitudes, skills and aspirations. This will give them the best possible chance of succeeding at age 16 and enable them to move on to the next stage of their education and training, whether this involves school sixth form, college, work-based provider or employment. We want every young person to leave our school fully equipped to meet the challenges of the adult world.

Help and advice is always available from the school so please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information on individual subjects, appropriate combinations or any aspect of the process. Students will be asked to choose three subjects plus a 'reserve' subject by the end of January. We will then analyse and discuss the choices made and there may need to be adjustments made to students' choices or to the structure of the options menu itself before a final confirmation of options is made. Again, please contact us if you have concerns at any stage.

The main people to contact for advice are:

Mrs Rebecca Williams, Head of Learning Year 9

Mr Gareth Roberts, Assistant Head (Curriculum, Assessment & Examinations)

D Williams (Headteacher)

January 2023

THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM: KEY STAGE 4

As a student in Year 9, you are currently following the Key Stage 3 National Curriculum, which is compulsory for all students in Welsh schools. Next year, as you move into Key Stage 4, the National Curriculum will continue, but it will be slightly different from the present one.

You are entering a period of education and training which extends from 14 to 19, during which you will be able to develop a *Learning Pathway* which meets your own individual needs to help you achieve your potential as an adult and eventually enter the world of work. All 14 to 19 year olds are entitled to a package of learning experiences which includes a balance of formal learning and a Learning Core for everyone, but introduces much wider choice and flexibility to help you to follow courses which you are good at, find interesting and relate to your future career choices. You will also receive a great deal of impartial personal support and advice to help you plan the Learning Pathway that is best for you.

There are some courses that all pupils in Years 10 and 11 must study.

These are:

- English Language and Literature
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science
- Welsh
- Welsh Baccalaureate [Skills Challenge Certificate]
- Religious Education
- Physical Education (Not examined)
- Personal, Social and Health Education (Not examined)

In addition, you will be able to study other subjects from an **Options Menu**, which you will choose, following a discussion with your parents, teachers and careers staff.

The number of examinations and the level at which you will study will depend upon your attainment in each subject. Most people will take GCSE courses, either by the traditional route of end of course examinations and controlled assessments or by the *vocational* route, which involves a more practical approach to working for qualifications. Vocational courses can be studied at GCSE and other levels. You can mix GCSEs and vocational qualifications.

You will be offered a range of General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses which involve written examinations in each subject, and possibly an element of **controlled assessment**, which is marked by your teacher over the two years of the course and

contributes to the final grade. Some subjects are *vocational* or work-related and comprise a series of units which are assessed by course teachers and sometimes by a series of external tests carried out over the two year course. These include BTEC courses.

You will also be offered a number of Vocational Qualifications which are much more specifically work-related courses. In some of these, you will spend part of your time studying away from school at a college. We will arrange transport to and from college but the teaching and assessment of your work will be carried out by the college staff.

The table below shows how the qualifications fit into the framework of qualifications that are available to you from year 10.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
GCSE grades D – G	GCSE grades A* – C	A levels
NVQ level 1	NVQ level 2	NVQ level 3
BTEC Level 1	BTEC Level 2	BTEC Level 3
Welsh Baccalaureate	Welsh Baccalaureate	Welsh Baccalaureate
Foundation level	National Level	Advanced Level

WHAT WILL MY CURRICULUM LOOK LIKE?

A. Core Subjects

- Mathematics (Numeracy and Mathematics)
- English (English Language and English Literature)
- Science Double Award (unless you take separate Sciences, see page 6)
- Welsh
- National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate)
- Religious Education
- Physical Education (not examined)

B. Option Subjects There is a wide range of subjects on offer at Queen Elizabeth High School, allowing you to learn in a variety of styles which suit you best and to help you begin to think about the type of career pathway you might want to follow. However, the advice at this stage is to choose from a range of different types of subject in order to keep your options open for the future and specialise further when you join the sixth form or move to the next stage in your education. Some subjects are more appropriate for pupils at particular levels of ability because of the degree of challenge and the type of assessment. Therefore certain options will only be available to you in relation to your current GLOBAL GRADE. All option

subjects are taught for five lessons per fortnight. The subjects in the options menu are as follows:

Art and Design	BTEC Business
Computer Science	BTEC Hospitality and Catering
Drama	BTEC IT
French	BTEC Preparation for Public Services
Geography	BTEC Certificate in Personal Growth & Wellbeing
Health and Social Care and Child Care	Engineering (Level 2)
History	Hair & Beauty Studies (Level 2)
Music	IT User Skills in Open Systems & Enterprise (Level 2)
Physical Education	Tourism (Level 2)
Product Design	Vehicle Component Fitting (VRQLevel 2)
Religious Studies (Full course)	
Spanish	
Triple Science (Biology, Chemistry & Physics)	

Please Note: This is just a list of the various subjects available. These are **not the Option Block** choices. You will be asked to select **three** subjects on the options sheet that will be given to you, plus a 'reserve' choice. Please note the following rules:

1. Everyone follows the Double Award GCSE course in Science, but there is an option to do **separate GCSEs** in Chemistry, Physics and Biology for those who are good at Science and know that they are likely to go on and study sciences at A Level. This option will normally only be suitable ***if you are currently in sets 1 or 2 for Science and have a Global Grade of A or B.***
2. Pupils with Global Grades C or above should choose a maximum of **two** non-GCSE courses.

Please note that some courses may not eventually be available, if numbers choosing them are too low.

C. The National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate)

This is compulsory for all students in Years 10 and 11. It forms a qualification in its own right and combines personal development skills with existing qualifications like GCSEs to make one wider award that is valued by employers and universities. The Welsh Baccalaureate gives broader experiences than traditional learning programmes and enables you to gain credit for participating in community work and work experience. **The WB Skills Challenge Certificate is worth the equivalent of one full GCSE.** You will be given more information on this separately.

D. Physical Education

This is a general PE course and is not examined, although you can choose to study GCSE PE in addition to this if you wish. Again, it is compulsory for all students in two lessons per fortnight.

AT WHAT LEVEL WILL I BE STUDYING?

This will be decided by your own performance in each individual subject. It is the school's policy that as many pupils as possible take public examinations and we would tend to give individuals the benefit of the doubt if there is some difficulty in deciding between GCSE and other courses; nevertheless, it would not be right to place anyone on a course or level which is clearly too hard and which is likely to lead to failure.

If you have any doubts about your ability and potential in a particular subject, consult your subject teachers or discuss the matter with your Year 9 Head of Learning, **Mrs Rebecca Williams**, **Mr Gareth Roberts** (*Assistant Head*) or any other member of the senior staff. However, there are three important points you must remember:

- There are limits to the number of students that can take certain subjects. In such cases, pupils with the best record of success in each subject will be given the first priority. **Don't Assume** that you will automatically follow the courses you choose now. A low mark in the examinations or a poor attitude to the subject now may disqualify you, especially if some groups are too large. For some subjects where places are limited, such as Vehicle Inspection or Hair & Beauty Studies, priority will be given to pupils with global grades C, D and E. Equally, some subjects will only be available to pupils with global grades of A and B.
- The school retains the right to refuse certain choices and levels if these are considered to be inappropriate. In such cases, we will always consult with your parents.
- Some subjects may need to be taken out of the options at a later stage because not enough people have chosen them and the groups would be too small. When this happens, you will be allocated your 'reserve' choice or be asked to choose another subject.

WHEN DO I MAKE MY CHOICES?

You will be expected to make **subject choices by Friday 3rd February 2023**. We hope that by this time you will have a clear idea of the courses best suited to your needs. However, if you still have any doubts, you should see Mr Roberts or Mrs Williams as soon as possible.

All students in Year 9 will have a one-to-one interview with a member of staff to discuss the choices they have made, before the choices are made final.

Please remember the following:

- ***Never select a subject simply because you like your teacher, or, on the other hand, never reject a course because you dislike a teacher. It is quite likely that you will be taken by a different teacher in Year 10.***
- ***Don't choose a course simply to be with your friends. This can create problems later on. Even if you do take the same options as your friends, it is likely that you will be in a different group. Choose what is best for YOU – it is your life!***
- ***Think of what you may want to do after you leave school and get the right advice to make sure that your choices fit your needs. Most people have yet to decide fully at your age, so don't worry if you haven't a clue about what you want to do. Remember to choose subjects you are good at or need for your future career.***

CAN I WITHDRAW FROM ANY COURSE?

No. All the courses are designed to last for two years and pupils cannot be allowed to withdraw early. However, if there are difficulties, you should talk to your Head of Learning, **Mrs Williams or Mr Roberts**. We may allow you to make any changes up to **the end of September at the very latest** if you feel that you have made a mistake in your choices, as long as there is room in the subject group that you wish to move into.

IS IT TOO EARLY TO THINK OF THE SIXTH FORM?

No, because your choices now will determine to some extent the courses available to you after your examinations at the end of year eleven. You will need to achieve decent grades to follow courses in the sixth form and we would expect at the very least, that you achieve five grade Cs at GCSE to go onto A level studies. You would also be expected to get a C grade in any individual subject you want to go on to study at A level. However, for some subjects, like Mathematics or the Sciences, you will need to achieve at least a grade B.

All pupils staying on in school for further study beyond Year 11 automatically become sixth formers. In the sixth form you will have the chance of following a broad range of courses at Advanced Supplementary level in Year 12 and Advanced Level in Year 13. Some courses have a strong vocational bias and involve more coursework and fewer end of year examinations. There are, of course, other options available to you such as full time college courses, apprenticeships or employment and you will need to gather as much information and advice as you can over the next two years. You will receive plenty of careers advice and support during years 10 and 11.

More details of sixth form courses and other options will be given to you during Year 11.

WHAT KIND OF CAREERS ADVICE WILL I HAVE?

During Years 10 and 11 you will have regular lessons of Careers Education Guidance (CEG) and Work Related Experience (WRE). These will be delivered within the Welsh Baccalaureate framework (Skills Challenge Certificate) and through PSE.

A variety of careers information and visits from local and National employers will be provided. Queen Elizabeth High School has a dedicated full time Careers Wales advisor, **Mrs Christie Squires** whose job it is to guide and advise you in this area. In addition to this you will be offered the opportunity to use the “Careers Wales On-line” as part of the careers guidance and education as well as the library of Specific Job related resources.

In Year 11 we prepare you for the world of work. Emphasis is given to the use of application forms, letters of application, curriculum vitae and you will also have a personal interview with our Careers Wales advisor to explore the next steps along your *Learning Pathway*.

WHAT IS CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT?

Most GCSE subjects contain an element of coursework, or **Controlled Assessment** which counts towards the final grade. This can vary between 20% in subjects like Geography and History to 100% in subjects like Art and Design. You should read the individual subject information later in this booklet for information on coursework in specific subjects. Some of the vocational and BTEC courses have a much greater element of coursework rather than exams.

Controlled Assessment in GCSE subjects has to be completed in school under direct supervision and cannot be taken home. Controlled assessment helps to test skills that cannot be tested through a traditional examination. In choosing your subjects, you may wish

to think about whether you are the sort of person who performs well in exam conditions or better in coursework type activities.

WHAT ABOUT THE EXAMS?

Some GCSE subjects have exams at the end of the course but some subjects now have a system where you are able to sit parts of the exam at the end of Year 10. This makes it vitally important that you work hard for the full 2 years and not rely on cramming everything in at the end of the course. Some exams sat at the end of Year 10 can be re-sat in Year 11 to improve grades. Some subjects, like the BTEC and NVQ courses have fewer exams as they are assessed continuously over the two years of the course.

WHAT IS A BTEC?

BTECs are work related qualifications suitable for a wide range of students, built to accommodate the needs of employers and allow progression onto A Level courses. These courses will provide a practical, real-world approach to learning alongside a theoretical background. BTECs can be taken as well as, or in place of GCSEs. A BTEC level 2 qualification is equivalent to a full GCSE at A* to C. Some BTEC subjects enable you to achieve the equivalent of 2 GCSEs if you are prepared to work hard. You must remember that BTECs are not easier, just different. They include a lot of coursework that has to be completed to deadlines and to GCSE standard, but there are fewer exams to do.

WHAT ARE NVQS?

These are other work related qualifications which are more practical and 'hands-on'. They are geared towards specific types of work such as hair & beauty, engineering or vehicle inspection. Some of these courses involve studying out of school in college.

COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

The following section offers some brief details of the compulsory courses in the option scheme. Further information can be obtained from your subject teacher.

1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE (GCSE)

All pupils in Years 10 and 11 study English and every pupil is expected to be entered for the GCSE exam. The examination, under the new specification, is untiered and the course is linear, which means all students will sit the examinations in May/June of Year 11. Pupils will simultaneously study a GCSE in English Literature.

The English Language course involves teaching and learning under three broad headings:

- Reading Skills
- Writing Skills
- Speaking & Listening Skills

The final grade is determined jointly by two externally marked examinations (80%)
and two Speaking and Listening Controlled Assessments. (20%)

There is no written coursework requirement.

Students will be encouraged to: proof-read, edit and handle a range of different texts to synthesise information. You will also be taught how to compose a range of writing tasks including: speeches, letters, exposition essays and narrative writing. Developing your language skills to be more accurate in the use of spelling, punctuation and grammar will be crucial to your success in English Language.

English Literature GCSE

The majority of Year 10 pupils will study English Literature. This is an additional GCSE to English Language.

This qualification is made up of two external exams, and one internally assessed unit. The two externally assessed units test learners' knowledge and understanding of prose from different cultures, contemporary unseen poetry and literary heritage and contemporary drama/prose. The internally assessed unit tests learners' knowledge and understanding of a play by Shakespeare and Welsh writing in English.

This GCSE specification in English Literature should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by reading a range of engaging and thought-provoking texts. It should extend learners' interest in, and enthusiasm for, literature as they develop an understanding

of the ways in which literature is rich and influential. It should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

English Entry Level:

A minority of pupils will not be following the combined Language and Literature GCSEs. Instead, these pupils' literacy skills will be best supported by following the Entry Level route in Year 10, with a view to working towards their English Language GCSE in Year 11. The qualification will assess the reading, writing and communication skills that learners will need in their everyday lives, in the world of work, and in other curriculum areas. It provides learners with a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. The course is broken down into:

One written exam;

A series of topic tests throughout the year

Two speaking and listening assessments.

The course is designed to develop pupils' literacy skills and confidence in English.

Who to talk to: Mrs C. Cluroe or your English teacher.

2. MATHEMATICS (GCSE)

Pupils in Mathematics will study for the following **two** qualifications:

1. GCSE Mathematics-Numeracy

This course teaches pupils how to apply their maths skills in real-life contexts and to recognise the importance and relevance of mathematics to their everyday lives and to society. Solving problems in the real world by selecting and applying the appropriate mathematics, interpreting results in context, managing money and using statistics form the basis of this course.

2. GCSE Mathematics

This course teaches pupils to develop knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods, techniques and concepts and how to solve problems set both in real-world contexts and within mathematics itself. Pupils will be taught how to make connections between different areas of mathematics, how to reason mathematically and how to communicate and interpret results.

In line with the style of these two examinations, the teaching style encourages pupils to think their way through an unstructured problem and practise reasoning in unfamiliar contexts, as well as giving pupils opportunities to practise more routine skills.

There are 3 tiers of entry: Higher, Intermediate and Foundation. The grades available for these are as follows:

Higher	A*	A	B	C				
Intermediate			B	C	D	E		
Foundation					D	E	F	G

Pupils are assigned to a tier of entry based on Key Stage 3 assessments.

Each GCSE is assessed through 2 written papers. Unit 1 is non-calculator and Unit 2 requires the use of a calculator. Pupils will sit 4 papers in total leading to the two GCSE qualifications. Each paper at Higher and Intermediate tier is 1 hour and 45 minutes and each paper at Foundation tier is 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Standard mathematical equipment and a scientific calculator are needed.

Key stage 3 teacher assessments from Year 9 will determine the set and course you are allocated to.

Who to talk to: Mrs. D Roulston-Jones or your Mathematics teacher.

3. SCIENCE (GCSE)

If you want to follow the Separate Science course, you will need to choose it as one of your three option choices.

- **Science (Double Award) GCSE:** This course is taught at higher and foundation tier level and pupils are awarded two science GCSEs. The course is awarded in Year 11 and is assessed in year 10 and 11. This is the main Science course and the compulsory elements that will be followed by pupils who have not opted for separate sciences. You will study Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Key stage 3 teacher assessments from Year 9 will determine the set and course you are allocated to. All pupils will require a calculator (scientific for GCSE higher tiers).
- **Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry & Physics) GCSEs:** This is an option choice and can be taken by pupils with a high ability and keen interest in science subjects. It is taught at higher tier level and is recommended for pupils in sets 1/2 or those who want to continue one or more of these subjects onto Advanced level.

If you wish to pursue a career in science, engineering, medicine, veterinary science or industry then separate sciences need to be a consideration. This course builds upon the double award curriculum and extends knowledge in new areas such as seismic waves, microbiology and its applications, industrial chemical process, and understanding starlight. STEM and MAT activities are focused within the separate science classes in year 10 /11.

Assessment:

Each Science GCSE has practical assessment tasks which comprise 10% of the qualification and exams in year 10 and 11 for Physics, Chemistry & Biology. We follow the WJEC specifications for all of our GCSE science courses.

Who to talk to: Mr A. Humphries or your Science teacher.

4. CYMRAEG (TGAU) WELSH (GCSE)

Welsh is a core subject which is taught to all pupils up to GCSE level. It is a statutory requirement that all pupils study the Welsh language up to 16 years old.

The Welsh Department is very active in promoting the importance of learning Welsh. With all the exciting developments in Wales today, people are becoming more and more aware of the importance of the language. It can be of an enormous advantage in a wide range of careers and jobs.

We attempt to nurture our pupils' positive attitudes towards their Welshness through dynamic teaching, the use of technology and also by arranging a variety of extra-curricular activities to promote the language outside the classroom.

Studying GCSE Welsh (First and Second Language) will encourage pupils to:

- Develop their confidence when communicating effectively in Welsh.
- Develop skills to make practical use of the language in order to communicate effectively, usefully and appropriately in the bilingual society.

Assessment

Pupils from Welsh Medium Primary Schools who have followed the KS3 First Language course will be entered for Welsh First Language GCSE.

4. WELSH FIRST LANGUAGE

Pupils studying Welsh as a First Language will complete three units of study:-

Unit 1 (30%) – Task 1 is an Individual Presentation. This can be on any chosen topic and is worth 15% of the final grade. Task 2 is also worth 15% and is a group discussion based on written and/or visual stimuli provided by WJEC.

Unit 2 (35%) – External assessment. Pupils will be assessed on their understanding of at least one description, one narration and one exposition text, including continuous and non-continuous texts through a range of structured questions. They will also complete one written task based on what they have read.

Unit 3 (35%) – External assessment. Pupils will be assessed on their understanding of at least one argumentation, one persuasion and one instructional text, including continuous and non-continuous texts through a range of structured questions. They will also complete two written tasks – one argumentation writing task and one persuasive writing task.

WELSH SECOND LANGUAGE

The department also offers a GCSE in Welsh Second Language. This GCSE is available for candidates who have followed the Welsh Second Language programme of study at Key Stage 3 or candidates who have started to study Welsh Second Language after Key Stage 3.

Pupils studying Welsh as a Second Language will complete four units of study:-

Unit 1 (25%) Oracy response to visual material. Non-examination assessment. This is a task for a pair/group of three based on a visual stimuli provided by the WJEC to stimulate discussion. (10% Speaking, 15% Listening).

Unit 2 (25%) Communicating with others. Non-examination assessment. This is a task for a pair/group of three based on the text/written stimuli provided by the WJEC to stimulate discussion. (20% Speaking, 5% Listening).

Unit 3 (25%) Narrative, specific and instructional written examination. This examination will include reading and writing tasks with non-verbal and written responses, including one translation task from English to Welsh and a proof reading task. (15% Reading, 10% Writing).

Unit 4 (25%) Descriptive, creative and imaginative written examination. This examination will include a range of reading tasks with non-verbal and written responses and writing tasks. (10% Reading, 15% Writing).

Future Prospects

In Wales, many sectors need employees who are bilingual or have a basic knowledge of Welsh. Even the basic phrases make a real difference – jobs from receptionists to top level management need language skills. Today, businesses in Wales are required to provide a

bilingual service. A knowledge of Welsh is a great asset in careers such as Health Care, Teaching, Child Care, Tourism, Law, Media or Government. The courses provided are also a secure foundation for those pupils who wish to continue with their studies in Welsh at AS and A Level.

Who to talk to: Mr G. Lewis or your Welsh teacher.

5. RELIGIOUS STUDIES (GCSE) SHORT COURSE

Religious Studies provides an opportunity for students to learn about the diversity of beliefs and cultures that exist in our world. Throughout the course students can express their own views on religious, moral and social issues. It is a highly versatile course and many students have progressed onto the following careers; Teaching, Medicine, Social Work, Nursing, Public Services Sector, Law, to name just a few. The subject enables students to improve their literacy skills through discussions and debates, reading and writing. Pupils are given the opportunity to consider arguments for and against modern ethical issues such as, environmentalism, evolution, abortion, euthanasia, just war and the death penalty.

Unit 1- 100% Exam

Part A:

At GCSE you will study the core beliefs and teachings of both Christianity and Islam. This includes the beliefs about the Nature of God, the teachings of Jesus and Prophet Muhammad, Places of worship and religious practices such as prayer and the Five Pillars of Islam.

Part B: You will study the philosophical themes from the perspective of Christianity and Islam as well as non-religious beliefs, such as those held by Humanists and Atheists (this will be explicitly assessed in the (d) questions in the Life and Death theme).

You will study two themes which are issues of Life and Death and Good and Evil. This will include topics such as the Creation of the world, medical ethics (for example, abortion, euthanasia) crime and punishment including arguments for and against the death penalty and whether not war is every necessary.

For pupils who perform better with continual assessments rather than examinations an alternative course is available (Equality & Diversity NCEF Level 2). This course explores Equality & Diversity in the community, society and the workplace.

Who to talk to: Miss R. Davies or Mrs S.O'Kelly

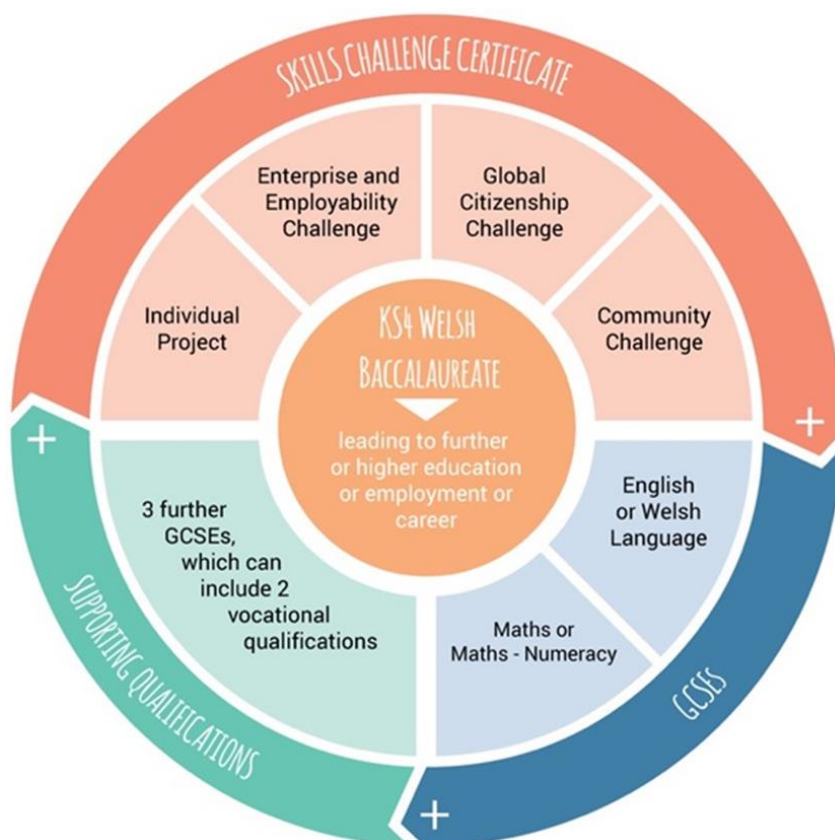
6. NATIONAL/FOUNDATION SKILLS CHALLENGE CERTIFICATE **(WELSH BACCALAUREATE)**

The National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC), has been introduced to learners at ages 14 to 19. It's format has been designed to help learners develop the skills they will need for higher education, employment and life.

The SCC has been universally adopted by all educational establishments in Wales, at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. The full GCSE qualification, will offer flexibility and inclusivity to all learners and will be studied alongside the learner's traditional choices at GCSE level, or Vocational Qualifications. Four Challenges will be completed over the two year period (Key Stage 4; Year 10 and Year 11).

The Skills Challenge Certificate will be rigorously assessed internally and externally. It will be graded (in line with all other GCSEs), ensuring that candidate's hard work, effort, commitment and high performance are better rewarded and recognised by higher education and employers. The National award will be graded as GCSE A* - C and the Foundation as a Level 1 Pass* and Level 1 Pass.

The SCC is primarily about the development, improvement and assessment of essential skills, such as Literacy and Numeracy, Digital Literacy, Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Planning and Organisation, Creativity and Innovation and Personal Effectiveness.



Specifications and delivery models, are constantly internally refined and adjusted, to improve student learning. Our school will continue to liaise closely with the Welsh Government, Regional Consortia and the WJEC, to ensure that the delivery of the National Skills Challenge is consistent with other schools throughout Wales.

Year 10 - Learners will engage and complete the Enterprise and Employability Challenge, Community Challenge and Global Citizenship Challenge.

Year 11 – Learners will engage in the Individual Project (50% of the course), Community Challenges and Global Citizenship Challenges.

Learners will develop and use these acquired skills. These skills will be assessed by the completion of an Individual Project (50%) and three Skills Challenges:

Enterprise and Employability Challenge (20%)

Global Citizenship Challenge (15%)

Community Challenge (15%)

The Individual Project and Skills Challenges will all be graded, to strengthen the qualification and to reward learners who achieve high standards. Completion of these four sections will result in completion and achievement of the National/Foundation Skills Challenge Certificate.

What the experts say...

“ From our perspective, we expect students who come to Oxford to be independent thinkers, highly motivated and flexible. I truly believe that the new qualifications from Wales, especially the refocused and strengthened Welsh Baccalaureate, will help develop students in that direction.”

Dr Samina Khan: Oxford University

Who to talk to: Mr R. Evans (WB Skills Challenge Certificate Co-ordinator)

OPTION SUBJECTS

The following section offers some brief details of the courses available in the option scheme. Further information can be obtained from your subject teacher.

ART (GCSE)

This course is designed to inspire and develop creative thinking and making. Learners will improve their skills with a wide variety of materials and processes, explore and analyse the work of artists from a range of contextual and cultural sources, and develop ideas for their own work based on their individual artistic interests.

The coursework element, the Candidate Portfolio, is worth 60% of the overall marks, and takes four terms to produce. It usually begins with a set theme, and pupils are expected to develop their own ideas in response to this theme. The Terminal Examination is issued in January of Year 11, and takes the form of a self-defined six week project, culminating in a ten hour practical exam, during which time a final outcome is produced.

Pupils will be given the opportunity to specialise, if they choose, in any of the following disciplines: drawing and painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, photography, animation, photomanipulation, fashion design, jewellery and costume, mixed media, graphic design, surface pattern and design for architecture. This usually happens towards the end of Year 10, when teachers are confident that pupils are on track, and are ready to work more independently. The range of options underlines the diversity of skills within the department, and indeed, possible career paths post GCSE.

Studying the work of artists is an essential element of the course, and pupils' understanding is enhanced through gallery visits. Although there is no actual written examination in Art, pupils will be expected to document their own creative process clearly as their work develops, and also to analyse the work of their chosen artists, demonstrating an understanding of context.

Time management is the key if pupils are to keep up with the volume of work that we expect.

Who to talk to: your Art teacher.

FIRST AWARD IN BUSINESS (BTEC LEVEL 1/2)

This course allows you to study the world of business, giving you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. You will examine the roles and responsibilities of setting up a new business and its financial management. You will also develop key skills, such as analysis and review of key financial statements.

This qualification provides an engaging, practical and relevant introduction to the world of business. It encourages you to explore the range of business types and understand the factors that influence success through analysing business models. It enables you to develop, enhance and apply your research, practical, communication and technical skills through creating and presenting a business plan for a realistic business start-up in your local area.

You will study **three mandatory units**, covering key aspects that underpin all business and the development of business models:

- **Mandatory units**

- Unit 1: Introduction to Business
- Unit 2: Finance for Business (External Assessment)
- Unit 3: Enterprise in the Business World (Synoptic)

You will choose a further unit from three optional units, covering marketing, customer services, and business recruitment:

- **Optional units**

- Unit 4: Promoting a Brand
- Unit 5: Principles of Customer Service
- Unit 6: Recruitment, Selection and Employment.

Assessment:

You will carry out tasks/assignments throughout the course. Your teacher will mark these, and you will receive feedback on your progress.

Unit 2 is externally assessed via a test set and marked by Pearson.

Developing employability skills

The vast majority of employers require learners to have certain technical skills, knowledge and understanding to work in a particular sector, but they are also looking for employability skills to ensure that employees are effective in the workplace. Throughout this course, you will develop a range of employability skills, engage with employers and carry out work-related activities.

Who to talk to: Miss K. Carter

COMPUTER SCIENCE (GCSE)

Computer science gives learners a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works as well as providing excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of Computer Science. It develops critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming. Computer technology continues to advance rapidly and the way that technology is consumed has also been changing at a fast pace over recent years. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. For example, businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically-aware individuals. This GCSE specification encourages all to develop their interest in Computer Science by becoming creators of games, apps and systems, rather than simply using programs designed by others.

Overview of the subject content:

- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Programming
- Fundamentals of data representation
- Computer systems
- Fundamentals of computer networks
- Internet and communications
- Ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology on wider society, including issues of privacy
- Aspects of software development

Assessment:

Unit 1 Understanding Computer science 45% (externally assessed exam)

Unit 2 Solving problems using computers 30% (externally assessed practical)

Unit 3 Developing Computer solutions 25% (internally assessed Controlled assessment)

The course is normally only available to pupils with a Global Grade A, with excellent Numeracy or Mathematical skills.

Who to talk to: Mr A. Salter

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY SUBJECTS

DT gives you a choice of three areas based upon the view that Design and Technology is essentially a practical activity involving the combination of skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products.

Pupils will have the opportunity to analyse and evaluate situations, design and make products and then evaluate their performance. The pupils will have the opportunity to work with a range of different materials and use the CAD/CAM machinery e.g. Laser cutter.

A fundamental part of the course is for the pupils to undertake a range of different practical projects in order to improve their manufacturing skills. Pupils will gain a better understanding of industrial practices and how different products are manufactured.

The different options that can be taken in Year 10 are:

- Product design (GCSE)
- It User Skills in Open Systems and Enterprise [Level 2 Certificate]
- Engineering (NVQ)

You may only choose **one** of these options. They are outlined in greater detail below.

PRODUCT DESIGN (GCSE)

Why Product Design?

Product design is about the creation of new items that people will buy. It includes appearance and function, and needs the balance of science and art for its success. Styling and function are crucial to commercial success, and through product design you will gain a thorough understanding of the processes involved in turning ideas into attractive and useful products. Shape, colour, CAD/CAM, user perception, usability and sustainability are just some of the elements you will learn to work with.

Designing

Designing is a process based activity involving thinking, creating, inventing, predicting, experimenting, decision making, constant evaluation and, where necessary, modification. Designers develop an awareness of the opportunities and constraints placed upon them by taking into account the demands of users and producers and of market forces.

Making

The realisation of design ideas and solutions is achieved by making products where a range of materials and media may be used. In product design, making activities may take many forms, ranging from early experiments through experimental mock-ups, prototypes, scale models and trials to a final marketable product. Students with an interest in design and/or computers would thrive and enjoy Graphic Products. Other areas of interest might be: presentation, media, advertising, architecture, modelling, illustration and design communication.

GCSE DT Product Design is your pathway onto AS / A Level at QEHS and then onto a career in 3D Modelling, Product Design, Industrial Design, Automotive design, Product or Interior Design, Architecture, Advertising/Promotion or the world of Media.

Assessment:

NEA 50% - Includes a design portfolio, sketchbook, prototypes and final product. 35 hours at GCSE Year 11.

Examination (2 hours) 50% - includes all theory elements (e.g. Materials, industrial processes) and a strong focus on Bethan Gray, James Dyson and Airbus.

Who to talk to: Miss A. Belton or Mr J. Killingsworth

IT USER SKILLS IN OPEN SYSTEMS AND ENTERPRISE

This Level 2 qualification has a points score worth the equivalent of 2 GCSEs at B grade.

This course is varied and is offered to students in Years 10 and 11. Students will complete modules using Microsoft Office suite and CAD software such as Adobe Photoshop, Techsoft 2D Design, PTC Prodesktop and other CAD software.

Students will be expected to learn the basics of mechanical Computer Aided Design, Animation, Digital image manipulation and much more. At the end of their academic year, they will sit an online exam where their competency with the software will be tested.

The units covered in the syllabus include:-

- Desktop Publishing
- Design Software
- Additive Manufacture Design and Make
- Web site Software
- Developing Computer Games and Puzzles
- Drawing and planning – linked to Architecture
- Word processing
- Presentation software

The Level 1 qualification has a points score worth the equivalent of 2 GCSEs at D grade. The Level 2 qualification has a points score worth the equivalent of 2 x GCSE at B grade.

Who to talk to: Miss A. Belton or Mr J. Killingsworth

DIPLOMA IN ENGINEERING (NVQ)

What will you learn?

The NVQ Diploma in Practical Engineering Operations will introduce the essential skills and knowledge you will need to work in engineering. It will cover general skills like safety, efficient and effective working practices and technical communications. You will also produce work which will prove your ability in a particular area such as fabrication, welding and materials processing.

Transferable subject skills

Throughout the course you will be taught how to safely and accurately undertake workshop skills along with essential theoretical work. The course will provide you with essential skills that are highly regarded for work in industry and apprenticeships. During the course, you will make a number of items with a high level of skill and accuracy.

Why choose Engineering?

Skilled engineers are always in demand within the workplace. The course provides the basic skills required by employers for apprenticeships or college course entry requirements.

Who is Engineering suitable for?

The subject is suitable for all pupils who enjoy working with metal and the specialist processes and machinery associated with this. The course is suited to those who enjoy learning new skills and enjoy making things.

The course is 100% coursework. This will be assessed from several units over the period of two years.

Who to talk to: Mr K. Abell.

DRAMA (GCSE)

Drama is an enjoyable and varied course and there are many reasons for choosing Drama as an option. It is not just about wanting to become a famous actor, it provides you with essential life / social skills, such as:

- Communication
- Confidence
- Teamwork
- Problem-solving

- Organisation skills
- Leadership

These are skills that you need in all careers, but specifically Drama can help you to become a teacher, actor, lighting or sound technician, costume designer, media representative, director, set designer, public speaker.

You will take part in group work, extra rehearsals, independent research, reading a variety of plays, and directing. You also get the opportunity to visit theatres to watch live and professional performances, attend theatre workshops, and study the world of theatre as a whole, not just acting. You will need to understand that Drama is not a soft option, and that commitment, enthusiasm, passion, and hard work are essential for success and enjoyment.

Unit 1: Devising Theatre 40%

You create, develop and perform a devised scene from a particular theme. The scene is also linked to a style/practitioner of theatre. This is worked on as part of a group ranging from 2 performer's upto 5 performers. The timings are as follows:

2 actors: 5-10 mins

3 actors: 7-12 mins

4 actors: 9-14 mins

5 actors: 11-16 mins

You must also produce a portfolio of supporting evidence (750 words) and an evaluation (1.5hrs) of your devised work to back up the performance.

Unit 2: Performing from a Text 20%

You study two extracts from the same script which is chosen by the school and/or you. You then participate in one performance using sections of the script from both extracts as part of a group. The group ranges from 2 performers to 4 performers and the timings of the piece are

2 actors: 5-10 mins

3 actors: 7-12 mins

4 actors: 9-14 mins

Unit 3: Interpreting Theatre 40% - Written Exam 1 hour 30 minutes.

You study and are then expected to answer questions about 1 set text which is chosen from a list of 5 given by the WJEC. The questions will be from the point of view of an actor, director, and technician.

There will also be the task of writing a live theatre review about a play you have watched in the theatre during the course.

Who to talk to: Miss S. Reynolds, Mr Williams or Mrs J. James

GEOGRAPHY (GCSE)

Should I take Geography?

- ✓ Did I enjoy the Geography lessons in years 7-9?
- ✓ Did I enjoy the teaching in years 7-9?
- ✓ Do I enjoy fieldwork?
- ✓ Do I enjoy a varied course?
- ✓ Do I enjoy finding out about the world in which I live?

If you have answered “yes” to any of these questions, then you should be thinking about doing Geography at GCSE level.

How is the course structured?

Year 10:

- Unit 1 Landscapes and Physical Processes
- Unit 2 Rural-Urban Links
- Unit 3 Coastal Hazards and their management

Year 11:

- Unit 4 Weather Climate and Ecosystems
- Unit 5 Development and Resource Issues
- Unit 6 Social Development

One enquiry:

- Based on two pieces of fieldwork carried out during the course.

These are examined at the end of Year 11, with the additional fieldwork exam taken in the November. You will have access to resources via Google classroom and the text book linked to the course in class.

During the course you learn many invaluable skills including map and atlas work, drawing and interpreting graphs, being able to conclude and evaluate. Throughout the course,

numeracy, literacy, and digital competency are developed, along with use of your own opinion.

You will learn about current issues such as flooding in the UK and climate change. Like mentioned above fieldwork forms an important part of the course. You will carry out at least two days of fieldwork in years 10 & 11. We also go further afield – Italy was our latest visit!

Geography at GCSE is a great qualification and combines well with other subjects. We have students combining Geography with just about every subject you can think of! It links well with them all as it has so many facets and skills within it. The skills base you form from taking GCSE Geography makes you highly regarded by employers.

Geography gives you a distinct advantage if you are thinking of a career in many things. This list is endless but includes cartography, architecture, civil service, landscape architecture, local government, marketing, town and country planning, teaching, transport, tourism, the armed services, civil aviation, estate agency, the leisure industry, nature conservancy, surveying, energy sector, flood protection.

Please see your Geography teacher for further information. It is recommended that you do not choose Geography if your Global Grade is below C.

Who to talk to: Mrs M. Killingsworth or your Geography teacher.

HISTORY (GCSE)

Why choose history?

History is a well- recognised and respected academic subject, often looked upon favourably by employers. It is also a useful discipline for entry to higher education at university level and is welcomed by the most prestigious universities. They know that a person who has studied history successfully is able to:

- understand information
- analyse and evaluate information
- present clear, logical reports both written and orally
- understand concepts of change, cause and consequence.

These skills are very important requirements for many careers including the police force, doctors, lawyers, teachers, accountants, social workers, managers, the armed forces and numerous others.

At GCSE you will study three key modules, each of which will be examined at the end of the two years. Controlled assessment based on the Home front in World War Two will make up the fourth module.

Unit 1 Radicalism and Protest 1810 – 1848

Unit 2 Germany in Transition 1919 – 1939

Unit 3 Changes in Health and Medicine c1000 – Present

Unit 4 Controlled Assessment on War and Conflict

It is recommended that you don't choose History if your Global Grade is below C.

Who to talk to: Miss B. Thomas or your History teacher

TOURISM (LEVEL 1/2)

Should I take Tourism? Did you enjoy Geography and History in years 7-9 but found it too hard? Well this is the course for you.

How is the course structured?

75% Coursework

25% Exam

Unit 1: Customer Experience (Course Work)

You will go on field work and collect data to understand how tourism and tourism services are affected by customer experience.

Unit 2: The Business of Tourism (Exam)

You gain knowledge on different types of businesses and understand how business work and solving issues in tourism

Unit 3: Developing UK Tourism (Course Work)

You gain understanding of destinations and why they appeal to different tourists.

Career options- Travel Agent, Hotel Manager, Spa Manager, Tour Operator, Event & Conference Organiser, Tour Guide, Executive Chef, PR Manager, Leisure Activity Co-ordinator

Field work is a key element of this course and throughout the 2 years you will visit local tourist attractions.

The following skills will be developed:

Map work, using graphs, numeracy, literacy, ICT skills, collecting data through fieldwork and current issues. This may be a good choice if you are also choosing Public Services or Hospitality and Catering.

Who to talk to: Miss N. John or your Geography Teacher.

HAIRDRESSING & BEAUTY (VTCT LEVEL 2)

This qualification is the Level 2 Extended Award in Hair and Beauty skills (VRQ).

The main purpose of the qualification is to enable learners to develop hair and beauty skills, techniques and knowledge, which will prepare learners to progress to the next level of vocational learning. All the units in this qualification directly prepare learners for further study in the hair and beauty sector. All units in this qualification have been designed as a foundation for further study both in the hair and beauty sector. Learners will develop knowledge of the hair and beauty sector to allow progression into either hairdressing or beauty therapy.

Mandatory unit - Create an image based on a theme.

Optional units (minimum of 3 units) which **could include** basic nail art, basic skin care, basic blow dry and finishing hair, shampoo and treat hair, basic plait and twist hair, basic manicure, working in the hair and beauty industries, colour hair using semi-permanent colour.

Learners will work in a mixed ability setting, but will be interviewed prior to the start of the course to assess their interest and suitability for the course. This is a two-year course open to both male and female students who are interested in a career in Hair and Beauty.

The programme is a partnership between QEHS and Coleg Sir Gâr. Two hour practical activities are carried out in our own salon at the Carmarthen Leisure Centre.

To successfully achieve this qualification, learners will complete a range of practical assessments alongside assignments for each unit taken. On occasions, there will be homework set.

As spaces are limited on this course, priority will be given to pupils with Global Grade C, D and E.

Who to talk to: Mr G. Roberts

HEALTH , SOCIAL AND CHILD CARE - GCSE

This course will interest you if you are thinking of a career in health (including nursing), social care or early years services.

Students pursuing a course of study based on this specification will develop their knowledge and understanding of Health and Social Care in a vocational context. It is a suitable qualification for those who want a broad background in this area and also those who want to progress to higher education.

The course is split into two units of work:

Unit 1: Health, Social Care and Children's Services (Internal assessment) 60%

This unit will enable candidates to gain knowledge and understanding of the main health, social care and children's service provision available to meet individuals' needs.

Candidates will learn about:

- care needs of individuals;
- types of care services;
- the ways of obtaining care services and the barriers to access;
- the main work roles and skills of people who provide health, social care and children's services;
- the principles of care.

Unit 2: Human Growth and Development (External assessment) 40%

To provide effective care, workers within health, social care and children's services need to know about the different ways that people grow and develop during their lives. This unit will allow candidates to gain knowledge and understanding of the process of human growth and development and the different factors that can affect individuals.

Candidates will learn about:

- human growth development and wellbeing
- promoting and maintaining health and well being
- Health Social and childcare in the 21st century
- promoting and supporting health and well being to achieve positive outcomes
- the factors affecting growth and development;
- the development of self-concept;
- life changes and sources of support.

Who to talk to: Mrs S. Makinson

BTEC LEVEL 1 /2 AWARD IN HOSPITALITY AND CATERING

Overview

The course aims to provide candidates with knowledge and experience of a range of culinary skills and different management careers within the Hospitality and Catering Industry. The level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering can help you take your first steps towards a career in events, catering or accommodation. You'll learn essential skills such as planning and running an event, preparing and serving food and drink, and delivering first-class customer service. The course lasts 2 years in which the candidates complete 3 controlled assessments and 1 external examination.

Assessment

The course consists of four units; this qualification is equivalent to 1 GCSE.

External examination 25%

Three Controlled assessments 25% each

Topics covered:

- Introducing in the hospitality industry
- Working in the hospitality industry
- Food safety and health and safety in hospitality
- Planning, Preparing, cooking and finishing food.

The candidate will be awarded one of the following results on completion of the 2 years:

Level 1 Pass (D) Level 2 pass (C), Merit (B) Distinction (A) Distinction* (A*)

Progression.

The specification provides candidates with the foundation for them to be able to study the Hospitality A level course within the school.

The course also enables the candidate to follow careers in the following:-

Careers within the Hotel Industry:

- Hotel Management
- Food & Beverage Manager
- Banqueting Manager
- Head Chef
- Human Resources Manager

Careers within the Catering Industry:

- Chefs- Head Chef, Sous Chef, Comme Chef

- Catering Manager
- Hospitality Manager- Organising Private Functions & Private Dining Events
- Restaurant Manager
- Running your own Business

Who to talk to: Mrs E. Simpson or your Technology teacher.

BTEC LEVEL 1 /2 FIRST AWARD IN INFORMATION AND CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY (BTEC IT)

Awarding Body: Edexcel

Qualification: BTEC level 1/2

This option, which will count for one GCSE at the end of the course, is an exciting way to develop your ICT skills through practical activities. This course has a 25% on screen Theory Exam and a vocational approach to study and is most suited to students that prefer a combination of written assessment and practical assignment based work, but will give you excellent experience in working with and developing projects.

You will learn:

1. To investigate online services and online communication.
2. To investigate components of the internet and how digital devices exchange and store information.
3. To investigate issues with operating online.
4. The Online World looking at the components and uses of online technology.
5. Using a range of ICT software applications and evaluating their use.
6. The role of different software in organisations and their applications.

This subject is most suitable for students who:

- Prefer doing written exams in addition to practical coursework assignments.
- Want hands on experience in creating databases and digital online portfolios.
- Want to learn about analogue and digital data and programming concepts.
- Enjoy working on projects to meet a deadline.

Assessment method:

Core Units Unit 1 - Online World (external assessment via online test – 1 hour)

Unit 3 - A Digital Portfolio Optional

A further two internally assessed units will also be completed.

Skills acquired

- Developing key skills in numeracy, communication and ICT.
- Identify and understand the use of computer hardware.
- Develop problem solving skills by applying ICT to real life situations.
- Developing web development planning and creating skills.
- Organising work and presenting it in a structured online folder.

Who to talk to: Miss K. Granville.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH & SPANISH) - GCSE

Now, more than ever, modern languages are playing an increasingly important role. In many careers, employers and universities are looking for people who have at least a GCSE in a foreign language. The GCSE course itself is well adapted to the demands of modern life since pupils work in everyday situations which enable them to put the language into real use. Even if you are not planning to work or travel abroad, a GCSE in MFL is sought after by businesses in Wales and the UK.

Course Content

You will learn in more detail the topic areas you have been working on in Year 9: Identity and Culture, Wales and the World and Current and Future Study and Employment. You will enhance your reading skills through the study of articles and texts. You will improve your speaking skills through real-life opportunities in class and small group work with the language assistant. By studying a modern foreign language at GCSE you will learn to write in a more sophisticated way. The basic skills acquired at GCSE are useful if you would like to start one or more languages in the sixth form and the communication skills are valued by employers.

Assessment:

Speaking 25%: This will include a role-play of a real life situation, discussion of a photo card and a conversation.

Writing and Translation 25%: An examination at the end of Year 11.

Reading and Translation 25%: An examination at the end of Year 11.

Listening 25%: An examination at the end of Year 11.

Who to talk to: Mrs E. Ward or Mrs G.Hughes.

LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE IN VEHICLE COMPONENT FITTING (VRQ)

This is a two-year course open to both male and female students who are interested in learning about the maintenance of motor vehicles. The qualification has a predominately practical approach to assessment.

Learners will develop their knowledge and skills of:

- health, safety and good housekeeping in the automotive environment;
- tools, equipment and materials for vehicle maintenance;
- removal and fitting of basic light vehicle mechanical, electrical and trim components and non-permanently fixed vehicle body panels;
- spark ignition engine systems;
- and suspension systems.

Learners must demonstrate their selected units' learning outcomes by following and achieving the required assessment components. The assessments for this qualification combine various assessment styles/methodologies, including written, practical and online tests, in order to suit the subject of the units.

The programme is a partnership between the school and Coleg Sir Gâr (Pibwrlwyd Campus). The course involves attending college for one morning or one afternoon session per week. As spaces are limited, priority will be given to pupils with global grade C or lower.

Who to talk to: Mr G. Roberts.

MUSIC (GCSE)

Do you think that GCSE music is not for you, that it's just learning about classical styles, or that only people who play in the orchestra can take it?

If so, you are not alone. But the truth is that GCSE music is a really good option choice for all sorts of pupils, especially if you:

- Enjoy listening to any kind of music.
- Are interested in learning more about different styles of music.
- Would like to learn how to create your own music.
- Want to improve your existing instrumental/vocal skills OR learn how to play an instrument/sing (pupils taking GCSE music receive free peripatetic tuition in school as part of the course).
- Are looking for a creative subject with a significant emphasis on practical work rather than written examinations.

The GCSE music course continues to develop the 3 skills of performing, composing and appraising that you will already be familiar with from your lessons in years 7-9.

PERFORMING 35% (internal assessment)

- Sing or play at least 2 pieces, 1 of which must be an ensemble (30%)
- Write a programme note for one of the pieces performed (5%)

COMPOSING 35% (internal assessment)

- Create 2 original pieces lasting between 3-6 minutes in total (30%)
- Write an evaluation of one of the pieces (5%)

APPRAISING 30% (written examination)

- 1 hour listening exam, with questions based on 4 areas of study - *Forms & Devices*, *Music for Ensemble*, *Film Music* and *Popular Music*.
- Study of 2 set works - 1 Popular piece (Handbags & Gladrags - Stereophonics) and 1 Classical piece.

GCSE music is a good choice for anyone considering studying music or performing arts at AS/A Level and university. It can also be beneficial in a whole host of different careers within the performing arts industry, including:

session musician, composer, conductor, radio broadcaster, arts administration, events organiser, music therapist, teacher, music journalist, stage manager, musical theatre performer, sound engineer, recording studio technician.

GCSE music also develops and promotes wider skills and attributes that are highly regarded by many employers and that are particularly beneficial on UCAS applications.

Who to talk to: Mrs R. Honour or your Music teacher.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (GCSE)

GCSE Physical Education allows candidates to build on the experience gained in the previous key stages particularly in relation to the areas of experience in physical education, namely Adventurous activities, Creative activities, Competitive activities and Health, Fitness and Well-being activities.

Following a course in GCSE Physical Education should encourage pupils to:

- become increasingly physically competent through being actively involved in a range of physical activities;
- become increasingly effective in their performance in different types of physical activity such as player / participant, leader and official;

- develop their ability to engage independently and successfully in the processes of different types of physical activity;
- develop and maintain their involvement in physical activity as part of a healthy active lifestyle.

Scheme of Assessment:

Written Paper (2 hours) 50% of final mark.

Section A: A series of short answer and extended writing compulsory questions to test candidates knowledge and understanding of exercise and fitness, its assessment and factors affecting performance, provision and participation in sporting, health and well-being activities.

Section B: A series of short answer and extended writing compulsory questions to test candidates knowledge and understanding of the physical, psychological and technical / tactical factors that have an influence on performance, health and well-being.

Practical Assessment: 50% of final mark.

Pupils will be assessed in three different activities in the role of performer. Pupils must offer one individual sport, one team sport and either a team or individual sport. Pupils will also be assessed by producing a Personal fitness programme linked to their major sport.

Who to talk to: Mr C. Thomas or your PE teacher.

LEVEL 2 PREPARATION FOR PUBLIC SERVICES (BTEC)

The BTEC Level 2 Diploma in Preparation for Public Services is a course for students that have a personal drive and motivation to join the United Kingdom's public services such as Police, Fire, Ambulance, Prison Service, Border Force, Armed Forces (Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and Royal Marines), Local Councils, Voluntary Sector and charity organisations.

Our strong links with the Public Services means you will benefit from a large selection of industry based employees coming to visit the college, to speak to you and give you the opportunity to undertake job related practical activities. This is an exciting, interesting and challenging course that will allow you to gain knowledge of the work undertaken by the Public Services and develop some skills needed by them such as communication, team working, leadership, problem solving and ICT.

Through this vocational course you gain transferable skills that are valued by any employer increasing your employability opportunities in a wide range of industries as well as developing your physical and mental strength. There are four units where you will undertake a variety of theory and practical activities related to the Public Services; unit 1 Public Services Skills, unit 2 Employment, unit 3 Health & Fitness, and unit 6 Expedition & Land Navigation.

This BTEC course is 100% coursework and is assessed through a number of practical and theory based assessments. You will achieve the equivalent of two GCSE's after completing this course. The BTEC Level 2 Diploma in Preparation for Public Service is suitable for students who have a "can do attitude", open to trying new things and a willingness to learn.

Who to talk to: Mr G. Price or Mr R. Evans

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (GCSE) FULL COURSE

Religious Studies provides an opportunity for students to learn about the diversity of beliefs and cultures that exist in our world. Throughout the course, students can express their own views on religious, moral and social issues. It is a highly versatile course and many students have progressed onto the following careers; Teaching, Medicine, Social Work, Nursing, Public Services Sector, Law, to name just a few. The subject enables students to improve their literacy skills through discussions and debates, reading and writing. Pupils are given the opportunity to consider arguments for and against modern ethical issues such as, environmentalism, evolution, abortion, euthanasia, discrimination, poverty, just war, the death penalty and sexual ethics.

Unit 1- 50% Exam

Part A:

At GCSE you will study the core beliefs and teachings of both Christianity and Islam. This includes the beliefs about the Nature of God, the teachings of Jesus and Prophet Muhammad, places of worship and religious practices such as prayer and the Five Pillars of Islam.

Part B: You will study the philosophical themes from the perspective of Christianity and Islam as well as non-religious beliefs, such as those held by Humanists and Atheists (this will be explicitly assessed in the (d) questions in the Life and Death theme).

You will study two themes which are issues of Life and Death and Good and Evil. This will include topics such as the Creation of the world, medical ethics (for example, abortion, euthanasia) crime and punishment including arguments for and against the death penalty and whether not war is ever necessary.

Unit 2- 50% Exam

Part A: In this section of the course you will further your knowledge on the belief and practices of both Christianity and Islam. This will include the role of sacred texts, the beliefs of the afterlife, rites of passage, festivals, religious identity and clothing.

Part B: You will study two ethical themes from the perspective of Christianity and Islam. The themes are 'Relationships' and 'Human Rights'. This will include topics such as the role of men and women, marriage and divorce, sexual relationships, prejudice and discrimination, religious extremism, wealth, charity and poverty.

Who to talk to: Miss R. Davies

BTEC LEVEL 2 CERTIFICATE IN PERSONAL GROWTH AND WELLBEING

The new Level 2 BTEC Certificate in 'Personal Growth & Well-being' will cover the following Units in far greater detail:

- Healthy Lifestyles
- Emotional Health & Well-being
- Social Health & Well-being.
- Maintaining Sexual health & Well-being
- Investigating Personal Identity
- Developing Resilient behaviours.

The aim is for pupils to develop transferable life skills such as

- Communication
- Working with others
- Problem-solving
- Managing & presenting information
- Self-management

All units are internally assessed and externally verified. The qualification is designed around practical skills and tasks that place an emphasis on learner's responses to everyday life situations & scenarios.

Who to talk to: Mrs R. Axon

WHAT NEXT?

Talk to your parents and teachers and decide what is the best combination of subjects for you. With the help of your Parents/Carers complete the online form that you will be given by choosing your 3 options in order of preference as well as a reserve choice. The reserve choice is important because it is quite likely that you will be unable to do all three of your first choices as they may clash on the timetable or because a subject has been taken out of the options due lack of pupil interest.

Submit the form with your choices by **Friday 3rd February**. If you hand your form in later than this date, there is a strong chance that the options you chose will already be full.

You will then be called to a meeting with a member of staff to discuss your options and hopefully, to finalise them. You will still be able to make changes at the end of the process, but these changes will only be possible if there is room in the subjects/classes that you want to move into.

Later in the year your parents will receive a letter confirming your choices and they will be asked to sign this and return it to school.