

Key Stage 4 Options 2021-2023

'Life in all its fullness'

*Guidance for the successful selection
of GCSE courses*





What are the key dates?

Wednesday 28th April 2021

- **Option Form and Guided Options information sent out to parents/carers**
- **Monitoring Report and HOPE report**
- **Guided Options information on website**

This includes the Options Booklet, and an accompanying PowerPoint.

Between Wednesday 28th April and Wednesday 5th May: Options Focus

You should take the opportunity to discuss options with your child. If you have any queries or questions, you will be able to email the Senior Leadership Team at Options@steds.org.uk

Friday 7th May: Option Choice Deadline

This is the deadline for when your Options form must be completed and returned to school to either Ms Perdomo or Mrs Day.

Please do not be late – we will process all forms received by the deadline before any received late. If you hand in your form late, you risk the chance of disadvantaging yourself.

June-July 2021

Your Key Stage 4 subjects will be confirmed to you and your parents/carers.

What is special about the Key Stage 4 curriculum?

The principles underpinning our Key Stage 4 curriculum are:

- **A broad and balanced curriculum** in Key Stage 4, defined by your entitlement to a full range of courses and nationally recognised qualifications.
- **A recognition of the importance of core subjects.** Success in the core subjects will provide you with a solid foundation for progression onto higher level courses and future careers.
- **Flexibility and choice.** During Key Stage 4, you are working between the compulsory curriculum of Key Stage 3 and the greater choice and flexibility of study post-16. You deserve a curriculum that is motivating, challenging and prepares you effectively for employment, further learning and adult life.
- **Coherence and progression.** As you begin to develop your own mix of subjects, you should be able to access coherent learning programmes that enable you to progress to further learning at age 16 and beyond.
- **High quality guidance and support** is essential to ensure your interests, needs and aspirations are met.
- **Maximising chances of success.** We will make use of prior attainment data and national progress data to ensure you can reach your full potential. We can provide a clear indication of your likely progress on particular courses and make firm recommendations to you and your parents/carers.

Why do I need this booklet?

This Options Guide is designed to be used by you and your parents/carers. It will help you plan your next two years at St Edward's Academy. Most of you will go on to St Edward's Sixth Form Academy, some of you will go into other types of training, but whatever you choose to do, you will find that your career will require further training. The Options Guide should be used during the options process to help you to make informed choices.

What does this booklet contain?

The Options Guide provides a summary of the option pathway available and details of the courses that you can follow in Key Stage 4. It provides useful information describing the content, forms of assessment and type of learning involved in each subject.

Read through this booklet carefully and discuss these options with your parents/carers and family. If you have older siblings or cousins who have already completed their GCSEs, they might be a useful source of advice. The more information you can get the better! Each subject has outlined their courses as accurately as they can do, however it is important that you and your parents/carers know that there may be changes to exam specifications and there may possibly be some additional changes before September.

What are the Options Choices?

National data enables us to predict your chances of success in particular subjects with considerable accuracy. We believe it is important to use that information when making appropriate choices of courses. The decisions that you will take should be guided by your prior and current attainment. We want you to achieve the very best results and help you to select the right subjects to ensure that you are successful. Your recent monitoring report will help support you in your decision making. This was sent home. If you need another copy, please email options@steds.org.uk

Can I choose all my Key Stage 4 subjects?

Not exactly – you must study the core subjects. You will continue to study these subjects: English, Maths, Science, Religious Education and Physical Education. Most of your core subjects will lead to GCSE qualifications (English Language and English Literature, Maths, Science, Religious Education).

Physical Education is delivered through practical core Physical Education lessons and is also available as a GCSE option. PSHE is delivered through tutorials, assemblies and special events and you will study themes including Citizenship, Work-Related Learning, Enterprise, Health and Careers Education. You will also study ICT across all of your subjects and it is also available as an option choice (Computer Science).

Remember that each course lasts 2 years and once you've started a course it is very difficult to swap to a different one. You need to make the right choices now!

What is EBacc ?

The EBacc is a set of subjects at GCSE that keeps young people's options open for further study and future careers. The EBacc consists of:

- English language and literature
- maths
- the sciences
- geography or history
- a language

EBacc impact

Secondary schools are measured on the number of pupils that take GCSEs in the EBacc subjects. Schools are also measured on how well their pupils do in these subjects.

The EBacc measure is also respected by many universities. The EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to many degrees and open up lots of doors. Research shows that the subjects chosen at GCSE determines the opportunities beyond school. A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can also help improve a young person's performance in English and maths.

The Government's ambition is to see 75% of pupils studying the EBacc subject combination at GCSE by 2022, and 90% by 2025:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc/english-baccalaureate-ebacc>

We believe that all pupils should have many opportunities open to them post-16 and post-18, including the option of university/further education. Therefore, where possible, we encourage students to embrace EBacc subjects as part of their continuing academic journey and aspire to the opportunities that this opens in the future.

Why do I have to choose options?

The next two years are a foundation for the rest of your life. Whatever you decide now will make a difference and secure your success in the future. We will advise on the pathway that you will follow at Key Stage 4 based on your prior attainment.

It is very important that you choose your options carefully in order to increase your chances of success. Think about the subjects that you enjoy, are interested in and do well at. Do not choose subjects because your friends have picked them or because you like the teacher. Your decisions should be made based on the pathway that will guarantee you the greatest chance of success.

Will I get my first choices?

Whilst it is our aim to ensure that as many of you as possible can study your preferred choices, we cannot guarantee that all of you will get your top option choices. With the number of students all choosing different subjects, it is sometimes impossible to give everyone their top choices.

There is always a possibility that not enough students will choose a particular subject to make up a class; in this case, the subject will be withdrawn and second choices automatically inserted. It is also possible that more students wish to take a subject than can be accommodated; in this case, some students will be given an alternative option.

You should therefore make sure that all of your choices are subjects that you definitely want to study, it will be very difficult to change afterwards. You have been given until **Friday 7th May 2021** to make sure that you are certain about your decisions, so use this time to speak to as many different people as possible.

What do I have to do to succeed?

The next two years of your education are very important for you. You must be as successful as possible, learning as much as you can to form the basis of your future qualifications. Careful planning and serious revision is the key to examination success. You should choose option subjects where you know you will succeed.

In every subject, you will be set regular homework. You will be expected to spend a minimum of one hour (and sometimes longer) on each piece of homework set for each subject. The courses are all devised so that the homework is an important part of them, as is the work you do in class. You will not be ready for your examinations unless you complete all the homework that is set. In addition to studying and completing homework for up to 3 hours a night, you will be expected to attend appropriate revision sessions.

You need to think very carefully about the subjects that you want to study. There is no point choosing a subject that you do not like or are not successful at, just because your friend wants to do it. The way the timetable works out, you might not end up in the same group as your friend anyway!



Key Stage 4 Options 2021-2023

What happens next?

You will need to read carefully through this booklet and look at the PowerPoint and subject videos to support and guide you through this process.

You will need to complete your Option Choice Form and return it to school by Friday 7th May. The Options Booklet and supporting PowerPoint can all be found on the school website.

We will then allocate your options based on your choices. We will do our utmost to give you your top choice of subjects but it is impossible to guarantee that this will happen. We will match up the demand of what is practical and possible.

Remember, if a subject is oversubscribed and we are unable to offer two groups, or if a class is not possible due to insufficient choices, then we will direct you to a reserve choice; you will need to make the best possible 5 choices in case this happens.

When you make your option choices, you should think about your plans for after Year 11, including St Edward's Academy Sixth Form, Further and Higher Education, Training Schemes and Apprenticeships. The choices you make now could be affected by what you might want to do post-16, whether you want to follow a training course, work-based training or start A Level courses. The implications of the choices you make now will continue after you leave school.

All further education institutions and employers are looking for candidates with good examination results and positive attitudes towards work and the school community. We will continue to encourage you to always achieve your best. You should show yourself to be well organised and hardworking, you should stick at challenging tasks and get on with other people; these are qualities that are just as important as your final examination results.

Key Questions

Here are some **questions** you might ask, with the **answers** to help you understand the process more clearly.

Question: How can I decide which options to choose? I don't know where to start!

Answer: *Start by asking yourself these questions:
Which subjects am I most interested in?
Which subjects am I best at?
Are there any new subjects I'd like to take up?*

Question: I know what kind of career I want. Which will be the best subjects to study for it?

Answer: *Have a chat with one of our Careers Personal Advisers. They can help you make the right Year 10/11 subject choices. They will be able to give you independent and impartial careers advice and guidance. They can see students individually and to help/support you to plan your future. You can arrange to see our advisers for a full Careers Guidance interview - the appointment can be arranged through Mr Lynch. Additionally, your child can access our careers platform, 'Unifrog'.*

Question: But what if I change my mind in a year or so about what career to follow?

Answer: *Well ... you might! A lot of people your age do. You can't be sure how you will change as a person over the next few years. You may find new things, which interest you or develop new skills. We can't be sure how technology and the working world will change and exactly what job opportunities there will be when you are older and are deciding on a career. That's why it is a good idea not to specialise too early. A balanced choice of subjects is the best bet as it is likely to leave doors to lots of different careers open.*

Question: My problem is that I've got no idea of what I want to do when I leave school.

Does this matter?

Answer: *No. It's a good idea to start thinking about what you may be interested in now but you don't have to make any definite plans. Go for subjects you are interested in and are good at. Try to keep your future choices open by choosing a range of subjects. Avoid too many similar subjects.*

Question: I think I'll probably stay on in the Sixth Form and then go on to college or university. What options should I choose now?

Answer: *Even if you think you know what you want to study at university, remember that colleges and universities expect you to have a good general education at Key Stage 4. If you follow your interests and abilities but keep a balance, you should be okay.*

Question: Do I have to choose a language?

Answer: *You will be encouraged to do so if your prior attainment suggests an aptitude for languages. We will not ask you to take a language if you are not going to be successful.*

The Dos and Don'ts of the Option Process

- **Do** choose subjects that you are interested in, do well at and enjoy.
- **Do** choose a range of subjects so that you keep your choices open for the future.
- **Don't** choose a subject because your friends have. This is a very easy mistake to make. If you are hoping to be in the same group as them, you probably won't because most option subjects have more than one group. Anyway, we are all different so choose for yourself, not for someone else.
- **Don't** choose a subject because you like a particular teacher. You may not get the same teacher next year.
- **Don't** link all your option choices to a single career or interest. You might change your mind later on. You need your choices to be balanced so you are open to a variety of career opportunities.
- **Don't panic** if you don't know what you want to do when you leave school. Most students in Year 9 have no idea and the ones that think they have can often end up doing something completely different. The important things are to follow the advice you have been given in this booklet and then do as well as you can in all of your studies ... whatever they are.

Core Subjects



English Language

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

You will identify and interpret themes, ideas and information in a range of texts. You will also need to read, compare and evaluate texts.

You will be able to justify your ideas about a text using quotes to support your ideas. You will develop your ability to construct and convey meaning in your own writing.

You will need to write for a range of different purposes with a focus on the way the text is organised and the use of grammar choices to suit the task and audience.

You will use speaking and listening to help develop your ideas with a particular focus on presenting ideas and information, responding to questions from others and expressing ideas using Standard English whenever appropriate.



How will I learn?

You will learn through speaking and listening activities in a range of contexts. You will also take part in individual and group work, class discussions, drama activities, reading and writing activities, independent research and a wide variety of other tasks.

How will I be assessed?

You will sit two terminal exams worth 50% each of the final grade. Both cover reading and writing:

Paper 1 – Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Paper 2 – Writers' Viewpoints and Perspective

You will be well prepared over the course of Key Stage 4 for these terminal exams that you'll sit in 2023.

Skills for Success

You will need to read a wide range of texts and use knowledge gained from your reading to inform and improve your own writing. You need to write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately. You will need to use grammar correctly and punctuate and spell accurately.

You will also need to develop your confidence for speaking and listening tasks. Successful candidates will also benefit from good research skills.

What can I do next?

Further Education

English Language gives you skills that are key to many A Level courses – and is essential if you want to study A Level English at the St Edward's Sixth Form Academy. English Language will also be very helpful if you want to continue your studies at University.

Career Routes

English Language is key to many jobs such as journalism, advertising, law, the media... the list goes on!

English Literature

Qualification: GCSE



What will I learn?

You will learn to understand, analyse, discuss and respond to novels, plays and poetry. Your analysis will focus on writers' language, themes, attitude and techniques.

You will develop an awareness of social, historical and cultural contexts and influences in your study of texts.

You will also learn about the literary heritage of texts and examine how writers help readers to understand or question issues and ideas.

How will I learn?

You will read and respond to a variety of texts, both modern and pre-20th Century.

You will learn through class discussion, individual and group work, drama activities, reading and writing activities, independent research and a wide variety of tasks.

How will I be assessed?

You will have two exams to sit. The exams will cover:

- Shakespeare
- A 19th Century novel
- A modern text
- Poetry

You will study each of these in class before the exam. These exams combined are worth 100% of your total mark.

Skills for Success

You will need to develop an understanding of literary devices and the conventions of poetry, prose and drama.

Experience of writing analytically will also be very beneficial.

What can I do next?

Further Education

English Literature can be studied at A Level at the St Edward's School Sixth Form Academy. You can also study English Literature at University.

The study of English Literature also teaches you many important skills that are key to other courses.

Career Routes

English Literature is key to many jobs such as journalism, publishing, writing, and teaching and is helpful in many other careers: advertising, law, the media...the list goes on!

Mathematics Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

Mathematics is very important in equipping you with the knowledge and understanding appropriate to a citizen of a modern society.

Your study of Mathematics will follow on from your Year 9 work. Your knowledge and understanding of the subject will develop as you experience and participate in a range of different activities.

You will study topics from a variety of themes, including: Using and Applying Mathematics, Number and Algebra, Shape and Space and Handling Data. The biggest change from your Key Stage 3 work is the emphasis on algebra.



How will I learn?

During Years 10 and 11, you will continue to work in classes that are set based on your ability. You will follow a course designed to meet the requirements of the exam specification at a level that is appropriate to your ability. You will be stretched and challenged to achieve the best possible outcomes.

You will use a variety of resources which include the GCSE MyMaths textbook, Hegarty Maths and Pinpoint learning. The use of a scientific calculator is essential for the course.

How will I be assessed?

At the end of the two-year course, there will be three equally weighted written examination papers. These include two calculator papers and one non-calculator.

You will follow either a foundation course (Grades 1-5) or a higher course (Grades 4-9).

Fewer formulae will be available in examinations and students are expected to learn most of these in advance.

Skills for Success

You will be encouraged to be organised and take responsibility for your own learning. The most successful mathematicians will supplement their learning with individual study.

GCSE Mathematics relies on your effective use of mathematical equipment. You will be responsible for bringing your pen, pencil, ruler and the calculator you have been given. You will learn to use all equipment including calculators, rulers, compasses and protractors accurately, efficiently and effectively.

What can I do next?

- Further Education
GCSE Mathematics provides a useful foundation for many post-16 courses and training opportunities, including A Level Maths at The St Edward's Sixth Form Academy.
- Career Routes
Achievement in Mathematics at all levels is advantageous and often essential for a wide variety of scientific, business and technological vocations. Further mathematical study will enable you to become game designers, engineers, accountants, doctors and investment analysts as just a few possibilities.

Combined Science

Qualification: 2 GCSEs



What will I learn?

You will study all of the three science disciplines (Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

Your study of Combined Science will place all scientific innovations firmly in the context of the modern world. You will look at the impact of scientific developments on our everyday lives and will learn the importance of science and investigate 'How Science Works'.

How will I learn?

You will learn in a variety of ways to gain a greater understanding of how science is related to everyday life, including:

- Practical investigations in controlled conditions in our laboratories.
- Using your numerical skills to solve mathematical problems.
- Using ICT simulations, data-logging, class discussion, practise questions and quizzes.
- Practise questions and quizzes.

How will I be assessed?

You will take a linear course, meaning you will take all of your exams at the end of Year 11. There are no controlled assessments but there are a series of compulsory experiments which must be completed over the two years. A percentage of your exam grade will be based on questions related to these experiments. This means that excellent attendance to lessons is crucial.

Exams:

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics

You will achieve 2 GCSEs, these will be calculated using all of your results.

The decision as to whether you study Combined Science or Triple Science will be made by the school, based on your prior attainment.

Skills for Success

You will need to develop your numeracy and literacy skills throughout the course, as well as an understanding of data logging and practical investigations.

You will also benefit from good communication skills.

What can I do next?

Further Education

Combined Science lays an excellent foundation for the further study of Science subjects. These include A Levels in Biology/Human Biology, Chemistry and Physics, which can be studied at The St Edward's Sixth Form Academy.

Career Routes

Science qualifications are useful for a wide range of careers including medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, physiotherapy, personal trainers and many others.

Triple Science

Qualification: Three separate GCSEs



What will I learn?

You will study all of the three Science disciplines: Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

The sciences will be taught in ways that ensure students have the knowledge to enable them to develop curiosity about the natural world, insight into working scientifically, and appreciation of the relevance of science to our everyday lives.

How will I learn?

Triple science will involve accelerated learning through the study of Biology, Chemistry and Physics through Years 10 and 11.

This course will be very demanding and moves at a quick pace.

You will require excellent time management, independent learning and organisational skills as you will be studying for three Science GCSEs rather than two.

How will I be assessed?

You will take a linear course, meaning you will take all of your exams at the end of Year 11. There are no controlled assessments but there are compulsory experiments which must be completed over the two years.

Exams:
Biology
Chemistry
Physics

Students will be awarded three separate GCSE grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics at the end of Year 11.

The decision as to whether you study Combined Science or Triple Science will be made by the school, based on your prior and current attainment.

Skills for Success

You will need to develop high level numeracy and literacy skills throughout the course, as well as an understanding of data logging and practical investigations.

You will also benefit from good communication skills.

What can I do next?

Further Education

Triple Science lays an excellent foundation for the further study of Science subjects. These include A Levels in Biology/Human Biology, Chemistry and Physics, which can be studied at the St Edward's Sixth Form

Career Routes

A science qualification can lead to employment at all levels in such diverse careers as Medicine, Engineering, Pharmaceuticals and Agriculture.

Religious Education

Qualification: GCSE, taken at the end of Year 10

What will I learn?

You will investigate different beliefs and attitudes and your own ideas about contemporary moral issues. You will study religious (Christian and Muslim) and non-religious (Atheist and Agnostic) responses to:

- Religion and Life Issues
- Religious Philosophy and Ultimate Questions



How will I learn?

You will investigate contemporary religious belief and practice. This includes the study of issues and ideas that are relevant in modern society.

You will take part in discussions about these issues and religious and non-religious responses to them, either in pairs, small groups or as a whole class.

You will work individually and with others to research information and you will feedback your ideas to the class.

You will learn how to assess your own and the work of others through exam questions and encourage and support each other to excel.

How will I be assessed?

GCSE RS is studied in Year 9 and Year 10. This gives you the chance to focus fully on this important GCSE subject and complete your GCSE at the end of Year 10.

You will take a linear course, meaning you will take all of your exams at the end of Year 10.

In Year 11, RS will be taught through PSHE and the curriculum of other subjects.

Skills for Success

Essentially, Religious Education is about enabling you to think for yourself about religious and moral issues.

You will need to develop your key skills in communication, having the ability to work with abstract, conceptual ideas, 'understanding both sides' of an argument, working with others, problem solving and independent learning.

You will also need to be able to make decisions about moral problems, and become sure about your own beliefs and be able to explain them clearly to others.

What can I do next?

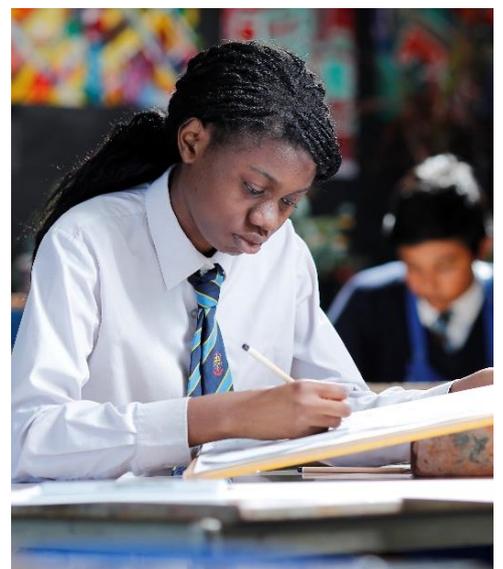
Further Education

GCSE in Religious Studies is a stepping stone to a wide range of future opportunities. You can continue studying RE at A Level at the St Edward's Sixth Form Academy. RE is held in high regard by universities because it shows you can think through complex issues and evaluate different ideas and opinions.

Career Routes

RE is particularly useful in many professions, including: police, media, journalism, law, medicine, tourism, teaching and social care, amongst others.

Option Subjects



Art and Design

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

You will build your artistic confidence and develop your own ways of working by generating your own projects through personal research and investigation.

You will take personal, creative and imaginative approaches to Art and Design.

You will be encouraged to work with both traditional and new media, exploring artistic areas of your own choice.



How will I learn?

You will work in a wide variety of ways including: learning to draw from observation, developing your painting skills, 3D design, digital photography, Photoshop and Illustrator, printmaking and mixed media, amongst others.

You will be encouraged to pursue areas of art that you enjoy and will generate your own projects.

We offer a full range of materials, including state-of-the-art ICT programmes, clay, lino and screen-printing. You will use an A3 sketchbook to work in ways that match your own interests, helping you to develop as an individual artist.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1 (60%)

Personal Portfolio: We will begin by studying art and architecture from Classical Antiquity. This part of the course is flexible and can be adapted to match your own areas of interest as your practice develops.

Exam unit (40%)

This set by the examination board. The theme is shared in January of Year 11 so that you have time to prepare for the exam.

Skills for Success

You will need to have a good grasp of Art at Key Stage 3, be a strong independent and creative worker, and have an interest in exploring the world around you through art.

You will continually evaluate and analyse your work.

What can I do next?

Further Education

The Art and Design GCSE prepares you for A Level and other Art and Design qualifications, which can be studied at the St Edward's Sixth Form Academy.

Career Routes

Art and Design qualifications are necessary for many careers including Architecture, Photography, Graphic Design, Illustration, Animation, Interior Design, Art Education, Art Therapy, Product Design, Gallery Direction, Museum Curator and Fashion.

Citizenship

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

- **Living together in the UK**

Topics covered include migration to the UK, identity, respect and understanding, human rights and local democracy

- **Democracy at work in the UK**

Topics include elections and voting, the UK government, the constitution, the role of Parliament and making and shaping the law

- **Law and Justice**

Topics include principles and sources of law, criminal and civil law, the justice and crime and punishment.

- **Power and Influence**

Topics include citizens' participation in politics and society, the role of organised groups in society, the role of the media in society and the UK's role in the wider world e.g. EU, NATO, WTO

- **Taking Citizenship Action**

Students must carry out an in-depth, critical investigation leading to citizenship action. The investigation and action can be based on any aspect or issue arising from the course content and should be designed to have an impact locally, nationally or globally.



How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed through two final examination papers at the end of Year 11.

How will I learn?

You will learn through both practical citizenship action research and theory-based work. You will experience a combination of taught lessons and independent study to develop your skills, competence and confidence.

Skills for Success

This course gives students the opportunity to discover how effective societies work. Students are encouraged to consider their role in a successful society.

You will need to be interested in all aspects of the wider world and enjoy finding out about new places, people, cultures, and the processes which created them.

You should be able to communicate effectively in both written and verbal forms and be able to work independently and with others.

You will need to contribute to lessons and respond independently to critical questions. You will have ample opportunities to debate and question ideas.

What can I do next?

Further Education

Citizenship is a great subject to study if you are interested in studying the following subjects at A Level or University:

Government and Politics, Law, Economics, Sociology, Psychology, History and Business Studies.

Career Routes

Your study of Citizenship can provide a basis for entering employment and can also enhance your career prospects. Career opportunities include:

- Solicitor
- Civil Servant
- Politician
- Economist
- Psychologist
- International Relations
- Police Officer
- Journalism
- Public Relations

Computer Science

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

Computational thinking: this is the process of thinking through a complex problem, taking the time to understand what the problem is and then develop potential solutions for evaluation. These are then presented in a way that a computer, a human, or both, can understand.

Theoretical content: here you will understand the fundamentals of data representation and computer networks. You will learn about the computer systems that you will create and use and also delve in to the world cyber security and ethical, legal and environmental impacts of digital technology.

Aspects of software development: understand how to implement and test a design to make sure it works effectively. Learn how to complete an overall evaluation to help refine the end product.



How will I learn?

Learning will be delivered through a creative blend of practical and theoretical lessons. Students are given the opportunity to develop practical programming skills, and also develop vital understanding across a range of relevant computer science topics. Your practical work will involve writing programmes for given purposes such as games and functions. You will also use advanced technologies such as blogs, wikis and Web 2.0 tools so that learning is enjoyable, accessible and contemporary.

How will I be assessed?

You will have two written exams which are 1 hour 30 minutes each. Together they contribute 100% of your overall grade. Your programming project assesses your ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve a practical programming problem.

Skills for Success

- Take a systematic approach to problem solving including the use of decomposition and abstraction.
- Design, write, test and refine programs, using Python, either to a specification or to solve a problem.
- Apply computing-related mathematics.

What can I do next?

Further Education

GCSE Computer Science is an excellent foundation for Computing at A Level along with other IT related Level 3 courses. You will also acquire skills that are useful for many other subject areas.

Career Routes

Computer science is such an exciting subject and can provide you with huge opportunities across lots of industries; this list shows some of the jobs you could do:

- Computer programmer
- Cybersecurity
- Software developer
- Games developer
- Plus many more...

Design and Technology with Graphics

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

Design & Technology is an exciting, innovative and relevant subject that enables students to explore and make sense of the technologies enjoyed by our society today. Everything human-made has been designed and we give our students the chance to participate in this creative, inventive world.

The aim of this course is to develop creativity by helping students understand and appreciate the design and manufacture of graphic products.

Students will have the opportunity to be creative, develop exciting ideas and work in 2D and 3D using a range of materials. The ability to think creatively and produce outcomes that fulfil a design brief is highly valued in today's competitive job market.



How will I learn?

Students will learn how to use industry standard software such as Photoshop and Illustrator to develop high quality 2D and 3D products.

They will develop a range of traditional practical skills used in the production and manufacture of products made from paper, plastic and card. We will use CAD/CAM and "SMART" materials to help with design ideas and in creating high quality products.

Skills for Success

You will need to be interested in core technical, and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. You will need to be able to work independently and develop research skills.

Please be aware that the GCSE course involves a considerable amount of practical work. This should not put you off, but you must be prepared for this.

How will I be assessed?

- Written exam: 50% of your final mark
- Non-Examined assessment (coursework): 50% of your final mark

What can I do next?

Further Education

Design & Technology is an exciting, innovative and relevant subject that enables students to explore and make sense of the technologies enjoyed by our society today. Everything manmade has been designed and we give our students the chance to participate in this creative, inventive world.

Career Routes

Careers with this specialism include: Web design, Animation, Illustration, Magazine design, Architecture, Accessory design, Photography, Interior design, Packaging design and many more.

Drama

Qualification: GCSE

How will I learn?

The course encourages you to explore a wide range of themes and ideas and to work in a range of ways, including in groups, using improvisation and role play.

There will be a mix of practical drama and written work. You will create, develop and perform devised piece of Drama from a stimulus.

You will need to analyse and evaluate the devising process and performance through a written portfolio.



What will I learn?

You will study one complete and substantial performance text. You will also see at least one live theatre performance and learn how to write a review.

You will participate in a minimum of two formal performances, one devised and one from a performance text which has been studied as part of the course.

You will learn about technical theatre and how to think like a director.

How will I be assessed?

- A written exam based on a set text and a review of a live theatre performance
- A drama you have devised and a portfolio
- A practical exam
- A performance from a published play

Skills for Success

You need to have confidence in your performance and a strong commitment to continue learning outside of lessons.

You will enjoy Drama GCSE if you like working as part of a team; Drama involves a lot of group work and you have to rely on your fellow group members for your success.

Students must be aware that the GCSE course involves a considerable amount of written work. This should not put you off, but you must be prepared for this.

What can I do next?

Further Education

You can go on to study A Level Drama and Theatre at the St Edward's Sixth Form Academy. You can also study for technical awards in Drama, Theatre Studies, Performing Arts, Stage Management, Lighting, Sound and Set design, Costume and Stage Make-up design.

Career Routes

Jobs within the theatre industry. For example, Actor, Presenter, Director, Lighting designer, Sound designer, Costume designer, Stage management.
Teaching any job where confidence, commitment and good communication are required.

How will I learn?

The style of the course allows it to be both interesting and enjoyable.

Discussions, group work, documentaries and problem solving exercises are all used to engage learners throughout the course.

Students will also have to complete two separate days of fieldwork over the GCSE course.



What will I learn?

The Geography GCSE curriculum is divided into three key components:

Unit 1 – Physical Geography

Unit 2 – Human Geography

Unit 3 – Geographical Applications

Each component develops students' ability to think creatively by questioning patterns and geographical change.

The course develops students' ability to think mathematically and scientifically by collecting and recording appropriate evidence from a range of sources including fieldwork before critically assessing the validity of the evidence and synthesising their findings.

Finally, the course develops students' ability to think independently by applying their geographical knowledge and understanding.

Skills for Success

Geographers will need to make a concise report, handle data, ask questions and find answers, make decisions about an issue, analyse material, organise themselves, think creativity and most importantly be independent thinkers.

The skills that geographers need to be successful can be categorised into the following main categories:

- Analytical
- Critical thinking
- Presentation
- Communication (oral and written) skills

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed in three written papers:

Paper 1 – **Physical Geography**

Paper 2 – **Human Geography**

Paper 3 – **Geographical Applications**

Two fieldwork enquiries are carried out in contrasting environments.

What can I do next?

Further Education

You can go on to study A Level Geography at the St Edward's Sixth Form Academy. The subject is extremely broad and links together with environmental health, ecology, nature conservation, research, architecture, cartography, travel and tourism, and civil engineering and many more.

Career Routes

Geography's relevance to the everyday world opens hundreds of employment opportunities. Students can go on to study geography, geology, town planning, environmental science, ecology and law, to name a few, at university.

History

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

You will study a variety of topics under the main historical themes of:

- Thematic Study and historical environment: Crime and Punishment
- Period Study: Henry VIII and his ministers, 1590-40
- Depth Study: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941 –91
- Modern Depth Study: Weimar and Nazi Germany



How will I learn?

You will learn independently and through group and discussion work. You will use film, pictures and cartoons, along with an interesting range of written sources and the Internet to consider the different ways people have acted in the past and their links to today's world.

You will learn how to weigh up evidence before coming to a critical decision. You will be analytical and critical when considering information presented to you.

How will I be assessed?

History GCSE is a linear course consisting of three papers sat at the end of the course in Year 11.

Skills for Success

You will need to think for yourself and respond independently to key historical events.

You will need to be well organised and have a good memory. You will need to contribute to lessons and enjoy finding out more about a variety of historical sources.

You will develop your historical research skills, including:

- Formulating inquiry questions about the past (and today)
- Finding, analysing and interrogating sources
- Evaluating sources for relevance and credibility
- Accurately citing sources
- Taking organised and accurate notes

What can I do next?

Further Education

History can lead on to the study of a variety of subjects at A Level. These include Psychology, Sociology, Government and Politics as well as 'A' Level History - all taught at The St Edward's School Sixth Form Academy.

Career Routes

Professions like Journalism, Business, Entertainment, Politics and Law all value success in History very highly.

Modern Foreign Languages: French, Mandarin or Spanish

Qualification: GCSE



What will I learn?

You will improve your grasp of the language, interacting with native speakers in a variety of real-life situations that employ the transferable skills that are learnt in class.

You will increase your cultural awareness of the world by studying music, dance, art, literature and theatre.

You will find out more about the wider world, looking at the key topics of lifestyle, leisure, home and environment and work and education in the areas of the world that speak the language of your choice.

How will I learn?

You will use the four language skills to become a competent communicator.

You will practise your spoken and written alongside a native speaker. You will also have the opportunity to practise your language in a variety of 'real life' simulations.

You will work independently and in groups. You will grow in confidence as you work in pairs and small groups and take part in role plays.

How will I be assessed?

You will formally assessed in the following skills areas:

- Listening and Understanding
- Speaking
- Reading and Understanding
- Writing
- Translation (from and into English)

Skills for Success

You need to develop your spoken language to communicate successfully.

You will need to work to master structures and vocabulary in your language of choice.

You will need to work well independently and in groups.

You will build up your confidence to acquire a language for life.

What can I do next?

Further Education

This qualification can lead to an A level in Languages at the St Edward's Sixth Form Academy. You can also complete a variety of vocational language courses.

Career Routes

Language graduates are very employable. French, Spanish and Mandarin language competency is useful for careers including those in Leisure and Tourism, the Civil and Diplomatic Service, Advertising and Market Research, amongst others.



What will I learn?

You will build on your current knowledge of composition and performing as well as your listening and appraising skills. For the performing unit, you will continue to attend lessons on your chosen instrument (including voice).

You will learn more about rhythm and metre, harmony and tonality, texture and melody, timbre and dynamics, structure and form. This will be achieved through analysis of instrumental music, vocal music, music for stage and screen and fusions.

How will I learn?

You will attend regular instrumental lessons and practise in school and at home. We will analyse a variety of musical genres and discuss which musical features, elements and techniques have been used.

There will be opportunities to watch and experience live performances by professional musicians. You will rehearse for and perform in concerts as a soloist and as part of an ensemble. You will also compose and record your own music.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1 – Performing 30%

You will perform a solo piece on your chosen instrument and a piece as part of an ensemble. These performances will be recorded and moderated.

Unit 2 – Composing 30%

You will produce two compositions using music software. One will be to a brief set by the examination board and the other will be set by you.

Unit 3 – Appraising Music 40%

You will complete a written paper where you will listen to music and answer questions on it. This will cover musical elements, musical contexts and musical language. Section A will relate to set works and section B will compare set works to unfamiliar pieces.

Instrumental/voice lessons will be arranged via the Havering Music Service. Support is available for funding for those students in receipt of Free School Meals or the Pupil Premium Grant. Other students wishing to have Music lessons can arrange to pay for instrumental lessons in line with school policy. Further information can be obtained from Head of Music, Ms Yeomans at Music@steds.org.uk

Skills for Success

You will be successful on this course if you enjoy different genres of music. ICT skills, particularly in composing and recording music, will be beneficial. You will be expected to practise your instrument every day as homework.

To succeed you will need dedication and self-motivation. You will have to maximise your music reading skills.

What can I do next?

Further Education

GCSE Music can lead to studying A Level Music, A Level Music Technology, or Technical Awards in Music, Composing, Performing, DJ Technology, Events Support or Production or BTEC Performing Arts.

Career Routes

There are many careers linked to music including; professional performer, recording artist, sound engineer, conductor, DJ, events organiser, composer, jobs within the media sector, acoustic engineer and many more.

Physical Education

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn?

You will:

- develop your knowledge and practical skills in a range of physical activities
- examine the effects of exercise and how training can improve performance
- find ways to improve your own performance in a variety of roles
- identify ways to develop and maintain a healthy and active lifestyle through participation in physical activity
- appreciate the benefits of promoting 'sport for all'



How will I learn?

You will work in a variety of ways, including:

- Sports specific practical lessons
- Theory based lessons
- ICT based lessons
- In settings outside school

You will extend your range of experiences and the sports you can study.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1: You will sit 2 written examination papers. These will contribute 60% towards your total marks.

Unit 2 is assessed in two sections:

Section 1: Three practical performances in the role of player/performer from an approved list. One performance will be in a team activity, one in an individual activity and any other one from the list of your choice. You can achieve 30% towards your total marks from this section.

Section 2: Analysis of performance in an activity. This will be worth 10% of your total marks and could include planning, performing and evaluating a Personal Exercise Programme. This will be produced in either written or verbal form.

Skills for Success

You will need to have the following:

- Practical ability
- Ability to analyse a performance
- Leadership skills and confidence
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Ability to work independently

What can I do next?

Further Education

As well as being the ideal preparation for the A Level Physical Education course at the St Edward's Sixth Form Academy, GCSE PE allows you to progress to related vocational courses in Sport or Sport and Exercise Sciences at Level 3.

Career Routes

The course develops transferable skills that employers are looking for and can lead to a wide variety of employment opportunities. This can include areas such as recreational management, leisure activities, coaching, the fitness industry, the armed forces and the Civil Service.

Sociology

Qualification: GCSE



What will I learn?

You will explore and debate contemporary social issues. For example, the purpose of the family within UK society.

You will evaluate the role of key institutions like the family from each of the key sociological theories.

You will also analyse how sociology takes a scientific approach and uses the evidence produced from studies to support the key theories.

How will I learn?

You will build upon a range of skills from research and source-analysis to mathematical and scientific.

You will also be supported in developing debating and critical analysis skills, and encouraged to carry out your own independent research.

Lessons will be engaging and challenging using a wide range of resources to support your learning. Therefore requiring you to work well; independently, together in small groups and as a class.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: The Sociology of Families and Education (50% of exam grade)

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes (100 marks):

- Section A: has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses
- Section B: has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses

Paper 2: The Sociology of Crime and Deviance and Social Stratification (50% of exam grade)

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes (100 marks):

- Section A: has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses
- Section B: has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses

Skills for Success

You will need to be able to research, to compare and contrast social issues and their impact on British society, drawing on information and evidence from different sources.

You will need good written skills to construct arguments and debates, to formulate your own conclusions, for key sociological theories and studies.

You will also be developing mathematical and scientific skills to analyse and evaluate different research methods used by sociologists.

What can I do next?

Further Education

The Sociology GCSE course will prepare you for study at A Level and other Social Science subjects, which can be studied at St Edwards Sixth Form Academy.

Career Routes

This subject will be very useful for a wide range of careers including; those within the criminal justice system, education, health care, social work, mental health and many more.

Additional choices: Community Languages

St Edward's Academy benefits from a vibrant and diverse community, with students possessing many additional talents. We believe this is something to be proud of, and something to celebrate and share.

We know that many students in our community are fluent in an additional language. This may be their home language or a second language. Some students actively attend a language college, have a tutor or speak an additional language at home.

If you are fluent (can speak, listen, read and write) in an additional language and would like to take a GCSE in it, then St Edward's will enable you to sit the exam at school. The expectation is that you are able to achieve a Grade 7-9.

The grade you achieve will count alongside all your other GCSEs and will count towards your Sixth Form applications. The language may also count towards the EBacc qualification, if it is applicable.

Please look at the information on the next page to see which languages are eligible for a GCSE qualification.

If you are interested and have the level of fluency required, please state the language at the bottom of the options form.



GCSE Community Languages

These exams are prepared for by students who have the necessary skills and fluency outside of lesson times on a voluntary basis.

List of GCSE Language Exams currently available:

AQA	Edexcel	OCR
Bengali Chinese (Mandarin) French German Italian Modern Hebrew Panjabi Polish Spanish Urdu	Arabic Biblical Hebrew French German Greek Gujarati Italian Japanese Persian Portuguese Russian Spanish Turkish Urdu	Classical Greek Latin

GCSE Language Exams

The exam is composed of four units, speaking, listening, reading and writing. The examination will occur at the end of Year 10 or Year 11 in the summer season.

Speaking Exam

Where possible, the speaking examinations will be held at St Edward's. Where students are taking a language more commonly taught in a neighbouring school we may also arrange for them to take the speaking exam there. The Listening, Reading and Writing aspects of the exam will all take place at St Edward's. One aspect common to most speaking exams is a 5 minute topic presentation and/or a dialogue with the examiner. Role play and discussion of a photograph may also be included.

The topics you will study include:

- Context 1 – Lifestyle (Health, Relationship and choices)
- Context 2 – Leisure (Free time, the media, holidays)
- Context 3 – Home and environment (home and local area, environment)
- Context 4 – Work and education (school, college and future plans, current and future jobs)

A full list of the topics and all syllabus requirements can be obtained from the examination boards:

www.ocr.org.uk www.edexcel.com www.aqa.org.uk

English Baccalaureate and Languages

All GCSE Language qualifications listed above currently count as a language component of the EBacc. Students need to complete a **Full Course** in order for the GCSE to be counted towards the English Baccalaureate.

What terminology is used in Key Stage 4?

Core Subject: A subject which you *must* study to GCSE level

Examinations: Most GCSEs have an examinable component but this can vary in terms of number and duration of exams. The question style can also vary considerably and it is worth looking at some examples

Key Stage 3: The collective name for Years 7-9

Key Stage 4: The collective name for Years 10 and 11

Key Stage 5: The collective name for Years 12 and 13

Option Subject: A subject which you *choose* to study to GCSE level

Syllabus/Specification: The information you have to know and the things you must be able to do by the end of the course

Where can I get more information?

The websites for the following examining board contain syllabus information for all of the courses offered:

- AQA (Assessment and Qualification Alliance): www.aqa.org.uk
- Pearson - Edexcel (The Foundation for Education Excellence): <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>
- OCR (Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations): www.ocr.org.uk

The following websites contain useful information about Key Stage 4 and beyond:

- Qualifications ladder: www.connexions-somerset.org.uk/education/qualifladder.html
- Apprenticeships: www.apprenticeships.org.uk
- Advice on going to college and university: <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/applying-for-university/choosing-a-course>
- Young people's information: <https://www.gov.uk/careers-helpline-for-teenagers>