2026-27


# GCSE Curriculum Guide

TRENT COLLEGE

The start of GCSE courses in Year 10 is a milestone in the career of all Trent pupils and is an opportunity for our pupils to make some important informed choices about the future direction of their education. This booklet has been written by Heads of Academic Departments and is designed to give an overview of the subjects available next year and to explain the decision-making process.

So far at Trent, your child will have enjoyed a broad range of subjects and many pupils at this stage will have a clear idea of what they would like to study next year and possibly even beyond. However, for many, subject choices are less obvious; pupils should look to their individual subject teachers and their tutor for additional information about subjects and guidance about the choices process, where necessary.

As well as allowing for a degree of choice, the GCSE curriculum at Trent is designed to afford each pupil access to a core set of subjects and a broad educational experience, such that they will have many options available to them post-16. With this in mind, all compulsory subjects are represented in this booklet, in addition to those that your child may opt for. With universities increasingly looking at GCSE grades to inform their selection process, this is vitally important.

Career aspirations might play some role in the decision-making process at this stage, although GCSE subject choices should be made based on a pupil's interests and strengths, as this is most likely to lead to enjoyment and success.

I hope that your child is looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead in Years 10 and 11 and that you find this booklet useful in your conversations with them. Please get in touch at any stage if you have any further questions about the choices process.

**Ms Sarah Hough**
**Head of Main School**





# Contents



**Core Subjects are compulsory and must be completed as part of the curriculum requirements.*

*** Pupils will choose either Biology, Chemistry and Physics as 3 separate GCSEs* ***or*** *Combined Science.*

# The GCSE Curriculum

Year 10 is an exciting stage for all pupils as, for the first time, they get to choose many of the subjects that they wish to follow for the next two years. These choices have the potential to make a significant impact on future university and career choices and therefore require careful consideration.

All pupils follow a core curriculum of English Language, English Literature, Mathematics and Science as compulsory subjects.

To ensure a balanced curriculum most pupils study a Humanities subject and a Modern Foreign Language.

Pupils also choose from a selection of other subjects:

Art, Business Studies, Computing, Design & Technology, Drama, Food & Nutrition, Geography, History, Modern Foreign Language (French, German or Spanish), Music, Physical Education, Psychology and RS: Philosophy and Ethics.

Pupils in set one Maths study and sit examinations in both GCSE Mathematics and GCSE Further Mathematics and therefore acquire an extra GCSE.

Information pages on all these subjects are found later in this booklet. It is worth noting that, in most cases, it will not be possible to pick subjects up again at A Level if you do not choose them for GCSE. There are notable exceptions, however, including Business Studies, PE, Psychology and RS: Philosophy and Ethics.



## The Balanced Curriculum

Maths, English, Sciences remain at the core of the academic curriculum at Trent College. We also believe in the power of the creative subjects, languages, and humanities in developing well-rounded, well-informed and confident learners.

We believe that it is important that pupils follow a balanced curriculum and the following criteria should be considered when choosing the option subjects:

- Modern Foreign Languages are strongly recommended for many pupils. If a pupil has the potential to perform well in a language then it adds a strong subject to their GCSE profile and aids their academic development in other subjects. This recommendation reflects the desirability of languages from universities and employers as well as the importance of preparing pupils to work in the global economy.
- A Humanities subject, either Geography, History, or RS: Philosophy and Economics, is strongly recommended. Pupils are advised to include at least one Humanity in their choices.

## Additional Learning Needs

For pupils with an identified learning difficulty, a reduction in the number of GCSEs studied may be the most appropriate curriculum. This arrangement would need to be agreed with the Head of Learning Support, Miss Kelly Hargreaves-Cox (Years 10-13).

## Looking ahead

Pupils selecting and beginning their GCSE courses will, in many cases, already be thinking about A Levels, post-16 vocational qualifications, Higher Education courses and professions. Trent College encourages its pupils to be informed and aspirational about what lies ahead, and we have found that it is never too early to understand the impact of choices made in Year 9 on future pathways.

Whilst enjoying a subject is the main requirement of study at all levels, it is vital at this stage that pupils choose GCSE subjects that will leave their options open in terms of selecting the courses they will study in the Sixth Form.

The Russell Group represents 24 leading UK universities. Many of our pupils will apply to these universities when they reach Year 13. The Group has published a website www.informedchoices.ac.uk which includes advice for pupils regarding post-16 subject choices. This may seem distant for current Year 9 pupils, but we advise them to bear these considerations in mind as they begin their GCSE courses.

Further advice on what subjects may be required for certain degree courses and other post-18 options has been compiled by our Head of Careers, Mrs Starbuck.

## What happens next?

Final choices will be submitted in Lent Term 2026, and a form will be circulated nearer to the time. Before doing that, pupils should discuss their options with subject teachers and tutors.

Please note that every effort will be made to both provide the courses outlined, and to allocate pupils to their choices, but occasionally this may not be possible where numbers opting are low or unusual combinations of subjects are chosen. In the unlikely scenario of this affecting your child, we will be in touch with you soon after the options deadline.

**Mr Darren Brumby**
**Deputy Head (Academic)**

# GCSE Options

All pupils will study Maths, English Language and English Literature and then either Biology, Chemistry **and** Physics, **or** Combined Science, plus additonal subject choices.

In the following pages you will find more detail about the compulsory and optional subject choices available at GCSE.

| Compulsory Subjects | And either | Plus |
|---|---|---|
| English Language | Biology, Chemistry and Physics (3 GCSEs) | **3** additional subject choices |
| English Literature | **OR** | |
| Mathematics | Combined Science (2 GCSEs) | **4** additional subject choices |



# ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

**Compulsory**

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mr J Beal**

## Why study GCSE English?

Almost everything you do in life requires the ability to communicate. An awareness of language, is therefore, one of life's essentials. Every career requires English skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. For this reason, English is a core subject and the higher the grade you achieve at GCSE the better for your future.

Most pupils will leave Trent College with two GCSE qualifications: English Language and English Literature. During the two-year course you will be prepared for the examinations at the end of Year 11.

The skills assessed at GCSE are reading (comprehension of fiction and non-fiction texts) and writing (including writing for specific purposes and the critical analysis of literature and spoken English). Pupils will also be involved in speaking and listening although this will not be assessed as part of the GCSE.

Due to its focus on essay-based communication skills, English is a great complementary subject to others such as Religious Studies (persuasive techniques), History (analysis and interpretation) and Drama (creative styles and improvisation).

If you fully engross yourself in English and remain conscientious, you'll really enjoy it and may even find yourself using expanded vocabulary and sophisticated language that you develop in English in many other of your subjects, probably resulting in you gaining more marks.

## What do our pupils say?

**"I have found English thoroughly enjoyable throughout my GCSE studies and it has helped me to develop a number of skills (especially essay-based) that are incredibly useful for a whole variety of other subjects."**

## English beyond GCSE

English beyond GCSE gives you the opportunity to study either English Literature, or a combined Language and Literature course.

If you study English Literature at A Level, you will spend the first year of the course exploring the theme of 'Love through the Ages', and you will study a range of writers from Shakespeare to twentieth century works. In Year 13 you will study the struggle for identity in modern literature and encounter a range of exciting and provocative novelists, dramatists and poets, for example, Owen Sheers, Tennessee Williams and Margaret Atwood. Assessment is primarily through examination although there is a small element of coursework in Year 13.

If you choose to take the combined A Level course, you will study a range of literary and non-literary texts and examine some of the key linguistic concepts which govern the use of our wonderful language, looking closely at the ways in which language is used to express values and attitudes and also the changes in language use according to time, location and purpose. Texts studied include "Frankenstein", "A Streetcar Named Desire" and "The Kite Runner". Assessment is mainly through examination but there is a small element of coursework in Year 13.

## Assessment

Assessment for GCSE English Language is by means of two exams at the end of Year 11.

Assessment for GCSE English Literature involves two exams at the end of Year 11.

# MATHEMATICS

**Compulsory**

**GCSE Exam Board: Edexcel**

**Contact: Mrs C Howat**

## Why study GCSE Maths?

Mathematics promotes logical reasoning, clear presentation and argument. It encourages precision in both written statements and in mental processes and its study develops a methodical and systematic approach to solving problems. It is an important tool in modelling real-world situations.

Pupils continue to be taught Mathematics in sets, at a pace and level appropriate to their developing abilities and are prepared for the Edexcel GCSE Mathematics.

Higher Tier material is covered by all classes but a final decision on tier of entry is made in Year 11 with some pupils opting to enter Foundation Tier. Many of our pupils will be working to secure an 8 or 9 in Mathematics, while others, being less confident in the subject, will be aiming to secure a strong pass grade 5 as a terminal qualification. The syllabus covers a combination of traditional and modern topics, with an emphasis on the development of Mathematics that can be used in everyday situations.

## Assessment

The GCSE examination consists of three written papers. All papers are 1 hour 30 minutes in length and calculators are not permitted in the first of the three papers. There is no controlled assessment or coursework in the programme.

## Maths beyond GCSE

The importance of at least a strong pass in GCSE Mathematics should not be lost. This is important for many post-16 and post-18 options.

Some pupils find higher level work in Mathematics particularly engaging and intend to study it well beyond GCSE level. They may even be considering following a career involving further study of the subject at degree level. Consequently, set one mathematicians are also entered for a GCSE in Further Maths. This is a challenging assessment that extends geometrical and algebraic skills and helps to bridge the gap between GCSE and A Level.

# BIOLOGY

**Compulsory Option**

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mrs C Forster**

## Course Content

The AQA GCSE Biology course explores the fascinating science of life, helping students understand living organisms and their environments. Topics include Cell Biology, Organisation, Infection and Response, Bioenergetics, Homeostasis and Response, Inheritance, Variation and Evolution, and Ecology. Practical skills are emphasized through Required Practical Activities, preparing students for real-world scientific inquiry.

## Why study Biology?

Biology helps us understand the complexities of life and address global challenges like climate change, health, and biodiversity. It encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills, valuable across many careers. Studying Biology also ignites curiosity about the natural world and encourages evidence-based decision-making..

## What do our pupils say?

**“Biology lessons are fun and engaging; I love how we connect what we learn to real-world issues.”**

## Biology beyond GCSE

GCSE Biology lays a strong foundation for A-Level Biology and other science-based qualifications. It opens doors to careers in medicine, environmental science, biotechnology, zoology, and more. For students interested in apprenticeships or vocational pathways, the knowledge and skills gained are equally invaluable.

## Assessment

The AQA GCSE Biology course for separate science is assessed through two written exams at the end of Year 11. Each paper contributes 50% to the final grade.

Paper 1: Covers Cell Biology, Organisation, Infection and Response, and Bioenergetics.

Paper 2: Covers Homeostasis and Response, Inheritance, Variation and Evolution, and Ecology.

Both exams include a mix of multiple-choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions. Practical skills developed during the course are assessed through specific questions on the Required Practical within these exams.





# CHEMISTRY

**Compulsory Option**

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Dr C Wakerley**

## Why Study GCSE Chemistry?

From the moment you are born, and throughout your life, you are surrounded by Chemistry – the air you breathe, the food you eat and the clothes you wear – they’re all Chemistry.

Chemistry is the study of substances: what they are made of, how they interact with each other and the role they play in living things.

## Topics covered

Paper 1: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table, Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter, Quantitative Chemistry, Chemical Changes, and Energy Changes.

Paper 2: The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change, Organic Chemistry, Chemical Analysis, Chemistry of the Atmosphere, and Using Resources.

## What do our pupils say?

**“Studying GCSE Chemistry has been incredibly rewarding. I’ve learned so much about how the world works and developed skills that I know will be useful in the future. The practical experiments are my favourite part, and they’ve really helped me understand the concepts better.”**

## Chemistry beyond IGCSE

As well as a knowledge of Chemistry at GCSE aiding the study of Chemistry and other sciences at A Level it opens up a wide range of career opportunities, both directly related to chemistry and in other fields where analytical and problem-solving skills are valued. Careers as diverse as medicine, engineering, environmental science, pharmacology, chemical engineering, forensic science, environmental science, biochemistry, food science, materials science, art conservation, accountant, patent attorney, firework design and science communication. For students interested in apprenticeships or vocational pathways, the knowledge and skills gained are equally invaluable.

## Assessment

AQA GCSE Chemistry is a linear course with no coursework. Chemistry is assessed through two written exams, each lasting 1 hour 45 minutes, at the end of Year 11. Each paper contributes 50% to the final grade.

Both exams include a mix of multiple-choice, structured, closed short answer, and open response questions. Practical skills developed during the course are assessed through specific questions on the Required Practical within these exams.

Students are expected to have completed 8 required practical tasks as part of their course; these will be conducted in lessons.

# PHYSICS

**Compulsory Option**

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mr J Cottell**

## Why study GCSE Physics?

Unlock the Mysteries of the Universe - Physics is the fundamental science that seeks to understand the laws governing the universe. By choosing GCSE Physics, you embark on a journey to explore everything from the tiniest particles to the vastness of space. Our AQA GCSE Physics course is designed to ignite your curiosity and develop your analytical skills, preparing you for a future in a rapidly advancing world.

## Course Content

The AQA GCSE Physics course covers a broad range of topics:

- **Energy:** Learn about different energy stores, transfers, and the principles of energy conservation.
- **Electricity:** Understand electric circuits, current, voltage, resistance, and their practical applications.
- **Particle Model of Matter:** Explore the states of matter, density, and the behavior of particles.
- **Atomic Structure:** Delve into the structure of atoms, isotopes, and nuclear radiation.
- **Forces:** Study the effects of forces on motion, including Newton's laws and momentum.
- **Waves:** Investigate the properties of waves, sound, and light.
- **Magnetism and Electromagnetism:** Discover magnetic fields, electromagnets, and their uses.
- **Space Physics:** Expand your knowledge of the solar system, stars, and the universe.

## Why study Physics?

- **Develop Critical Skills:** Physics teaches you to think logically, solve complex problems, and understand the world quantitatively.
- **Hands-On Learning:** Engage in practical experiments that bring theoretical concepts to life.
- **Future Opportunities:** A strong foundation in physics opens doors to careers in engineering, technology, medicine, and research.
- **Intellectual Challenge:** Physics challenges you to question, explore, and innovate, making it an intellectually rewarding subject.

Join us in uncovering the secrets of the universe and developing the skills that will shape the future. Choose GCSE Physics and be part of a community of inquisitive minds and future.

## What do our pupils say?

**"Physics has allowed me to understand what others just take for granted."**

## Physics beyond GCSE

There is no getting away from the fact that pupils will encounter Physics in all areas of their lives beyond Year 11 but for those who wish to continue in its study, an engaging and rewarding A Level course awaits. The study of A Level Physics introduces many more topics while developing still further those skills and processes that will support pupils in their wider studies and future careers.

## Assessment

- AQA GCSE Physics is a linear course with no coursework.
- You will take two Physics exams at the end of Year 11.
- Equation Sheets are provided for those sitting GCSE exams in 2026 & 2027.
- Paper 1 and Paper 2 are equally weighted at 100 marks each.
- Your grade is decided from a total score from 200 Marks.
- Students are expected to have completed 10 required practical tasks as part of their course; these will be conducted in lessons.
- Exam entries can be in either Higher or Foundation Tier





# COMBINED SCIENCE

**Compulsory Option**

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA Combined Science: Trilogy**

**Contact: Mrs C. Forster (Biology), Dr C. Wakerley (Chemistry), Mr J. Cottell (Physics)**

## Why Study GCSE Combined Science?

This course provides a solid foundation in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, making it ideal for students curious about the natural world and scientific principles.

- **Comprehensive Learning:** Covers all three sciences, preparing you for advanced study.
- **Practical Skills:** Hands-on experiments enhance theoretical knowledge.
- **Flexibility:** Free up a GCSE option slot while studying Double Science.
- **Future Opportunities:** Opens pathways to careers in medicine, engineering, environmental science, and more.
- **Critical Thinking:** Build problem-solving and analytical skills.

## Course Content

### Biology

- Cell Biology
- Organisation
- Infection and Response
- Bioenergetics
- Homeostasis and Response
- Inheritance, Variation, Evolution
- Ecology

### Chemistry

- Atomic Structure & Periodic Table
- Bonding & Properties
- Quantitative Chemistry
- Chemical & Energy Changes
- Reaction Rates & Organic Chemistry
- Chemical Analysis
- Atmosphere & Resources

### Physics

- Energy
- Electricity
- Particle Model
- Atomic Structure
- Forces
- Waves
- Magnetism

## Assessment

- Six linear exams (two for each science), equally weighted (70 marks each).
- Physics exams include an equation sheet (2026–2027).
- Foundation and Higher Tier options available.

# ART

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mrs K O'Hare**

## Why study GCSE Art?

GCSE Art is a structured course led by enthusiastic teachers and involves the exploration of a wide range of themes, techniques, scales and approaches. We challenge our pupils and believe in exposing them to a wide range of media including graphite, painting, charcoal, print, mixed-media, textiles, dark room and lens-based photography.

GCSE coursework involves two major projects, as well as small, skills-based workshops. Pupils will also develop their use of a specialist art vocabulary by carrying out research into the work of artists, using this influence to further develop their work.

In Year 10 pupils undertake a full day practical workshop; an exciting and inspiring opportunity to work alongside a recognised, practising artist. In January of Year 11 pupils will receive their exam paper and will respond to one of a range of starting points, creating a full unit of work, fully supported by staff, culminating in a 10 hour exam over two days.

## What do our pupils say?

**"The Art department has a really good atmosphere. It's always busy and the teachers and pupils are friendly. It's inspiring because the standard of the work is so high and it makes you want to do your best. It's challenging but relaxing too."**

## Art beyond GCSE

GCSE Art is not just for pupils wishing to pursue an Art-based course in the future, but also adds breadth of study for any pupil at Trent College. It is a highly successful course which encourages individuality, creative thinking and independent decision-making. It is a necessary GCSE for those wishing to pursue Art at A Level.

## Assessment

Coursework is worth 60% of the GCSE mark.

The exam unit is worth 40% and is marked as a whole, including all preparation work, research and the exam piece.

# BUSINESS

**GCSE Exam Board: Edexcel**

**Contact: Mr J Shaw**

## Why study GCSE Business?

This course encourages you to be inspired, moved and challenged by studying an enterprise-based syllabus.

By following this course you will be able to:

- Develop as an effective and independent young person who can think critically and reflectively and have an enquiring mind
- Use an enquiring and critical approach to distinguish facts and opinions, to build arguments and make informed decisions
- Develop and apply your knowledge, understanding and skills to contemporary business contexts from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts
- Appreciate the range of perspectives of different stakeholders in relation to business activities
- Consider the extent to which business activity can be ethical and sustainable.

Studying this course should prepare you to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities in these subjects and career choices.

## What do our pupils say?

**"Doing a Business GCSE provides a broader knowledge of the outside world and a better understanding of relatable and current events."**

## Business beyond GCSE

We offer Business A Level as well as Level 3 BTEC, and many former pupils have continued their studies at university. The career opportunities are varied and exciting, with many opportunities to travel abroad and work for international corporations. Alternatively, you are also given the knowledge to successfully start your own company if you have entrepreneurial flair.

## Assessment

Theme 1: Investigating Small Businesses

Externally assessed: The paper consists of a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

It contains five topic areas:

1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship

1.2 Spotting a business opportunity

1.3 Putting a business idea into practice

1.4 Making the business effective

1.5 Understanding external influences on business.

Theme 2: Building a Business.

Externally assessed: The paper consists of a combination of multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions. Both papers will include questions that target mathematics at a minimum of Key Stage 3. Some questions will be based on business contexts given in the paper which will require an ability to process information rapidly.

It contains five topic areas:

2.1 Growing the business

2.2 Making business decisions

2.3 Making operational decisions

2.4 Making financial decisions

2.5 Making human resource decisions





# COMPUTER SCIENCE

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mr S Reynolds**

## Why study GCSE Computer Science?

Are you curious about how a computer works? Do you want to pursue a technical or scientific career in the future? Would you like to use your creativity to make things and/or solve problems?

Computer Science is about so much more than using Microsoft Office products. In the modern world, whether in industry, scientific research or even in everyday life, an understanding of computers, the internet and programming is vital. There is currently a shortage of programmers in the UK. Computer Scientists are therefore in high demand. The software design industry is booming. The gaming industry alone is now bigger than Hollywood and with the rise of mobile technology, the software industry will only increase in size. Programmers are highly sought after for the unique mix of logical reasoning, creativity and practical problem-solving skills that they possess. All scientists, mathematicians and engineers will at some point have to produce a program as part of their studies. The Government has recently stated that the country must produce more programmers, as there simply aren't enough for the jobs that are available.

The GCSE gives those pupils who know they wish to pursue a technical career a large head-start over many of their peers. It forms an excellent basis on which to build for future A Level/degree studies. Computer Science is also an enjoyable subject in which pupils learn how to solve problems and are given the opportunity to exercise their creativity and team-working skills. Pupils will learn how to make apps and code solutions to technical problems.

## What do our pupils say?

**"It takes the logical thinking found in Maths and combines this with problem-solving and a fair bit of creativity to overcome real world problems."**

## Assessment:

The course is assessed through two exams:

Paper 1: Practical Problem-solving (50%)

Paper 2: Written Theory Assessment (50%).

# DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mr J Prince**

## Why study GCSE Design and Technology?

Design and Technology (D&T) helps to equip pupils with the essential skills required to participate effectively in the highly technological world in which we live today. An important feature of D&T is that it makes immediate and practical use of knowledge and skills from other subjects. The core skills of innovation, creative problem-solving, a thorough understanding of aesthetics, social and environmental issues, industrial practices and the effective use of ICT make D&T pupils a highly attractive prospect for employers and universities alike. If you enjoy problem-solving, being creative, keeping on top of what's hot and what's not, using ICT and making innovative products, then D&T may provide the challenges you are looking for.

Pupils who study GCSE D&T will now cover core technical principles across all materials as well as the principles of designing and making.

## What do our pupils say?

**"D&T is about learning to use a broad range of practical and theoretical skills to turn your ideas into physical reality."**

## D&T beyond GCSE:

The GCSE D&T course allows pupils to access the A Level Product Design course, a broad-based course which prepares pupils for a wide range of university courses in any design related area, from Architecture and Engineering, to Product and Environmental Design. In recent years Trent College D&T pupils have gained positions at prestigious companies such as Dyson, Cateye, Hozelock and BAE systems as a result of their A Level studies.

## Why choose Design and Technology at GCSE?

Design and Technology is a subject that will provide a number of opportunities to challenge your skills and creativity. The practical nature of the subject offers pupils a unique outlet in which they are able to design and project manage with an outcome that is chosen entirely by them.

Design and Technology is a subject favoured by universities offering courses in Engineering, Architecture and all other creative design specialisms as it provides pupils with invaluable experience of working to a client's brief.

Skills learned in Design and Technology are transferable to a wide array of other subject areas. Use of ICT and industry-standard software feature heavily in the subject content and the practical skills developed have life-long value. In a rapidly evolving digital age, an awareness of and ability to use the latest emerging technologies is a highly sought-after attribute by employers.

Pupils who study Design and Technology are eligible to enter the Young Engineer for Britain and the Crest Award competitions. Trent College pupils have an impressive track record of national success in both competitions. Those considering a career in engineering can also apply for an Arkwright Scholarship to support their A Level studies.

**Assessment**:

Paper 1: 50% weighting of final qualification.

Theory will be taught during Year 10 through a number of practical projects and assessed at the end of Year 11 in the form of a written exam. Pupils will have the opportunity to consolidate their theory knowledge throughout Year 11 during the completion of their controlled assessment – 15% of the exam now requires the application of mathematical principles.

Non-Exam Assessment: 50% weighting of final qualification. 35 hours 100 marks.

Pupils will be able to choose from a limited range of controlled assessment tasks and will complete an independent design and make project in the Michaelmas and Lent terms of Year 11. This allows pupils the opportunity to achieve a high grade through demonstration of the designing skills that they have developed throughout the course.

# DRAMA

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mrs D Ward**

## Why study GCSE Drama?

The study of Drama at GCSE combines practical and theoretical elements. You will learn and write about a broad range of dramatic elements and put them into practice within a performance context. The course is both challenging and enjoyable with assessments spread over three study units. The course complements many other areas of study and you will be challenged in your thinking as you understand how theatre reflects and mirrors the world.

Studying Drama at GCSE can offer many opportunities in a variety of fields and higher education. It is recognised by many professions as an asset as it has many transferable skills and applications across a number of specialisms. It is a highly literate subject and you are required to justify decisions and arguments through in-depth analysis and interpretation. You will need commitment, focus and an openness to try out new ideas.

## What do our pupils say?

**"Studying Drama allows me to respond, think and create. I explore my ideas and, at the same time, have my thinking challenged. I get to work collaboratively in class and have the opportunities to lead and develop my own skills and those of others."**

## Drama beyond GCSE:

You will leave the course equipped with the skills necessary to study at A Level with an excellent foundation upon which to build.

## Assessment:

Component 1: Understanding Drama 40%.

Written Exam: This component is a written exam in which pupils are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed, including in connection to a set play and on their ability to analyse and evaluate the live theatre work of others. The paper is divided into three compulsory sections:

- Section A: Theatre roles and terminology
- Section B: Study of set text
- Section C: Live theatre production.

In the exam pupils are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject content.

Component 2: Devising Drama 40%.

Internally marked and externally moderated.

This is a practical component in which pupils are assessed on their ability to create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance, apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance and analyse and evaluate their own work.

For this component pupils are required to complete the following two assessment tasks:

- Produce an individual Devising Log documenting the devising process
- Contribute to a final devised duologue or group performance.

Component 3: Texts in Practice 20%.

Externally assessed.

This component is a practical component in which pupils are assessed on their ability to apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance.

For this component pupils must complete two assessment tasks:

- Study and present a key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance)
- Study and present a second key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance) from the same play.

# FOOD & NUTRITION

**GCSE Exam Board: OCR**

**Contact: Miss J Rigley**

## Why study GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition?

The Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure that pupils develop greater understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At the heart of the qualification is a focus on developing practical cookery skills and a robust understanding of nutrition.

Pupils also learn about food from around the world, through the study of British and international culinary traditions as well as developing an understanding of where food comes from (food provenance) and the challenges surrounding food security. Pupils will master culinary skills and appreciate the science behind food and cooking. This is an exciting and creative course which will allow them to demonstrate their practical skills and make connections between theory and practice.

## What skills will pupils learn?

This is a GCSE course with a strong practical focus. Pupils will master a variety of technical skills and become proficient in the kitchen. In addition, they will develop an in-depth knowledge of food science, food safety, food choice, nutrition and health.

## Food Preparation and Nutrition beyond GCSE:

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition will equip pupils to go on to further study. After taking this course, they could embark on post-16 study, begin an apprenticeship or perhaps begin employment in the catering or food industries. Pupils will also have the knowledge and skills to feed themselves (and others) affordably and nutritiously for life.

## How will it fit in with my other subjects?

The skills pupils develop through the study of food preparation and nutrition will support their study of a wide range of other subjects and can be studied in combination with any other GCSE course. In terms of subject knowledge, the nutrition and health may particularly complement the study of biology and physical education. Food preparation and nutrition also helps you to learn how to work independently and manage your time – skills valued by both higher education institutions and employers alike.

### Assessment:

There will be one exam for this qualification, which will assess pupils' knowledge of the theory behind food preparation and nutrition. The exam represents 50% of the qualification. The second part of the assessment will be none examination assessment (NEA) and will consist of two tasks, involving practical work.

Task 1: 15% of your qualification. Pupils will carry out an investigation into the scientific principles that underpin the preparation and cooking of food. This task will provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and practically apply their understanding of the science behind cooking. Pupils will practically investigate ingredients and explain how they work and why.

Task 2: 35% of your qualification. Pupils will plan, prepare, cook and present a 3 course menu. This task will provide them with an opportunity to cook up a storm and showcase their creativity and cooking skills. Possible topics might be to make a street food menu, create delicious tapas dishes or cook up a menu for a pupil on a budget.





# GEOGRAPHY

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mr D Hartley**

## Why study GCSE Geography?

Through Geography, one can apply ideas to new and changing settings; it helps explain, inspire and address curiosity about the earth and is concerned with 'real world' issues that have a past, present and future perspective.

At GCSE we deal with key issues facing the world today, recognising similarities and differences across the world and developing knowledge and understanding of location, interconnectedness and spatial patterns. We analyse on a range of different scales to draw upon our own local, national and global perspectives. These include river flooding, ageing population, squatter settlements, pollution, immigration and economic activities, coastal landforms and much more. The GCSE course is dynamic, exciting and broad in the sense of both human and physical worlds.

There is no substitute for 'real world learning' – at least for some of the time. In Geography this is manifested in a special way: we call it fieldwork! Pupils will attend at least two field trips during their GCSE course. Destinations may include the Holderness Coast in East Yorkshire, physical landscapes in the Peak District or a local location in which to carry out fieldwork in preparation for the Geographical Applications exam. We also offer additional trips to support classroom learning and bring the subject to life but also to give the pupils the opportunity to explore the fabulous world in which we live. The additional opportunities of trips such as the Italy and Iceland trips also support the learning of 'the challenge of hazards' and 'the living world' modules.

Great use is made of contemporary examples and sources, and, with an emphasis on trying to make pupils think more independently, this makes Geography a popular choice at GCSE, and later at A Level.

## What do our pupils say?

**"You learn new diverse skills such as map work, drawing, interpreting photos and graphs but also improving your written work. Moreover, you learn in a variety of ways, such as group and pair work, independently and also with the use of IT."**

## Geography beyond GCSE:

Geography is a broad based academic subject. Employers and universities see Geography as a robust academic subject rich in skills, knowledge and understanding. As a subject linking the arts and the sciences it is highly flexible in terms of what you can combine it with both at GCSE and A Level. Don't just take our word for it. Geography's importance to your education is evident: GCSE and A Level Geography is recognised as one of the key 'facilitating' subjects for entry to degree level study and Geography graduates become some of the most sought after graduates by employers.

### Assessment:

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment = 35%

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment = 35%

Both papers consist of multiple choice, short answers and extended prose.

Paper 3: Geographical Applications = 30%

This paper consists of a geographical issue that has to be evaluated, and skills questions based on a fieldwork investigation.



# HISTORY

**IGCSE Exam Board: Cambridge IGCSE**

**Contact: Mr D Gervis**

## Why study IGCSE History?

History is packed with incredible stories about pivotal events, people and machines. We learn about the past so that we might better understand the present. Current conflicts bear marked resemblances to those in the past and international relations and our understanding of them are more vital than ever. The superpower relations that shaped our world post-WW2 remain just as relevant today. Our history with the USA and Russia impacts on our present. Do you know why? And what will become of the USA? From the Roaring Twenties, through gangsters, the depression, Isolationism to the rescuer of Europe from the threat of Stalin's Communism, we certainly have a 'special relationship' with the US. By understanding the past accurately you can better judge, analyse and deal with the present in whatever direction your career takes you.

## What will I study?

Year 10: The 20th Century: International Relations since 1919

- Were the peace treaties of 1919–23 fair?
- To what extent was the League of Nations a success?
- Why had international peace collapsed by 1939?
- Who was to blame for the Cold War?
- How effectively did the USA contain the spread of Communism?
- How secure was the USSR's control over Eastern Europe?

Year 11: Depth Study: The USA, 1919–41

- How far did the US economy boom in the 1920s?
- How far did US society change in the 1920s?
- What were the causes and consequences of the Wall Street Crash?
- How successful was the New Deal?

## What do our pupils say?

**"History has been invaluable to me for the past two years; not only has it tied many of my subjects together and indeed developed my analytical thinking skills, it has proved to be a great interest of mine also, thanks to the variety and engaging nature of the topics studied."**

## History beyond GCSE:

The study of History will improve your written and verbal communication skills. It will improve your ability to argue, to defend your opinion and to persuade others to your point of view. The skills taught through History are highly valued in careers in Management, Commerce, Law, Journalism, Politics as well as many jobs directly related to History. For many however History is studied simply because it is interesting.

## Assessment:

Component 1: Written Exam 40% of IGCSE.

You will answer two questions on The 20th century: International Relations since 1919 and one on the Depth Study.

Component 2: Sources Exam 33% of IGCSE.

You will answer six questions on the topic 'How effectively did the USA contain the spread of Communism?'

Component 3: Coursework 27% of IGCSE.

One piece of extended writing worth 40 marks based on the Depth Study topic.

# MODERN LANGUAGES (French, German, Spanish)

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Ms A Lebat**

## Why study a Modern Language?

"The limits of my language are the limits of my world"
Ludwig Wittgenstein

The aim of Modern Languages at Trent College is to open our pupils' minds to other cultures by learning to communicate in another language. By the end of Year 9 pupils will have achieved a good grounding in their first modern foreign language chosen in Year 7 (MFL1), and some will have extended their contact with a second language (MFL2) by way of an introductory course in

Years 8 and 9. The GCSE language courses offered at Trent College build on and extend this knowledge, as well as provide an insight into the culture of language studied.

A Modern Foreign Language is strongly recommended for most pupils as part of their suite of GCSE subjects. Some pupils may opt to take two languages.

Seeing and experiencing a language is the best way to learn, hence the department is keen to offer opportunities to visit the country in which the target language is spoken. In the past, the department has run study trips to Andalusia, Valencia, Paris, Montpellier and Cantabria. In addition, a successful German Exchange is established with the Dreieichschule in Langen, Long Eaton's twin town in Germany.

## Assessment:

Paper 1: Listening (25%) Written Exam

Paper 2: Speaking (25%) Non-exam assessment

Paper 3: Reading (25%) Written Exam

Paper 4: Writing (25%) Written Exam

## What do our pupils say?

**"Modern Languages open up opportunities to make new friends from different cultures."**

## Modern Languages beyond GCSE:

A high proportion of pupils who study Languages at A Level at Trent College continue with their studies at university, where they find that Language graduates have one of the highest employment rates, bettered only by medicine, education and law graduates (Source: University of Wales).





# MUSIC

**GCSE Exam Board: Edexcel**

**Contact: Mr N Parrans-Smith**

## Why study GCSE Music?

Music gives you the chance to stand out and to be an individual. The broad range of tasks undertaken at GCSE allows development of the self, as well as providing an interesting and contrasting experience to most other subjects.

Through performing as a soloist you will learn and hone presentation, technical and expressive skills, whilst in an ensemble you develop leadership and teamwork. These coursework performances (lasting a minimum of 4 minutes) account for 30% of the GCSE music course; performances should be of Grade 5 standard.

The two compositions you submit (30% of the course) will demonstrate creativity, versatility, musical literacy, and an eye for detail. You will learn to compose in lots of different styles, from pop to world music and everything between. There is also the opportunity to use industry standard computer software for its notation, to produce professional looking coursework.

Featuring music from across the spectrum, orchestral works by J.S. Bach and John Williams are juxtaposed with songs by Purcell and Esperanza Spalding. Through eight prescribed pieces, you will study the world in a musical context, develop technical vocabulary and skills to support your practical music-making, and gain a highly desirable qualification that sets you up for any number of further education options. If you want to stand out later on, it's a great course to do. Even better, you'll have fun doing it. If you're still in doubt, speak to a member of the Music department.

## What do our pupils say?

**"GCSE Music has really helped me develop right across my musical studies. The concert trips are great!"**

## Music beyond GCSE:

GCSE is the ideal gateway to A Level study, and on to Music in Higher Education. Many musicians at university level study other courses, but still use the skills gained earlier to participate in extra-curricular music-making, scholarships, and the like. The transferable skill-set demonstrated by an academic Music qualification is difficult to effectively replicate and evidence by other means.

## Assessment:

- 30% performance non-examined assessment (solo and ensemble)
- 30% composition (two pieces) non-examined assessment, one to an exam board brief
- 40% listening and appraising examination (written paper)

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mr M Powell**

## Why study GCSE Physical Education?

GCSE Physical Education provides pupils with the knowledge and understanding of how to live a healthy and active lifestyle, enabling them to make informed choices about their own physical development. Pupils can choose from a variety of roles and activities in which to participate in physical activity.

Pupils will learn how to analyse and evaluate performance and suggest effective plans for improvement. This course is particularly suitable for pupils who wish to continue their studies in further education and for those who are interested in sports-related career opportunities in the future.

## What do our pupils say?

**"I enjoyed learning all about the workings of the human body and how to design training programmes."**

## Physical Education beyond GCSE:

GCSE PE is the ideal preparation for an A Level in PE or the BTEC National Diploma in Sport. The course develops not only your sporting abilities but will also introduce you to coaching and leadership roles within a range of sports. You will be given an opportunity to develop a number of transferable skills such as teamwork, leadership and independence, all of which are desirable to employers.

Typical jobs taken by people who study the PE GCSE are: physiotherapy, coaching, fitness instruction, personal training and teaching as well as being a professional athlete or serving in the Armed Forces.

## Assessment:

Exam = 60%; 2 papers each worth 30%,

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

Paper 2: Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport;

Coursework: 40% (3 sports assessed, will at least one individual and one team sport) plus written coursework on one sport.

Topic areas for exam: Applied anatomy and physiology, Movement analysis, Physical training, Use of data, Sports psychology, Socio-cultural influences, Health, Fitness and Well-being

Sports for coursework: Team Sport (offered in curriculum): Football, Basketball, Cricket, Netball, Hockey, Rugby

Individual Sport (offered in curriculum): Athletics, Badminton, Tennis, Squash, Swimming, Rock Climbing.

Additional sports that pupils can choose independently: Boxing, Kayaking, Cycling, Dance, Golf, Equestrian, Skiing/Snowboarding, Trampolining.

# PSYCHOLOGY

**GCSE Exam Board: Edexcel**

**Contact: Miss O Hopewell**

## Why study GCSE Psychology?

GCSE Psychology is a course that will engage pupils as they explore human behaviour and gain more insight about themselves and others. They will develop skills that will support progression to further study of Psychology as well as a wide range of other subjects.

The course offers a variety of interesting topics. Each topic area will include the examination of an engaging and contemporary selection of studies so that pupils can develop their knowledge of research methods. Opportunities to carry out practical investigations are also within the scope of the course.

The curriculum is broken down as follows:

In Year 10, we will cover Developmental Psychology, Memory, Psychological problems (including depression and addiction), Neuropsychology and Research Methods.

In Year 11, we will revisit Research Methods and teach Social Influence, Forensic Psychology, Sleep and Dreaming.

There will be two exams: Paper 1 and Paper 2.

## Where can Psychology take me?

Insights gained from studying Psychology are especially useful to those considering careers in medicine, education, social work, law or management. A- or AS-level Psychology is never required for entry to a degree course, but many pupils find that studying at this level gives a useful insight into the subject and helps them decide if they will be suited to studying Psychology at degree level.

## What do our pupils say?

**“Psychology has really helped me to understand why people do the things that they do.”**

## Assessment:

Paper 1: (55%)

- Development – How did you develop?
- Memory – How does your memory work?
- Psychological problems – How would psychological problems affect you?
- The brain and neuropsychology – How does your brain affect you?
- Social influence – How do others affect you?

Paper 2: (45%)

- Criminal psychology – Why do people become criminals?
- The self – What makes you who you are?
- Perception – How do you interpret the world around you?
- Sleep and dreaming – Why do you need to sleep and dream?
- Language, thought and communication – How do you communicate with others?
- Research methods – How do you carry out psychological research?





# RS: PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

**GCSE Exam Board: AQA**

**Contact: Mrs T Ford**

## Why study GCSE RS: Philosophy and Ethics?

RS: Philosophy and Ethics at GCSE is both exciting and academically challenging. It will provide you with excellent preparation for many courses at A Level and beyond. Consideration of ethical and philosophical issues and knowledge of ethical approaches is of vital importance in today’s world. Every day the media alerts us to the latest ethical debates and dilemmas.

In this course, you will study two religions, using this knowledge to give you an in-depth understanding of the following ethical problems: human rights and social justice, the right to life, crime and punishment, and conflict. The Philosophy unit gives pupils the opportunity to look at life’s ‘ultimate questions’ through topics such as: the compatibility of science and religion, the problem of evil, the afterlife and arguments about the existence of God.

It enables you to reflect both upon differences and common ground across faiths and atheism, to know what you think and why you think it. To be able to articulate your ideas, while developing awareness and understanding of differing points of view, is a critical element of this course.

It helps to develop skills such as debating, analysis and evaluation – skills that are invaluable. It also encourages greater awareness of issues of local, national and international concern.

## What do our pupils say?

**“I like the fact that what we look at has relevance in the modern world and we can see it in action every time we look at the news.”**

## RS: Philosophy and Ethics beyond GCSE:

This course lays great foundations for many A Level subjects, not just Philosophy and Ethics. It develops skills such as an ability to see ‘both sides’ and the ability to work with conceptual ideas and helps to develop an appreciation of human diversity, all of which are particularly useful for careers in law, education, social work, medicine and the media, to name but a few!

RS: Philosophy and Ethics at GCSE lays a good foundation for further study at A Level and that will complement other related and popular A Level subjects including Law, Psychology, History, Government and Politics and English Literature.

## Assessment:

The course is examined by two written papers. There is no controlled assessment or coursework.

0115 849 4942
elmsreception@trentcollege.net
www.trentschools.net

Derby Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, NG10 4AD

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