



GCSE
options
2026



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- 14 English Literature
- 15 Future Me, Future Thoughts
- 16 Mathematics
- 17 Triple Science

Optional subjects

Art and Design Technology

- 20 3D Design
- 21 Fine Art
- 22 Hospitality and Catering
- 23 Photography

Creative and Expressive Arts

- 24 Dance
- 25 Drama
- 27 Music

Humanities

- 29 Geography
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IT and Business

- 33 Business and Enterprise
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Modern Foreign Languages

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Welcome

At Retford Oaks we are incredibly proud of our students and helping them achieve success starts with them making the right choices best suited to them. This is an exciting and pivotal moment as our students prepare to embark on their Level 2 courses, explore their aspirations, take the first steps towards planning their futures and shaping their dreams.

Inside this brochure, you will find everything you need to guide you through this journey, providing inspiration and information to help you make choices that align with your passions and goals. Together, let's turn this into the start of something extraordinary—your future awaits!

At Retford Oaks we are dedicated to continuously reviewing and refining our curriculum to stay aligned with the latest government policies, university expectations, and workplace demands. Our goal is to cater to the diverse interests and abilities of our students, ensuring they are well-prepared to succeed in their future endeavours.

We are proud to offer an exciting and varied range of qualifications, in addition to the core compulsory subjects. The details of each qualification can be found in the following pages and on our website: www.retfordoaks-ac.org.uk/curriculum/courses

We hope that you have enough information to make the right choices for your future. However, if you have further questions about the process or a specific course, please speak to your tutor in the first instance.

Contacts

For further information or clarification please contact:

Mr Olley - golley@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

Final student numbers will determine whether the qualifications offered in this booklet will be available.

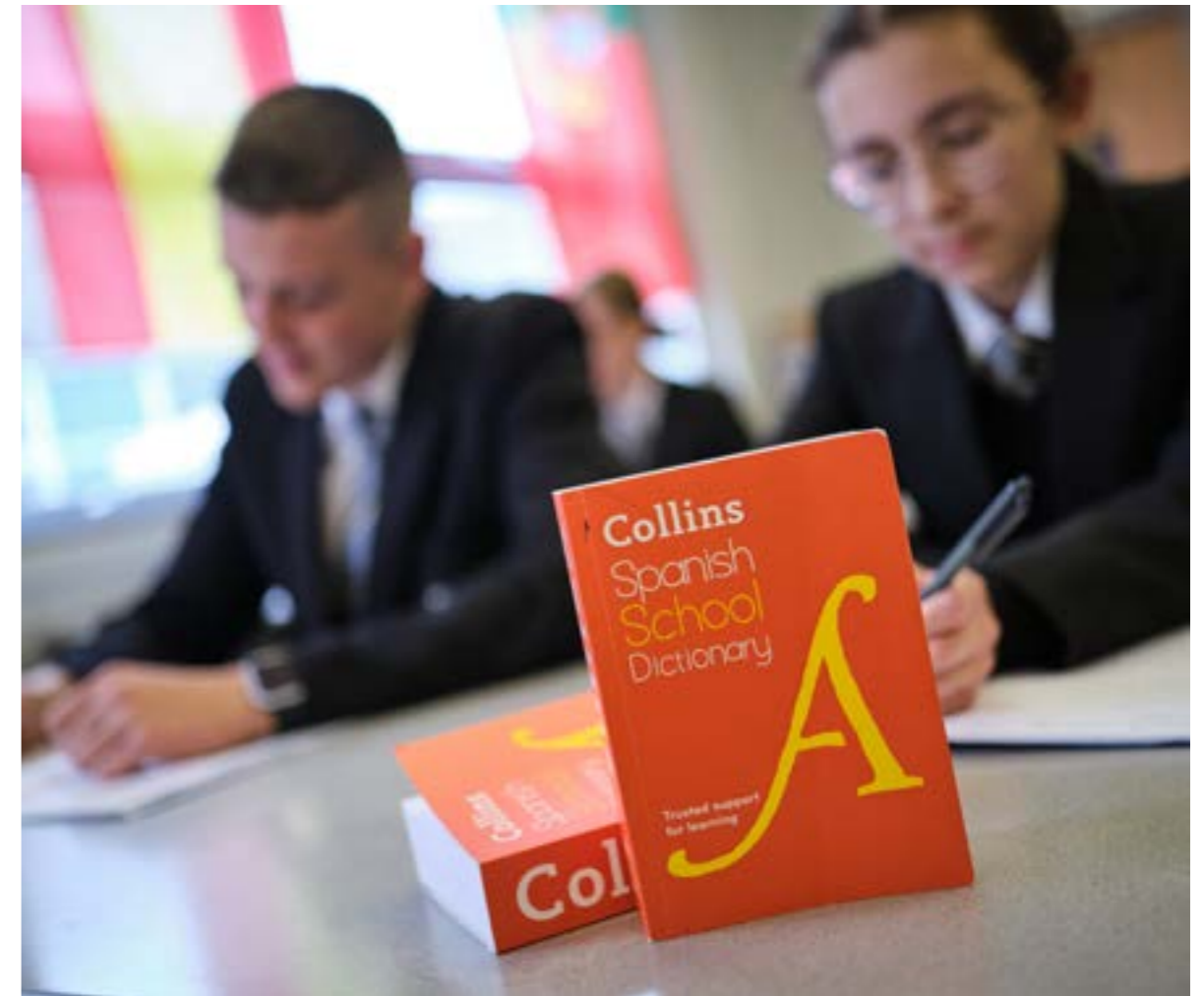
Read this booklet and focus on courses you enjoy and excel in

Speak to your teachers about specific subjects

Do your research into careers and what you need to go into them

Talk to your parents, carers, family and friends about what you would like to do

The options process



During years 10 and 11, students complete courses that lead to approximately nine GCSEs.

Compulsory subjects for GCSE study are:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Triple Science
- Future Me, Future Thoughts

As we are committed to providing an holistic education, students will also have non-assessed PE and PSHE lessons as part of their timetable.

This then leaves three further options, to be picked from the following:

- 3D Design
- Fine Art
- Hospitality and Catering
- Photography
- Dance
- Drama
- Music
- Geography
- History
- Religious Studies
- Business and Enterprise
- IT
- Media
- French and Spanish
- Sport Studies
- Child Development
- Construction
- Health and Social Care

Choosing your options



How to choose your subjects: Tips for making exciting and informed decisions

Choosing your subjects is an exciting opportunity to shape your future! Here are some tips to help you make the best decisions:

- **Follow your passions and strengths:** Pick subjects you enjoy and excel in – you are more likely to thrive when studying something you are good at.
- **Think ahead to your dream career:** If you have a specific job or career in mind, research which subjects might be important stepping stones.
- **Explore new horizons:** Be adventurous! Look into subjects you haven't studied before by talking to subject teachers to find out what's involved.
- **Know your learning style:** Consider the balance of exams and coursework for each subject. If you prefer hands-on projects, consider courses with more coursework.
- **Choose for you, not others:** Avoid picking a subject just because your friends are taking it – they might end up in a different class.

- **Focus on the subject, not the teacher:** Don't select a subject solely because you like your current teacher – they may not be teaching you next year.
- **Seek advice:** Talk to your teachers, head of year, or family – they can offer valuable insights.
- **Keep your options open:** Remember, your year 9 choices won't lock you into a specific pathway. It's all about building a strong foundation for the future.

How do we personalise key stage 4?

At Retford Oaks, every student's key stage 4 pathway is uniquely tailored to their individual needs and aspirations. Each student is guided onto the route that best supports their strengths and goals, ensuring they can achieve their full potential and build a strong foundation for future success.

Progress and achievement in chosen subjects are carefully monitored and assessed at regular intervals throughout key stage 4, providing ongoing support and guidance to help students thrive.



What does the GCSE assessment process involve?

Most GCSEs are examined via a number of final exams in the summer of year 11. However, a few remain a combination of coursework and final examinations, the proportion of which varies between subjects. The number of GCSEs taken by individual students varies.

What are examinations like?

The examinations are set to reward positive achievement. They allow candidates to show what they know, understand and can do.

What is coursework?

Coursework includes any work that is carried out and assessed whilst the course is in progress. It is a method of assessing practical work and can count for up to 60% of the overall mark in some subjects. Coursework gives students the opportunity to use skills and techniques they would be unable to demonstrate in an examination. It is undertaken within controlled conditions in the academy.

What demands does coursework place upon students?

The amount of coursework and its contribution to the final grade varies between subjects. When making choices, students should carefully consider where their strengths lie.

Coursework can take a lot of pressure off the final exam, but it often involves working both at home and at school for an extended period. This means that time must be carefully planned and managed. It can be stressful if it isn't managed correctly or left until the last minute. A coursework calendar is produced to reduce the overlap in coursework from different subjects and help students to plan their time.

What is a BTEC?

A BTEC stands for Business and Technology Education Council. BTECs are equivalent to GCSEs but are more vocational in nature. Often, they include more coursework than examination content.

How are targets set?

Students are given target grades during year 10 based on attainment in key stage 2 and key stage 3 assessments. The targets are chosen to be challenging, but also to add value to attainment made in key stages 2 and 3. We also look at predictions from Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT) taken in year 7. Target grades are then adjusted to reflect a student's 'real' ability and provide an appropriate level of challenge. Throughout key stage 4, students are regularly assessed across all subjects to ensure that progress continues to be made or that appropriate actions are taken.

Are there any career websites I can visit for further information?

While some students have a clear idea of the career path they would like to follow, others do not. The following websites include information about different careers and some quizzes to help students identify areas of work they may not have previously thought about.

icould: www.icould.com

Apprenticeships:

www.apprenticeships.org.uk



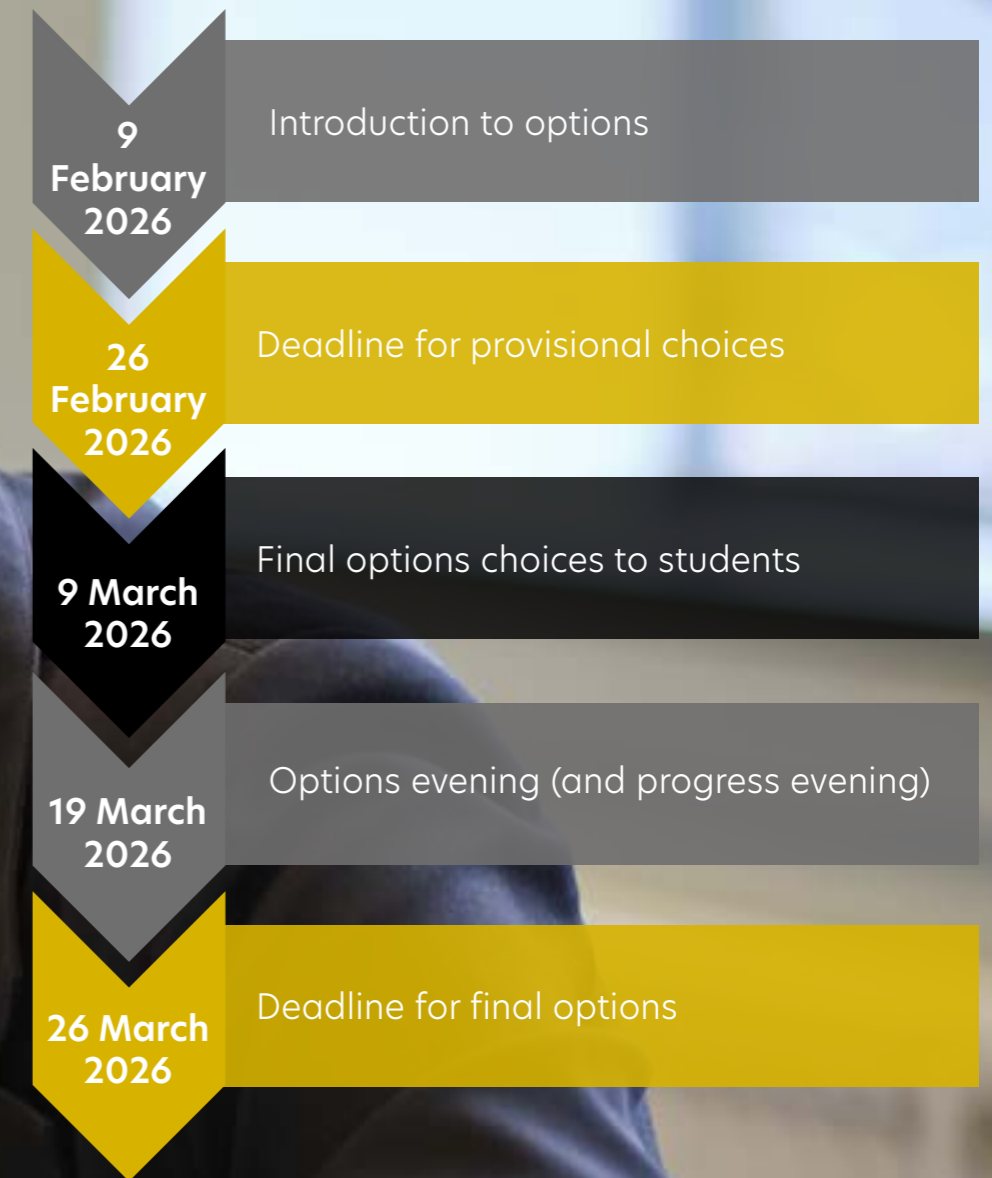
Careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG)

Students at Retford Oaks have a planned programme of CEIAG, in accordance with the Department for Education careers guidance and inspiration in schools. The programme ensures all students have opportunities to recognise their own strengths and values and take responsibility for developing employability skills.

Careers advice is available at the academy. We use Unifrog, where students can access further careers information, explore hundreds of jobs with text and video, or complete personalised career quizzes. This is available to use both within the academy and at home.

The password is available from your tutor.

Timeline and deadlines



- 13 English Language
- 14 English Literature
- 15 Future Me, Future Thoughts
- 16 Mathematics
- 17 Triple Science

English Language

EXAM BOARD	AQA
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Miss Jackson - ajackson@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	8700

GCSE English language allows students to prepare for life after school, enabling them to write for all kinds of audiences and to be able to read many different types of texts. The course runs alongside English literature, so that students can concentrate on a different element each half term. The course introduces students to different genres and exposes them to the world and all its possibilities.

What will be studied?

Paper 1: explorations and creative reading and writing

Section A: reading – students read an extract of text from either the 20th or 21st century and consider how established writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to capture the interest of the reader. Students are asked to answer four questions on the text.

Section B: writing – students write their own creative text inspired by the topic in section A. They must demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills. They are given a prompt, such as a scenario or an image.

Paper 2: writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Section A: reading – students read two linked sources from different time periods and genres to consider how each presents a perspective or a viewpoint to influence the reader.

Section B: writing – students write their own creative text inspired by the topic in section A. They must demonstrate their narrative and descriptive skills. They are given a prompt, such as a scenario or an image.

Students are assessed on their spoken language. Students are tested on their presenting skills, responding to questions and feedback and their use of standard English.

Course benefits

Most employers will ask for this qualification.

- You will demonstrate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing that are necessary to communicate with others confidently, effectively and precisely
- You will be able to use language to express yourself creatively and imaginatively
- It will help you to become a critical reader of fiction and non-fiction prose, poetry and drama

Assessment structure

This qualification is assessed by examination. There are two papers, each examination is 1 hour, 45 minutes long.

Career opportunities

English GCSEs are relevant to all future careers, as all jobs need clear reading and writing skills.

- Journalism
- Writer (author, playwright, poet etc.)
- Teaching (in the UK or abroad)
- Public relations
- Law
- Advertising

English Literature

EXAM BOARD	AQA
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Miss Jackson - ajackson@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	8702

GCSE English literature allows students to read, study and write about texts in a detailed way. The course runs alongside English language, introducing students to different genres and exposing them to the world in the past, present and future. Students will develop their reading skills whilst studying set texts. They will explore plot and work on literal comprehension and inference skills. They will become critical readers, focusing on theme and be able to support different points of view. They will focus on language use and be able to compare and evaluate different texts.

What will be studied?

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th century novel

Section A: Shakespeare – students will answer a question on the text they have studied. They will write in detail about an extract from the play and the play as a whole.

Section B: the 19th century novel – students will write about an extract from the novel they have studied and then about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2: modern texts and poetry

Section A: modern text – students have to answer one question from a text they have studied.

Section B: poetry – students will answer a comparative question on a named poem and one other from the anthology cluster. Poems are clustered thematically – we will look at either ‘love and relationships’ or ‘power and conflict’. Poems are written between 1789 and the present day.

Section C: unseen poetry – students will be given two unseen poems. They will analyse and answer a question on the first unseen poem and then compare the second poem to the first. Students will analyse and compare key features such as the content, theme, structure, and use of language.

Course benefits

Reading and learning about poems, plays, stories and novels helps people to sympathise with others and see how complex humans truly are. It broadens intellectual horizons and stimulates a more active imagination. Literature explores different human beliefs, ideas and societies. This allows people to learn about where they came from and how past events shape different cultures.

Assessment structure

This qualification is assessed through two examinations. The first examination is 1 hour, 45 minutes long and the second is 2 hours, 15 minutes.

Career opportunities

English GCSEs are relevant to all future careers, as all jobs need clear reading and writing skills.

- Journalism
- Writer (author, playwright, poet etc.)
- Teaching (in the UK or abroad)
- Public relations
- Law
- Advertising

Future Me, Future Thoughts

CONTACT | Mrs West - jwest@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk

As part of our core curriculum, we are committed to equipping students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in life after school. This is achieved through our Future Me, Future Thoughts lessons, which serve as a foundation of personal development education.

Starting in year 10, students dedicate one period per week to a specially designed program that integrates elements of Religious Education (RE) and Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) education.

The program is carefully structured to address a range of essential topics, ensuring that students gain a well-rounded understanding of the world around them. Key areas of focus include:

- **Careers and employability skills:** students explore various career paths, learn essential workplace skills, and understand the qualities needed to succeed in the job market.
- **Mental health and wellbeing:** sessions emphasise the importance of self-care, resilience, and emotional intelligence, equipping students to manage stress and maintain a positive mental outlook.
- **The environment:** students examine pressing environmental issues, encouraging them to consider their role as global citizens and explore sustainable practices.
- **Alternative beliefs:** through discussions and case studies, students analyse the benefits and drawbacks of various belief systems, fostering an appreciation for diversity and critical thinking.

These lessons are designed to be interactive and discussion-driven, encouraging students to engage with the material. Emphasis is placed on developing key communication skills, such as forming and articulating opinions, effective listening, and respectful debate. Students are given tools to argue their viewpoints thoughtfully while remaining open to different perspectives.

Through Future Me, Future Thoughts, students not only gain practical knowledge and skills but also cultivate a deeper understanding of themselves and their place in society. This program is a vital part of preparing our students for the challenges and opportunities they will encounter in adulthood.

Mathematics

EXAM BOARD	AQA
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mr Sinclair – asinclair@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	8300

GCSE maths lessons build on the mathematical ideas and learning skills acquired in earlier years, whilst new topics of a more advanced level are introduced.

What will be studied?

GCSE maths covers five key areas:

- number
- algebra
- geometry and measures
- statistics and probability
- ratio and proportion

The course gives students the ability to:

- acquire and use problem-solving strategies
- select and apply mathematical techniques and methods in everyday and real-world situations
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context

Course benefits

Maths is important in life because it is used to perform many different daily tasks, such as telling time, counting change and to make strategic decisions. Similarly, nearly every profession uses some form of maths.

Assessment structure

This is a linear course, which means that all of the examinations are taken at the end of the course and any part of the specification can be tested on any paper. The specification is designed to be holistic with a clear structure, and to encourage and motivate students.

The final examination is taken at either a higher or foundation tier, the grades available for the two tiers are 4-9 and 1-5 respectively.

The examination requires students to develop their mathematical knowledge in these areas and use their knowledge and understanding to make connections between mathematical concepts. The examination will also require the students to apply the functional elements of mathematics in everyday and real-life situations.

Career opportunities

- Engineering
- Accountancy
- Teaching
- Science
- Computer programming

Triple Science

EXAM BOARD	AQA
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Miss Dumbill – cdumbill@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	Biology – 8461, Chemistry – 8462, Physics – 8463

Studying triple science results in students gaining three separate science GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics. These separate sciences are suitable for those who enjoy the hardwork and practical activities involved in the study of science.

Students studying triple science will have eight lessons per week of science. Whatever career you are considering, triple science will set you up well for later life.

Employers in all areas are crying out for candidates with science-based skills.

What will be studied?

The science curriculum covers a wide variety of scientific areas studied throughout the two years.

In biology, you will study the following areas:

Cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution and ecology.

In chemistry, you will study the following areas:

Atomic structure, the periodic table, bonding, properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere and using resources.

In physics, you will study the following areas:

Energy transfers, energy resources, electricity, waves, radiation, forces and motion, momentum, light, sound, electromagnetism and the universe.

Why study triple science?

Students learn about the development of scientific ideas and its power and limitations. They will also evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of scientific and technological advances. Students will develop experimental, investigative and problem-solving skills.

Assessment structure

At the end of year 11, students are assessed through two written papers in each of the three sciences. Each paper is 1 hour, 45 minutes and contributes to 50% of the overall result. These papers include multiple choice, short answers, longer written responses and calculations. Almost all equations are provided and mathematical skills are tested in a variety of questions. The examination papers also include questions on the core practical elements that students will have completed, as well as general questions on working scientifically.

Career opportunities

- Aerospace systems
- Astronomy
- Robotics
- Medicine
- Veterinary
- Pharmacology
- Forensic science
- Software and games development
- Engineer
- Motorsport
- Medical research

Optional subjects

Art and Design Technology

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- 21 Fine Art
- 22 Hospitality and Catering
- 23 Photography

Creative and Expressive Arts

- 24 Dance
- 25 Drama
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Humanities

- 29 Geography
- 30 History
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IT and Business

- 33 Business and Enterprise
- 34 IT
- 35 Media

Modern Foreign Languages

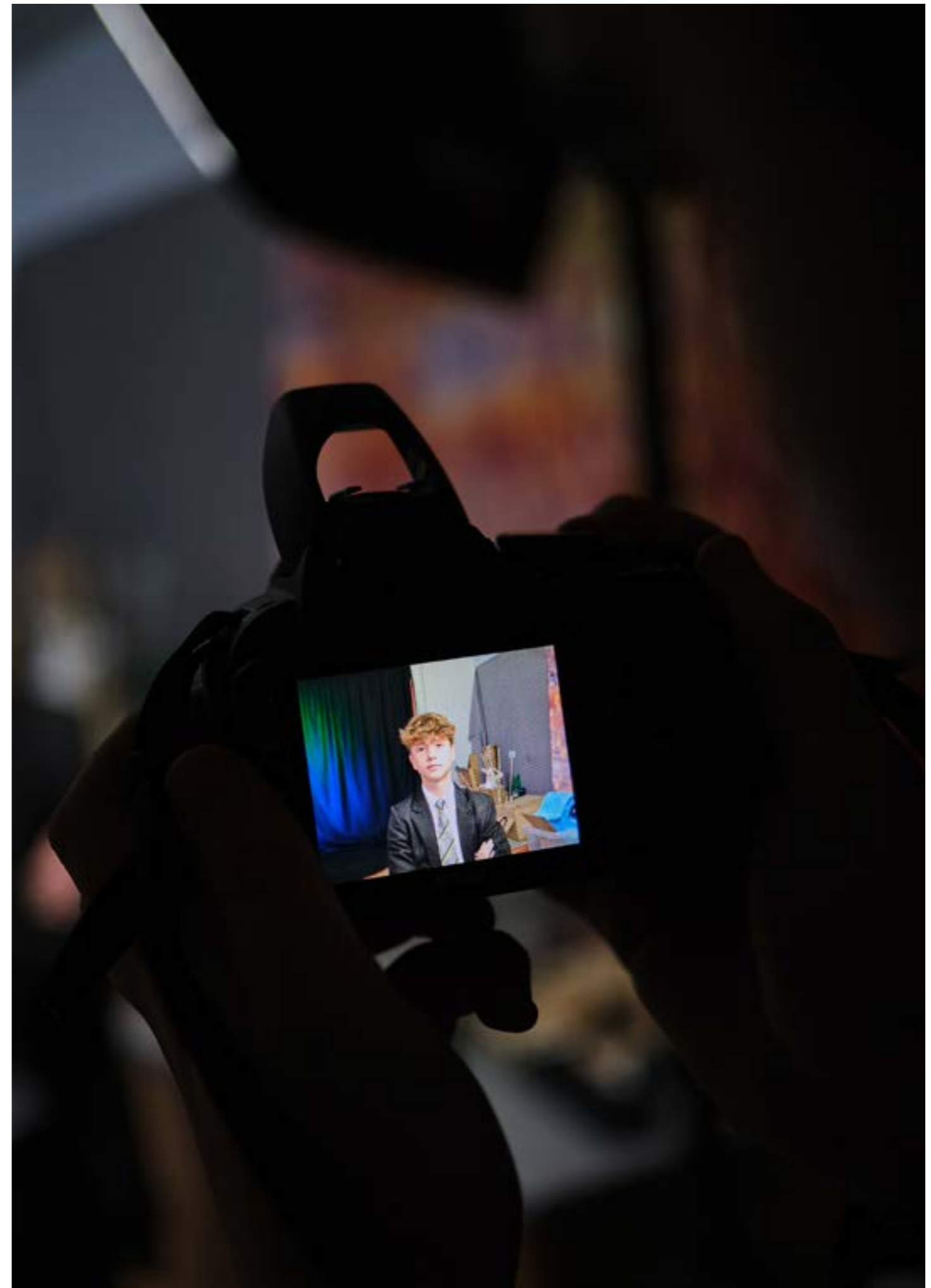
- 37 French
- 37 Spanish

Physical Education

- 39 Sport Studies

Social Sciences

- 41 Child Development
- 42 Construction
- 43 Health and Social Care



3D Design

EXAM BOARD	Pearson Edexcel
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mr Oprych - aoprych@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	601/8069/9

3D design covers a wide range of material areas that can be used to develop new products that solve problems in everyday life. Students will design and prototype their own creative solutions to problems and will present their ideas using CAD and traditional drawing skills.

What will be studied?

Students learn a range of practical skills that enable them to solve and adapt to a wide range of challenges. Students need to be:

- imaginative and creative
- problem solvers
- independent thinkers
- organised and able to meet deadlines
- team players

Students will learn about ethical design, the environment and future technologies. Engineering, mechanisms and manufacturing knowledge will be developed to create products that meet a need.

Why study 3D design?

Students will gain valuable transferable skills that will prepare them well for a changing workplace, where creative thinking is highly prized as automation replaces traditional jobs and skills.

Students will also be able to apply their practical knowledge and problem-solving skills to develop useful products that could be commercially viable. They will cover the ethical responsibilities of designers and how funding can be sourced to make their own designs commercially successful business ventures.

What will be studied?

Portfolio - 60% (120 marks)

For this unit a candidate needs to produce a portfolio of work showing their personal response to either a starting point, brief, scenario, or stimulus devised and provided by the centre.

Set task - 40% (80 marks)

An early release paper will provide candidates with a range of written and visual starting points, briefs, scenarios and stimuli, from which students must formulate a personal response.

Assessment structure

The early release paper for the set task is issued to candidates on or after 1 January. There is an unlimited preparatory period. This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated by OCR.

Career opportunities

This course leads directly to a wide range of careers including:

- Engineering
- Architecture
- Product design
- Interior design
- Furniture design
- Graphic design
- Project management
- Health and safety officer
- Construction
- Building services
- Manufacturing
- Motor vehicle technology and repair
- Agriculture

Students will also develop problem-solving skills that will be needed in a landscape with more automation in the workplace.

Fine Art

EXAM BOARD	Pearson Edexcel
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mr Oprych - aoprych@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	601/8069/9

This GCSE is designed to bring art and design to life and to help you develop your artistic skills and expand your creativity, imagination and independence. What's more, the possibilities for personal expression are endless. You will also be required to analyse artists and write about your interest around the subject matter to inform your work.

The course is good preparation for progression onto A level in art and design, fine art or a suitable college or vocational course.

We want this to be an inspiring GCSE that will encourage you to consider a wide range of approaches to expressing yourself through different materials, media and techniques. It will help you gain knowledge and understanding of the art, craft, design, media and technologies of today and in the past, as well as in different societies and cultures. You will experience different work practices and look at relevant processes and equipment too.

Why study fine art?

Students who decide to pursue art at key stage 4 will be provided with the unique opportunity to work in a wide variety of media and create a range of work in two or three dimensions. They will learn new techniques and have the freedom to select their own inspiration and creative journey.

In addition to lesson time where staff will guide them through the development of their skills and ideas, students will also be expected to work independently. They will be asked to focus their efforts on creating interesting and exciting personal responses, which have materialised from an observational starting point.

This is a fantastic choice for students wishing to pursue any career which requires creativity, confidence in expressing ideas and opinions, or problem-solving.

What will be studied?

Portfolio - 60% (120 marks)

For this unit a candidate needs to produce a portfolio of work showing their personal response to either a starting point, brief, scenario, or stimulus devised and provided by the academy.

Set task - 40% (80 marks)

An early release paper will provide candidates with a range of written and visual starting points, briefs, scenarios and stimuli, from which students must formulate a personal response.

Assessment structure

The early release paper for the set task is issued to candidates on or after 1 January. There is an unlimited preparatory period. This unit is internally assessed and externally moderated by Pearson.

Career opportunities

- Advertising
- Publishing
- Architecture
- Museum and gallery work
- Photography and film
- Animation
- Fashion
- Interior design
- Landscape gardening

Hospitality and Catering

EXAM BOARD	WJEC
QUALIFICATION TYPE	Vocational qualification
CONTACT	Mrs Shiplee - rshiplee@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	603/7022/1

Hospitality and catering provides an awareness of the catering industry, encouraging the identification of customer needs and developing a knowledge of nutrition.

What will be studied?

Students apply their learning to safely prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes. They will draw on their learning of different types of provision, including kitchen and front of house operations in unit one, as well as keeping safe.

Course content is relevant not only to employees within food production, but also those with a responsibility for food safety in the industry, such as nutritionists, restaurant managers and business owners. This extends the learner's appreciation of the whole vocational area beyond the kitchen environment.

The theory part of the course covers:

- meanings of food related terms
- equipment
- safety and first aid
- recipe adaption
- healthy eating
- presentation techniques
- environmental issues
- the hospitality industry
- types of service
- planning for functions
- teamwork and communication

Benefit of studying hospitality and catering:

- provides students with an awareness of the catering and hospitality industry
- encourages organisational skills
- encourages the identification of customer needs and eating trends in a multicultural society
- develops a knowledge of nutrition and the relationship between diet and health
- acknowledges the importance of cost effectiveness when menu planning
- provides opportunities to work individually and as part of a team
- develops creativity and interest in food preparation, presentation and service

Assessment structure

Coursework worth 60%
Examination consisting of one paper worth 40%

Career opportunities

- Catering
- Diet and nutrition
- Food production
- Health and safety

Photography

EXAM BOARD	Pearson Edexcel
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mr Oprych - aoprych@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	601/8069/9

This GCSE is designed to bring art and design through the medium of photography. Students will develop their artistic skills and expand their creativity, imagination and independence using photography and ICT manipulation to express themselves. Students will analyse artists and write about their interest around the subject matter. The artist or designers' work will directly inspire the work that students produce using ICT resources and Adobe Photoshop software. The course is good preparation for progression to art and design A level.

What will be studied?

Art and design portfolio 60% (120 marks)

Students will produce a portfolio of work showing their personal response to either a starting point, brief, scenario, or stimulus. This will take the form of a portfolio of images developed by the student.

Art and design OCR-set task 40% (80 marks)

The early release paper will be issued in January and will provide students with a range of written and visual starting points, briefs, scenarios and stimuli. From these, one must be selected upon which to base a personal response. Students will be expected to create a product based on the starting point under controlled conditions.

Why study photography?

Photography students will have the opportunity to work in a wide variety of media and create a range of work using photo manipulation software. They will learn new techniques with the freedom to select their own inspiration and creative journey. In addition to lesson time where staff will guide them, students will be expected to work independently and focus their efforts on creating interesting and exciting personal responses. This is a fantastic choice for students wishing to pursue any career which requires creativity, confidence in expressing ideas and opinions, or problem-solving.

Assessment structure

The early release paper is issued to candidates on or after 1 January with an unlimited preparatory period. The set task worth 40% of the qualification is internally assessed and moderated by OCR.

Career opportunities

- Advertising
- Media
- Photography
- Film and animation
- Forensic artist

Dance

EXAM BOARD	Pearson
QUALIFICATION TYPE	BTEC
CONTACT	Mrs Puttergill – aputtergill@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk Mrs Manfredi – kmanfredi@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	603/7054/3 – RPD3

What will be studied?

This course offers a practical introduction to life and work in the performing arts (dance) industry. The qualification is the same size and level as a GCSE.

Course Content

This course will give you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. You will also develop key skills, such as creating performance or design content for a real vocational scenario. Everyone taking this qualification will study three components, covering the following content areas:

Component 1: Exploring the performing arts - Learners will develop their understanding of performing arts (dance) by examining the work of dance professionals and the processes used to create dance performance.

Component 2: Developing skills and techniques in the performing arts (dance) - Learners will develop their dance skills and techniques through the reproduction of a dance repertoire as performers or designers.

Component 3: Responding to a brief - Learners will be given the opportunity to work as part of a group to contribute to a workshop performance as either a performer or a designer in response to a brief and stimulus

Why study dance?

This qualification is for learners interested in taking a hands-on course alongside their GCSEs that will offer them an insight into what it is like to work in the performing arts (dance) sector.

How is the course assessed?

As a creative subject with a focus on application, there is no written exam. All components are assessed through engaging, open, and flexible set tasks, designed to give students as much freedom as possible in how they respond, allowing them to work to their own strengths and interests.

Assessment structure

- Exploring the performing arts (dance): 36 GLH - internal assessment
- Developing skills and techniques in the performing arts (dance): 36 GLH - internal assessment
- Responding to a brief: 48 GLH - external synoptic

Career opportunities

- Teacher
- Choreographer
- Freelance
- Performer
- Physio
- Fitness instructor
- Designer
- Personal trainer
- Dance therapy
- Community work

Drama

EXAM BOARD	OCR
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mrs Simpson – ksimpson@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	601/8975/7

Drama will not only give you the opportunity to attain a GCSE but will also help you to develop key life skills such as teamwork, communication and how to be a team leader.

You will be able to explore all aspects of drama, from performing in front of an audience, to scripted sketches and improvised scenes. The use of technology and stage crafts, such as make-up, costume, video, lighting, and sound, is essential and will be covered within the course.

What will be studied?

Students can choose how to be assessed. This means students have the choice to complete the course as a performer, as a designer or through a combination of both roles.

The qualification is made up of three components. There is one non-examined practical component (30%) and one moderated examined practical unit (30%). There is a final written examination at the end of the course (40%).

Theory and practical work will be integrated throughout the course and all the work studied will be explored practically.

Why study drama?

Students will gain valuable transferable skills that will prepare them for the modern world. Drama allows students to become independent learners, critical thinkers and effective decision makers - all personal attributes that can make them stand out as they progress through their education and into employment.

Assessment structure

Component 1: devising drama - 60 marks

Students will create a devised performance from a stimulus in groups. Students can choose to work as a performer or designer in this component. All performances must be supported by a portfolio, which is evidence of the devising process and can be a made up of a combination of writing, images, observation notes and artefacts.

Component 2: text performance - 60 marks

Students will study a play and take part in two performances based on two extracts from the text. Students can work as a performer or designer in this component and are required to produce an accompanying concept document, which outlines intentions for the performance.

Final examination assessment - 80 marks

The examination component will be assessed at the end of the qualification and will be 1 hour, 30 minutes in length. There are two sections to the exam. Section A focuses on the exploration of *Blood Brothers* by Willy Russell. Section B gives opportunity to develop evaluative skills. Students are required to visit the theatre and create an evaluation of something they have seen.

Career opportunities

By studying GCSE drama, you will not necessarily be an actor, but you will use the skills you learn throughout your life. Confidence in your ability as a team leader and communicator are key skills in any career.



Music

EXAM BOARD	Pearson
QUALIFICATION TYPE	BTEC
CONTACT	Mrs Simpson - ksimpson@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	603/7055/5

BTEC music is a study of several aspects of music including performing, composing, listening and musical technology.

Music lends itself well to developing a wide range of transferable skills recognised by employers and universities.

What will be studied?

BTEC music is split into three modules.

Component 1: exploring music products and styles (30%, internally assessed)

You will take part in many different music-making workshops over several months to explore a wide range of different styles and iconic performers. Throughout this you will produce a portfolio of your work.

This portfolio will include many forms of work such as:

- short videos
- audio
- text
- graphics

This unit is designed to introduce you to performing, composing, producing (using technology) and listening skills.

Component 2: music skills development (40%, internally assessed)

You will specialise from two out of the following three areas:

- performing on your chosen instrument (including vocal)
- composing your own music
- producing music using technology

Component 3: responding to a commercial music brief (40%, externally assessed)

You will be given a brief from the exam board to work on. You will then develop and present an original creation, choosing one of the four styles the exam board has selected.

You can present this as a solo or group performance, an audio recording or a project using music technology.

Why study music?

Music is an interesting course for anyone already able to play an instrument (voice included) which looks at a broad range of musical styles. It helps increase cultural and social skills, brain and memory development, coordination, concentration and creative thinking. It is excellent for improving listening skills while giving students the opportunity to express themselves and relieve stress.

Career opportunities

- Professional performer
- Composer
- Music production



Geography

EXAM BOARD	AQA
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mr Newby - lnewby@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	601/8410/3

This exciting course is based on a balanced framework of physical and human geography. It allows students to investigate the link between the two themes, and approach and examine the battles between the man-made and natural worlds.

What will be studied?

- Living with the physical environment
- Challenges in the human environment
- Geographical applications

Why study geography?

Students will travel the world from their classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, higher income countries, newly emerging economies and lower income countries.

Topics of study include climate change, poverty, deprivation, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Assessment structure

The course involves a two-year study period (plus half a year in year 9). Students must have studied the three units over the period of two years before they can sit all three examinations. All geography students will also be required to undertake fieldwork study outside of the academy. This will have direct input into paper 3.

Paper 1: living with the physical environment - written examination, 1 hour, 30 minutes (35%)

Paper 2: challenges in the human environment - written examination, 1 hour, 30 minutes (35%)

Paper 3: geographical applications - written examination, 1 hour, 30 minutes (30%)

Career opportunities

- Meteorology
- Finance
- Journalism
- Teaching
- Graphic design
- Surveying
- Transport
- Conservation
- Tourism
- Hotel management

This is just the tip of the iceberg!

History

EXAM BOARD	Eduqas
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mr James - mjames@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	601/8239/8

The structure of this course is distinctive, giving students the opportunity to study history in-depth. It allows students to make a clear distinction between the study of history in the short-term, the medium-term and the long-term. It actively encourages connections between different periods and eras in history, representing a coherent programme of study.

What will be studied?

Students undertake two studies in-depth, one British and one non-British, from eight options in total. This focuses study on substantial and coherent short-time scales.

Studies in-depth provide the opportunity to study history in greater detail and consequently understand the complexity of a society or historical situation more effectively. This component encourages students to use a wide range of historical sources. They will also study different historical interpretations of specific events and issues.

Component 1: British study in-depth – the Elizabethan age, 1558-1603 and non-British study in-depth – the USA, a nation of contrasts, 1910-1929.

Component 2: period study – the development of Germany, 1919-1991 and thematic study – changes in health and medicine in Britain c.500 to the present day with a focus on Letchworth, garden City, 1903 to present day.

Why study history?

- The topics are varied and fascinating
- The lessons are varied and engaging
- History helps you understand the world around you
- History is a keystone subject, highly valued by a range of employers and universities

History provides transferable skills for a number of career opportunities. Here are just a handful of famous people who have studied the subject:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| • Gordon Brown | • Jonathan Ross |
| • Michael Briggs | • Diane Abbott |
| • Louis Theroux | • Martha Stewart |
| • Sir Stringer | • Julia Child |
| • Sacha Baron Cohen | • Lauryn Hill |

Assessment structure

Component 1: British study in-depth:
1 hour written examination

Component 1: non-British study in-depth:
1 hour written examination

Component 2: period study:
45 minutes written examination

Component 2: thematic study:
1 hour, 15 minutes written examination

Career opportunities

- Travel and tourism
- Museums
- Finance
- Journalism
- Law
- Teaching

Religious Studies

EXAM BOARD	Eduqas
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mrs Hunt - zhunt@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	601/8879/0

Religious studies encourages students to reflect on current ethical issues and philosophical questions such as:

- what happens when we die?
- why are we here?
- are miracles real?

What will be studied?

Component 1: religion, philosophy and ethical studies in the modern world (50%)

Theme 1: issues of relationships – family relationships, sexual relationships, marriage, changes in relationships, and issues of equality.

Theme 2: issues of life and death – the world (including religious and scientific beliefs), the value of life (humans/animals), beliefs about death and the afterlife, issues of sanctity and quality of life, medical ethics (abortion/euthanasia).

Theme 3: issues of good and evil – good (morality, conscience), evil (natural, moral evil), suffering (causes and type of suffering, work of a charity to alleviate suffering), crime and punishment (aims of punishment, death penalty, work of prison chaplains), forgiveness.

Theme 4: issues of human rights – human rights, racial prejudice and discrimination, issues of wealth and poverty, issues of social justice (issues about freedom of beliefs, censorship, extremism, freedom of speech), religion in 21st century Britain (role of Christianity, diversity of beliefs in the UK, inter-faith dialogue).

Component 2: study of Christianity (25%)

Beliefs and teachings – nature of God, creation, Jesus Christ, salvation, the afterlife.

Practices – forms of worship, sacraments, pilgrimage, the church in the local community, the worldwide church.

Component 3: study of a world faith – Judaism (25%)

Beliefs and teachings: nature of God, different views within Orthodox and Reformists. The Abrahamic Covenant, importance of Pikuach Nefesh.

Practices: Orthodox and Reform synagogues, the role of Brit Milah, use of the Tenakh and Talmud in daily life as well as a study of Jewish festivals and practices in British communities.

Course benefits

Religious studies gives you a greater understanding of other perceptions of life. It focuses on current key issues in the world and gives you an opportunity to be reflective about the choices you make in your life and those of others. The examination technique develops analytical skills, which will help in many other GCSE subjects.

Career opportunities

Religious education provides a platform and skills base for a number of career pathways. The key components of discussions and development of reasoning are valued by many careers including:

- Teaching
- Social work
- Law
- Journalism
- Psychotherapy and counselling



Business and Enterprise

EXAM BOARD	NCFE
QUALIFICATION TYPE	LEVEL 1/2 TECHNICAL AWARD
CONTACT	Mr Fossey - dfossey@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	603/7004/X

In today's world, it is important to be one step ahead of the competition. The competition may be other businesses, it may be other people applying for the same job or it may be your future colleagues. In all circumstances, it is important to ensure you have developed an analytical viewpoint of the world to avoid getting left behind. Many business moguls have already walked this very path to success and in business and enterprise, we aim to learn from their ideas.

What will be studied?

Introduction to business and enterprise:

- understand entrepreneurship, business organisation and the importance of stakeholders
- understand the marketing mix, market research, market types and orientation types
- understand operations management
- understand customer service and internal influence of business
- understand external influence on business

Understanding resources for business and enterprise planning:

- understand research, resource planning, growth and development for business and enterprise
- understanding human resource requirements for a business start-up
- understand sources of enterprise funding and business finance
- understand business and enterprise planning

Why study business and enterprise?

If you like to actively engage in the study of business and enterprise and want to develop as an effective and independent learner, if you have an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts from opinion, and if you like to build arguments and make informed judgements, then you should choose to study business and enterprise. You will also learn to develop and apply your knowledge and understanding to a range of contemporary issues in national, local and international contexts.

Assessment structure

40% externally assessed exam
60% internally assessed coursework

Career opportunities

- Starting your own business
- Management consultancy
- Chartered accountancy
- Marketing

IT

EXAM BOARD	OCR
QUALIFICATION TYPE	Level 2 Cambridge National
CONTACT	Mr Upton - cupton@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	J836

The digital age needs IT. Computer programs have all but infiltrated every aspect of our lives. IT is about theorising, designing and understanding software for the programs we use day in, day out.

What will be studied?

IT in the digital world - written examination

In this unit you will learn about design and testing concepts for creating an IT solution or product, and the uses of IT in the digital world.

Topics include:

- design tools
- human computer interface (HCI) in everyday life
- data and testing of cyber-security and legislation
- digital communications
- internet of everything (IoE)

Data manipulation using spreadsheets - set assignment

In this unit you will learn how to plan, design, create, test and evaluate a data manipulation spreadsheet solution to meet a client's requirements. You will be able to evaluate your solution based on the user requirements.

Topics include:

- planning and designing the spreadsheet solution
- creating the spreadsheet solution
- testing the spreadsheet solution
- evaluating the spreadsheet solution

Using augmented reality to present information - set assignment

In this unit you will learn how to design, create, test and review an augmented reality model prototype to meet a client's requirements.

Topics include:

- augmented reality (AR)
- designing an augmented reality (AR) model prototype
- creating an augmented reality (AR) model prototype
- testing and reviewing

Why study IT?

IT will give you an understanding of how to program computers using the Python programming language, as well as equipping you with the knowledge of how computer technology works. You will also learn first-class problem-solving skills and troubleshooting skills. If you have a keen interest in how computers work, then IT could be the ideal course for you.

Assessment structure

70% coursework
30% exam

Career opportunities

IT students have excellent graduate prospects. The average salary for someone working in the IT sector is £47,500. There is a plethora of opportunities available including:

- Web developer
- Games designer
- Software engineer
- Network analyst

Media

EXAM BOARD	WJEC
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mr Fossey - dfossey@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	603/1115/0

What is media?

Media is about communication, particularly mass communication with lots of people. The media creates products that are designed to entertain and inform, created for lots of people to hear, watch or read, often at roughly the same time. Whenever you are watching television, streaming films, scrolling through social media or listening to a podcast, you are consuming media.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment will consist of a mixture of examinations and non-examined assessment.

Component 1: written examination:

1 hour 30 mins, 40% of qualification

Component 2: written examination:

1 hour 30 mins, 30% of qualification

Component 3: non-exam assessment:

Media production, 30% of qualification



What will be studied?

As a media student, you will analyse how media products like TV programmes and music videos use images, sounds, language, and representations to create meaning. You will learn about the media industry and how the industry affects how media products are made. You will investigate media audiences, exploring who are the people who watch, read and consume the products, and consider how different people may be affected by media products differently, and why.

You will study lots of different media forms, such as:

- television
- online media
- advertising and marketing
- film marketing
- magazines
- newspapers
- social and participatory media
- music videos
- radio
- video games

Career opportunities

- Media planner
- Multimedia specialist
- Programme researcher
- Broadcasting/film/video
- Public relations officer
- Runner broadcasting/film/video
- Television/film/video producer



Modern Foreign Languages

EXAM BOARD	AQA
QUALIFICATION TYPE	GCSE
CONTACT	Mrs Burton - cburton@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	French - 8652, Spanish - 8692

Modern foreign languages are widely chosen and have a proven track record of success at Retford Oaks. Two years of language study will catch the eye of anyone reading your job or university application and is valued by future employers.

What will be studied?

During the course, students will study three main themes. Each theme contains three subsection topics.

Theme 1: people and lifestyle

- Unit 1 - identity and relationships with others
- Unit 2 - healthy living and lifestyle
- Unit 3 - education and work

Theme 2: popular cultures

- Unit 4 - free time activities
- Unit 5 - customs, festivals and celebrations
- Unit 6 - celebrity culture

Theme 3: communication and the world around us

- Unit 7 - travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Unit 8 - media and technology
- Unit 9 - the environment and where people live

Why study a language?

- Using languages at work can raise your salary by 20%
- Learning a language helps your memory, creativity, listening skills and self-confidence
- By taking a language you don't just learn the language, you find out about other people, countries and cultures, making it a varied subject
- Languages mean business - being able to speak a language will make you really stand out

Assessment structure

Students undertake examinations in the summer of year 11.

- Paper 1 - listening (25%)
- Paper 2 - speaking (25%)
- Paper 3 - reading (25%)
- Paper 4 - writing (25%)

Languages have supported:

- David Beckham to speak to Spanish journalists
- Paula Radcliffe to speak French when competing in Europe
- J.K. Rowling to speak to French publishers
- Tony Blair to work in a French bar during his gap year before university

Career opportunities

- Consultant
- Human resources officer
- Interpreter
- Investment analyst
- Journalist
- Logistics manager
- Management accountant
- Marketing manager
- Public relations officer
- Secondary school teacher
- Solicitor
- Tourism officer
- Tourist information manager
- Translator



Sport Studies

EXAM BOARD	OCR
QUALIFICATION TYPE	Level 2 Cambridge National
CONTACT	Mr Payne - cpayne@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	Code - 603/7107/9

The study of sport and physical education offers a variety of topics and develops a knowledge base, which provides a platform for further education and employment. We welcome students with a passion for sport who are keen to progress in the area.

What will be studied?

This course is made up of three modules. Two of these modules are internally assessed and verified by external moderators. The third module is an exam-based unit of work.

The first unit is based around increasing the awareness of outdoor and adventurous activities. The second unit assesses the student's ability to perform practically in both a team and individual sport, as well as assessing their ability to plan and lead a group successfully in a given activity.

The last exam unit focuses on contemporary issues in sport. Topics included in this unit are;

- issues which affect participation in sport
- the role of sport in promoting values
- the implications of hosting a major sporting event for a city or country
- the role National Governing Bodies (NGBs) play in the development of their sport
- the use of technology in sport

Why study sports studies?

- Helps you to understand the impact of sport in society
- Helps you to improve your practical ability in different sports
- Allows you to further develop LORIC skills in the classroom
- Links directly to sports psychology
- Broadens your understanding of outdoor and adventurous activities available
- Prepares you to study BTEC PE at Level 3

Assessment structure

The exam unit is 1 hour 15 minutes that will be sat in year 11. The other two units are assessed through practical and written tasks throughout year 10. Students may also be able to resubmit coursework and practical units in year 11 if necessary.

The practical activities will be recorded and moderated by an external visiting moderator. Assignments will be completed under limited controlled circumstances once the content has been delivered through lessons. These will also be moderated by an external visiting moderator.

Career opportunities

- Teacher of physical education
- Physiotherapist
- Journalist
- Sports coach
- Sports scientist
- Sports technician
- Armed forces



Child Development

EXAM BOARD	OCR
QUALIFICATION TYPE	Cambridge Nationals Level 1/2
CONTACT	Mrs Hunt - zhunt@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	J809

This course is for students who wish to develop applied knowledge and practical skills in child development. It is designed with both practical and theoretical elements, which will prepare students for future qualifications in childcare, health and social care, psychology, sociology and biology.

Career opportunities

There are many jobs available in the childcare industry, including roles in schools, nurseries and day care centres, plus many others.

What will be studied?

All students will study three mandatory units:

- Health and wellbeing for child development
- Create a safe environment and understand the nutritional needs of children from birth to five years
- Understand the development of a child from one to five years

Why study child development?

Level 1/2 Cambridge Nationals in child development naturally progresses onto Level 3 courses in child development, also health and social care at A level, and psychology and sociology at A level. These are all excellent starting points for university courses and further education courses. Many students leave after their GCSE courses to start an apprenticeship in childcare.

Assessment structure

There are two centre assessed units which equate to 60% of the overall grade. There is also one hour and fifteen minute externally assessed exam paper which covers topics such as pre-conception health and reproduction, antenatal care and preparation for birth, postnatal care, and childhood illness and child safe environments.



Construction

EXAM BOARD	WJEC
QUALIFICATION TYPE	WJEC Level 1/2 Award
CONTACT	Mrs White - fwhite@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	603/3068/5

This course has been designed to allow learners to develop the understanding and skills required for a range of job roles in construction. The units provide an overview of technical roles such as bricklayers, carpenters and electricians, as well as professional roles such as site inspectors, project managers and architects, and how they work together on construction projects.

What will be studied?

The WJEC Level 1/2 Award in construction supports learners to develop an awareness of the construction industry. It is useful for students who want to learn about the construction industry from the build perspective. It provides learners with a broad introduction to the different trades involved in the sector and the types of career opportunities available. It is an ideal foundation for further study. Students may go on to start an apprenticeship or continue with their studies in order to pursue a range of job roles.

Why study construction?

This course places a high expectation upon behaviour and safety. Learners are expected to display high levels of self-control and behaviour to ensure the safety of themselves and others. Constant reference is made to the workplace environment and learners are expected to adjust and meet our mature expectations.

Assessment structure

Units are assessed through a controlled internal assessment or external assessment.

Unit 1: safety and security in construction (external assessment online)

Unit 2: practical construction skills (internal assessment)

Unit 3: planning construction projects

Why is the construction industry a great place to work?

You get to build the stuff people depend on. How many professionals in other industries can point at the brand-new hospital in town and say, 'I helped build that'? Whether it's a road, a home, a sewage system or a school, the things you build matter to your community.

A strong construction industry equals a strong economy. Construction projects provide jobs, inject funds and new life into a community, and create the infrastructure critical to keeping the country moving forward.

You get to see immediate results from your work. At the end of every day, you can see the progress you and your team have made. Watching that progress turn into a completed project is one of the most rewarding parts of a construction job.

Health and Social Care

EXAM BOARD	OCR
QUALIFICATION TYPE	Cambridge Nationals Level 1/2
CONTACT	Mrs Hunt - zhunt@retfordoaks-ac.org.uk
COURSE CODE	J811

This course is for students who have a keen interest in all aspects of health and social care. It provides essential knowledge and transferable life skills, and contributes to students' personal development, employability and economic wellbeing.

What will be studied?

All students will study three units, including:

- principles of care in health and social settings
- supporting individuals through life events
- health promotion campaigns

Why study health and social care?

This course positively challenges students, whilst promoting independence, creativity and critical thinking. Further progression from this course would be to health and social care at A level or A levels in psychology and sociology, thus meeting entry requirements for study at university. Apprenticeships in health and social care would be an alternative progression route.

Assessment structure

There are two centre assessed coursework units, which equate to 60% of the overall grade. There is also a one hour and 15 minute written paper which equates to 40% of the overall grade. This will include topics such as individual rights, person centred values, effective communication and methods of protecting service users.

Career opportunities

- Nursing
- Paramedic
- Social care
- Counselling
- Psychology
- Audiology
- Anaesthetist

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