



Year 9 Option Choices

March 2017



"Helping you make the right choice"

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Explaining the Curriculum for Key Stage 4 **Core Curriculum**

All students take the following 5 subjects; these are referred to as the 'core curriculum':

- Religious Education
- English
- Maths
- Science
- Core PE (Not examined)

All students take a GCSE in Religious Education. As a Catholic Academy we see Religious Education as at the core of our Academy. Not only is the subject very successful academically but it also provides important moral and spiritual education vital to the development of every child and adult.

All students take GCSEs in Maths and English Language. These two qualifications are the key to future success regardless of whether students go straight into the world of work, apply to college or for an apprenticeship. Most students will also take a GCSE in English Literature in addition to the GCSE in English Language.

All students take Science as part of their core curriculum. Core Science consists of a Combined Science GCSE (two GCSEs) which includes Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

We also expect all students to participate in Core PE which is not examined.

The Four Pathways

The Academy does not want to provide a one-size-fits-all approach for students within the optional curriculum and, as such, provides four pathways to the future. The pathways are identified by looking at your son's/daughter's strengths and weaknesses and then suggesting two possible pathways that would best ensure your child reaches their full potential.

We will provide you with an option sheet designed for the suggested pathway for you and your son/daughter to review and discuss on the Options Evening. We are really passionate that your son/daughter can achieve his/her full potential and want to ensure the pathway selected is best suited to their needs. Within the selected pathway there will still be some choices to be made.

The four pathways are as follows:

- **Baccalaureate Academic**
- **General Academic**
- **Broad Curriculum**
- **Personalised Curriculum**

Baccalaureate Academic Pathway

All students will complete:

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Separate Sciences (three GCSEs)

Languages choice

Students can select **one** language from the list below:

- Spanish
- French

Humanities choice

Students can select **one** subject from the list below:

- Geography
- History

General Academic Pathway

All students will complete:

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Separate Sciences (three GCSEs).

Humanities choice

Students can select **one** subject from the list below:

- Geography
- History

General choice

Students can select **one** GCSE subject or Technical Award from the list below:

- Art
- Computer Science
- Film Studies
- French
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education (Academic Course)
- Spanish

Students may wish to select a Technical Award from the following:

- Fashion and Textiles
- Food and Catering
- Materials Technology
- Visual Communication

Broad Curriculum Pathway

All students will complete:

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Combined Award Science (two GCSEs)

Humanities choice

Students can select **one** subject from the list below:

- Geography
- History

General choice

Students can select **two** subjects from the list below from GCSEs, Technical awards or BTECs. So, for example, a student could select GCSE French and BTEC Sport.

GCSEs:

- Art
- Computer Science
- Film Studies
- French
- Geography
- History
- Music
- Physical Education (academic course)
- Separate Sciences (three GCSEs)
Selecting this option will substitute the Combined Award Science course (two GCSEs)
- Spanish

Technical Awards:

- Fashion and Textiles
- Food and Catering
- Materials Technology
- Visual Communication

BTECs:

- Creative Digital Production
- Sport
- Health and Social Care

Personalised Curriculum Pathway

All students will complete:

- GCSE RE
- GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Combined Award Science (Two GCSEs)

Humanities choice

Students can select **one** subject from the list below:

- Geography;
- History.

Vocational choice

Students can select **one** subject from the list of either Technical Awards or BTECs below:

Technical Awards:

- Fashion and Textiles
- Food and Catering
- Materials Technology
- Visual Communication

BTECs:

- Creative Digital Production
- Sport
- Health and Social Care

Students following this pathway will also be provided with further opportunities that include:

- Additional Maths
- Additional English
- Further vocational qualifications to be determined at an individual level.

Choices within the pathway

We ask all students to have a reserved choice from within their selected pathway in the event that a selected choice cannot be honoured. In the vast majority of cases, choices will be honoured but it is possible that we may be unable to provide for a choice where:

- The course clashes with another one of the student's choices (although we will pre-emptively do our utmost to schedule courses in such a way as to avoid this as much as possible)
- The course is oversubscribed and there are staffing limitations
- There is not enough interest in the course.

Options within your pathway – Your road to the future

Choosing your options is your first chance to influence your educational future. Until now, such decisions as which school you attend, the subjects you study and the groups you are in have been made by someone else. This is your chance to choose the subjects to study that will best help you to achieve your chosen career.

There are people around you to help you decide wisely about the subjects that are right for you and your future. These people are your parents/carers, your subject teachers, your form tutor and Mr Briggs as Pastoral Learning Manager.

Many careers require a good, broad-based general education, but entry standards for many careers are laid down by professional institutions and there are entry requirements for courses in higher education or training. There is more about University applications later in this booklet.

How to choose your options within your pathway

Give all subject areas careful consideration before you make your choice.

- Don't just think of your experience in Year 9 – think of your experience of each subject from the beginning of Year 7.
- Don't choose subjects because your friends are doing them – it is your future, not theirs, and it is likely you will end up in different groups and working separately.
- Don't drop a subject only because you don't like it. That subject may be important in keeping open a wide range of future career opportunities for you.
- Do not assume that certain subjects are easy. There are no 'soft options' at either GCSE, BTEC or Technical level.

Remember, your education is not just about the subject requirements of employers and professional bodies. By studying a wide range of different subjects, you will learn new skills and gain understanding and knowledge that will help you in your hobbies, at home and with friends, as well as in both college and employment now and in the future.

Guide to GCSEs, BTECs and Technical subjects

GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education)

This is the main qualification for students aged 14-16. Each GCSE has a range of results.

Examinations

All GCSEs include examinations. These take place at the end of Year 11. In the past, students could take modular examinations through Years 10 and 11. This has changed, however, and now **all GCSE examinations will be taken at the end of Year 11.**

Mock Examinations

Students will take mock examinations (practice exams) at the end of Year 10 and in December of Year 11.

BTECs

BTECs are not GCSEs, but they are considered equivalent to GCSEs. They have a vocational focus rather than the academic focus of GCSEs.

Technical Awards

Very much like BTECs, Technical Awards are not GCSEs either, but they have an equivalency to GCSEs that are accepted in post-16 institutions. They too have a vocational focus rather than the academic focus of GCSEs.

University Applications

The most important factor in applying for university places are a student's A-level results. However, **GCSE grades are also increasingly important**. The Russell Group (the top 24 British Universities) has given some guidance on GCSEs and how these might affect an application for university. There are no hard and fast rules that apply here, as each University can take a different approach to applications. Nevertheless, the summary below gives an idea of some of the GCSE requirements that you might come across for certain degree courses.

- A growing number of universities require a modern language for entrance to **any** course, e.g. University College London, Edinburgh, Oxford and Cambridge are some examples.
- Applicants to study Medicine are usually required to have very good GCSE results in Maths, Science, and English.
- For a degree in English, universities often look for applicants to have a GCSE in a modern or classical language.
- For a Business degree, a Grade 6 or above in GCSE Maths is often required.
- A Grade 5 or 6 in Maths and sometimes Science is often required for a degree in Psychology.
- To study a Science subject at university (including Biology, Chemistry or Physics) applicants who have not studied Maths at A-level will often need to have achieved at least a Grade 5 in Maths at GCSE.

The English Baccalaureate

The Government has introduced a concept called the "English Baccalaureate". This provides recognition to any student who achieves a GCSE pass at Grade 5 or above in **all** the following areas:

- Mathematics
- English Language
- Combined Award Science (two GCSEs) **OR** Separate Sciences (three GCSEs) consisting of either three of the following: Physics, Biology, Chemistry or Computer Science;
- A modern or ancient language
- History or Geography

The Government believes that this qualification will encourage students to obtain a broad range of academic qualifications by the time they leave secondary school.

Many universities currently have no plans to make the English Baccalaureate a requirement for entry. However, applicants should be mindful of **individual** GCSE entry requirements for particular undergraduate courses. Furthermore, the subjects within the English Baccalaureate are known as 'facilitating' subjects, and the Russell Group advise students to choose as many 'facilitating' subjects as possible' as they are either required to follow particular courses or provide essential knowledge and skills which will support the study of any subject. The facilitating subjects are: Mathematics, English, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History and Languages.

It is important that students at St Michael's make choices that they are happy and confident with. For a student to succeed at GCSE, they must be interested in and motivated by the subject they study. There are many GCSEs, BTEC and Technical courses on offer at St Michael's that are outside the English Baccalaureate subjects. These courses provide excellent opportunities for qualifying for studying a trade or apprenticeship, and give valuable preparation for work and further study.

Core Curriculum: GCSE Religious Education

Contact: Mrs C Griffiths (Curriculum Leader: Religious Education)

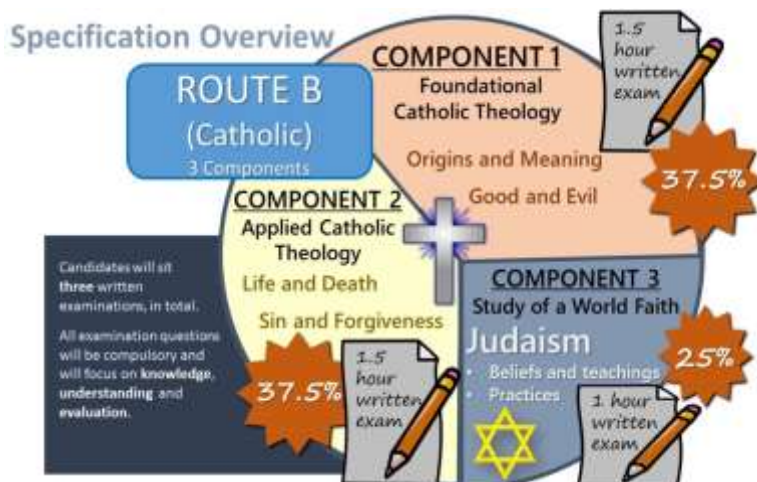
Exam Board: Eduqas Route B

Course Outline

As a Catholic community, we believe in core Christian values which are at the heart of what we do. These define and underpin all our decisions and actions in life. Religious Education is therefore a core subject at St Michael's and studied by all students. The GCSE course develops religious understanding and enhances critical thinking about moral, religious and social issues. Many of the issues studied are very relevant to young people today and it helps them to formulate a clear, relevant and accurate opinion. It also helps them to recognise, evaluate and respect the opinions of others.

The Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle has stipulated that all Catholic Schools must choose an exam option which includes the following:

- 50% Roman Catholic (Beliefs and Teachings; Practices; Sources of Wisdom and Authority; Forms of Expression and Ways of life)
- 25% Judaism (Beliefs and Teachings; Practices)
- 25% Philosophy and ethics (2 themes)



Assessment: Examination will take place in the Summer Term of Year 11. There is **no** controlled assessment element in RE.

On-line Support

The department has always been committed to ensuring students achieve and exceed their potential and excellent resources have been developed in the past to ensure this. As this is a new course of study, resources will be developed online to help and support students nearer to completion of the course in Year 11. Revision sheets are presently provided before all internal assessments to ensure students are given the means to succeed.

Core Curriculum: GCSE English

Contact: Miss Thompson (Curriculum Leader: English)

English is central to the life of St Michael's Academy. All students will study English Language and English Literature (two GCSEs), following the AQA GCSE specifications.

English Language

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8700

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing (50%)

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (50%)

Spoken Language (separate endorsement)

There are two examinations for English Language and these will account for 100% of the final grade (50% per paper). Students will study a range of fiction and non-fiction texts to prepare them for their language exams. Both exams feature texts which are unseen and therefore students are encouraged to read widely at home in order to prepare for this. They will also develop their descriptive writing skills and practise how to write to express a viewpoint.

Students also develop their communication skills through the spoken language element. This will involve them speaking in a range of contexts. They will receive a separate qualification for this which is internally assessed.

English Literature

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8702

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century Novel (40%)

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry (60%)

There are two examinations for English Literature, accounting for 100% of the final grade. Students study a range of texts including a Shakespeare play, a novel and poetry. Students will develop a thorough knowledge of each text to prepare them for their Literature exams. Exams are all closed book and so students need to be very familiar with the plot, characters, themes and context of each text they study.

Core Curriculum: GCSE Maths

Contact: Mr M. Nicholson (Curriculum Leader: Maths)

Exam Board: Edexcel

Syllabus Code: 1MA1

Paper 1: Non-calculator (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %)

Paper 2: Calculator (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %)

Paper 3: Calculator (33 $\frac{1}{3}$ %)

The aim of this course is to provide evidence of students' achievements against demanding and fulfilling content, to give students the confidence that the mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding that they will have acquired during the course of their study are as good as that of the highest performing jurisdictions in the world.

The study of Mathematics provides a strong foundation for further academic and vocational study as well as being an essential pre-requisite for employers. The new Mathematics GCSE teaches students the appropriate mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding to help them progress to a full range of courses in further and higher education. This includes Level 3 Mathematics courses as well as Level 3 and undergraduate courses in other disciplines such as Biology, Geography and Psychology, where the understanding and application of Mathematics is crucial.

Assessment

The assessments will cover the following content headings:

1 Number

2 Algebra

3 Ratio, proportion and rates of change

4 Geometry and measures

5 Probability

6 Statistics

Examination

Two tiers are available: Foundation and Higher (content is defined for each tier). Each student is permitted to take assessments in either the Foundation tier or Higher tier. The qualification consists of three equally-weighted written examination papers at either Foundation tier or Higher tier. All three papers must be at the same tier of entry and must be completed in the same assessment series. Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment and a calculator is allowed for Paper 2 and Paper 3. Each paper is 1 hour and 30 minutes long. Each paper has 80 marks. The content outlined for each tier will be assessed across all three papers.

Core Curriculum: Science

Contact: Mr A. Burgess (Curriculum Leader: Science)

Separate Sciences – GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: Biology 8461

Paper 1: Cell Biology, Organisation, Infection and Bioenergetics: 50%

Paper 2: Homeostasis, Inheritance and Ecology: 50%

Syllabus Code: Chemistry 8462

Paper 1: Atoms, Bonding, Quantitative Chemistry, Chemical and Energy changes: 50%

Paper 2: Rate of change, Organic chemistry, Analysis, Atmosphere, Resources: 50%

Syllabus Code: Physics 8463

Paper 1: Energy, Electricity, Particles and Atoms: 50%

Paper 2: Forces, Waves, Magnetism and Space Physics: 50%

The Separate Science courses are suited to highly motivated students who wish to extend their scientific knowledge and understanding. This GCSE course occupies **15 hours per fortnight;** 5 hours for each specialism. Students following this course must be highly committed and motivated, and willing to undertake additional independent study. This course is suited to those wishing to study Science post-GCSE, or to those students simply wanting to make themselves as attractive as possible to colleges or future employers.

Core Curriculum: Science (Continued)

Combined Science (double award: two GCSEs)

Exam Board: AQA

Combined Science 8464

Paper 1: Cell Biology, Organisation, Infection and Bioenergetics: 16.7%

Paper 2: Homeostasis, Inheritance and Ecology: 16.7%

Paper 3: Atoms, Bonding, Quantitative Chemistry, Chemical and Energy changes: 16.7%

Paper 4: Rate of change, Organic chemistry, Analysis, Atmosphere, Resources: 16.7%

Paper 5: Energy, Electricity, Particles and Atoms: 16.7%

Paper 6: Forces, Waves and Magnetism: 16.7%

Combined Science GCSE occupies **10 hours per fortnight** and is completed across Year 10 and Year 11. It is designed to educate students about the basic requirements to understand the main areas of Biology, Chemistry and Physics that they may need for further study or for a scientific literacy and understanding in life.

GCSE Option: Art

Contact: Miss V. Laking (Curriculum Leader for Art)

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8201

Component 1: Portfolio of Work (60%)

Component 2: Externally Assessed Task (40%)

The GCSE Art and Design course covers a variety of different skills and techniques within various areas of art and design:

- 2D: Drawing, Painting, Printmaking, Graphics, Fashion Illustration, Canvases and Photography
- 3D: Wire jewellery, Ceramics, Sculptures, Masks, Set designs and models, Animation, Textile wall hangings, Costumes/Fashion garments.

Assessment

Students complete two units:

Unit 1: A Portfolio of Work (Controlled Assessment) 60% overall Grade

Unit 2: A controlled Assignment (Exam) 40% overall Grade

Students complete individual projects that are based on a theme/ concept in which the student is inspired by. They will investigate into different skills, techniques and processes, underpinning all their work with various artists and cultural references.

Motivation

This course is ideal for students who are interested and are enthusiastic about art and design. This course offers them the chance to gain the knowledge and skills in an immense variety of areas within the art and design spectrum. They will be able to express themselves as well as gaining vital skills that will allow them to progress into creative fields of employment or further studies. The students may have opportunities to work alongside practising artists, designers and craftspeople to complete different projects.

Progression Routes

After studying GCSE Art students can progress to A-Levels in Fine Art, Textiles or Photography. There are also a number of BTEC qualifications in Art and Design that students can study post-16.

GCSE Option: GCSE Computing

Contact: Mr Cook (Curriculum Lead: Computer Science)

Exam Board: OCR
Syllabus Code: J276

Unit 01 – Computer systems

Unit 02 – Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

Unit 03 – Programming Project

This exciting new course has three engaging and empowering units to unlock the potential of young computer scientists. Your child has now spent three years studying Computer Science and has been given the opportunity to work on exciting, important and rewarding topics that build the foundations for success in GCSE Computing. This course is fun, exciting and offers students the chance to receive a valuable qualification whilst at the same time learning important transferable skills that can be taken into the workplace.

Students will receive tuition in the fundamental concepts of Computer Science that will enable them to complete the three units of work. Units 01 and 02 are written exam based units that allow students to express their knowledge of Computer Science that will stretch and challenge their prowess within the subject. Unit 03 is a Programming Project that will facilitate students investigating and developing their programming skills.

Assessment

Unit 1: Computer Systems

This unit will cover the fundamental aspects of Computer Science and will be assessed in a **written exam worth 40%**. Topics include systems architecture, memory, storage, networks, and security.

Unit 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

This unit will cover technical topics that are assessed in a **written exam worth 40%**. Topics include algorithms, programming techniques, computational logic and data representation.

Unit 3: Programming Project

This is a **non-exam assessment worth 20% of the course**. The project will require students to develop a project following a systems development cycle and also apply various programming techniques that will enable them to develop and demonstrate programming creativity.

BTEC Option: Creative Digital Media Production

Contact: Mr Cook (Curriculum Lead: Computer Science) & Mr Miln

Exam Board: Edexcel

Course: Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Creative Digital Media Production

Unit 1: Digital Media Sectors and Audiences

Unit 2: Planning and Pitching a Digital Media Production

Unit 6: Website Production

Unit 7: Digital Games Production

Unit 1: Digital Media Sectors and Audiences

This is a **written exam. It is worth 25% of the course.** This unit is a core unit and students will study three main learning aims:

- Understanding digital media sectors, products and platforms
- Understand audiences for digital media products
- Explore how audiences engage with digital media products

Unit 2: Planning and Pitching a Digital Media Product

This is **an internally assessed unit. It is worth 25% of the course.** Students will study three main learning aims:

- Understand how to develop ideas for a digital media product
- Pitch ideas for a digital media product
- Produce planning for a digital media product

Unit 6: Website Production

This is **an internally assessed unit. It is worth 25% of the course.** Students will study three main learning aims:

- Know the context and purpose of websites
- Know the technical requirements for website production
- Produce and review a functioning website

Unit 7: Digital Games Production

This is **an internally assessed unit. It is worth 25% of the course.** Students will study three main learning aims:

- Know 2D and 3D digital games platforms and audiences
- Develop the required assets for a digital game
- Produce and review a digital game demo for a selected platform

Design and Technology Options

The Design and Technology department are excited to offer Technical Awards in the following areas.

Fashion & Textiles will replace Textiles Technology

Food & Catering will replace Food Technology

Materials Technology will replace Resistant Materials

Visual Communication will replace Graphic Products

The new Technical Awards give our students a hands-on, practical approach to learning. There will be a greater focus on specialist skills than we as a department believe the new single GCSE offers. Students can concentrate on the area they are really interested in rather than the broad brush of the GCSE.

Students will, as ever, gain valuable transferable skills in team-working and communication. Technical Awards are vocational qualifications available for 14–16 year olds to take alongside GCSEs. A Technical Award will be equivalent to a single GCSE.

The grades available for Technical Awards at both unit and qualification level will be:

- Level 1 Credit and Advanced Credit (C/AC)
- Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction* (P/M/D/D*).

The comparison table below shows where these vocational grades are likely to sit in relation to GCSEs – both against the current GCSE grading system and the new 9 to 1 grades.

| Technical Award | Current GCSE grading | 9 to 1 GCSE grading |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| L2 Distinction* | A* | 8/9 |
| L2 Distinction | A | 7 |
| L2 Merit | B | 6 |
| L2 Pass | C | 4/5 |
| L1 Advanced Credit | D/E | 2/3 |
| L1 Credit | F/G | 1/2 |

Technical Award Option: DT - Materials Technology

Contact: Mr Marshall (Curriculum Leader for DT) & Mr Dunning

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus: Materials Technology Technical Award

Why study

"This is a course that is 'hands on.' It lets me use my creativity to imagine new solutions to existing products and equips me with the skills to develop and make my designs."

Assessment

Unit 1: Skills Demonstration – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 2: Extended Making Project – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 3: Fundamentals of Materials Technology – 40% (External examination)

Course Outline

Unit 1: Students undertake a number of practical projects which will cover the following 12 skills: selecting and preparing materials, using hand tools for cutting and shaping, forming, bending or laminating, casting or moulding, non-permanent joining techniques, permanent joining techniques, machining and the use of power tools, quantity production, using CAD/CAM systems, using finishing techniques, quality control and maintaining accuracy, and teamwork. All of the above will be presented in the form of a portfolio complete with photographic evidence.

Unit 2: Extended Making Project. This will give students the opportunity to work on a contextual problem in order to make a single product that will showcase a range of the technical skills learnt in Unit 1. This project will provide evidence of planning, development, testing and evaluation in a coursework style.

Unit 3 External exam. Throughout the term of the course students will be introduced to the theory behind; materials and their working properties, processes and manufacture, joining, components, adhesives and finishes, product specification, commercial practice and careers opportunities.

Where do students go next?

The course provides an ideal foundation for Level 3 'specialist' courses at local colleges or for application to an Apprenticeship. It could also provide the **best possible** foundation for A-Level Design & Technology: Product Design

Points to note

If you are intending on choosing Materials Technology, please consider that there is a large commitment to coursework and you need to choose your other options subjects with this in mind.

Career opportunities

Careers in design following further education are incredibly broad ranging, including Design Engineering, Engineering, Interior Designer, Architect, Automotive Design, Furniture Design, Film and TV Set Design, Theatre Design etc.

Technical Award Option: DT – Visual Communication

Contact: Mr Marshall (Curriculum Leader for DT)

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus: Visual Communication Technical Award

Why study

This Level 1/2 Technical Award will enable students to develop skills in making high quality promotional materials, including packaging. Students will be expected to make a range of products, prototypes and samples, applying technical and practical expertise to ensure that the product is fit for purpose

Assessment

Unit 1: Skills Demonstration – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 2: Extended Making Project – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 3: Fundamentals of Visual Communication – 40% (Examination)

Course Outline

Unit 1: Students will create a number of small practical outcomes to demonstrate their competency in 12 core skills outlined in the specification. As part of this students will draw on knowledge of the relevant techniques and how to select and apply the most appropriate in the context of the project they are undertaking. This unit will also include assessment in the transferable skill of teamwork.

Unit 2: Students will undertake an extended making project that showcases the skills they have developed in Unit 1 and the knowledge and understanding they have acquired in Unit 3. Students will develop skills, knowledge and understanding in planning and development, making, testing and evaluation and the transferable skill of communication.

Unit 3: Students will be examined on the fundamentals of Visual Communication including: visual communication techniques, processes in industry, health and safety, materials and stock forms, tools and equipment, systems and control procedures, consideration of commercial aspects, social and environmental issues, career opportunities.

Where do students go next?

The skills and knowledge gained will allow students to progress to a wide range of courses in both general and vocational qualifications. It could also provide the **best possible** foundation for A-Level Design & Technology: Product Design and related level 3 vocational qualifications, or an apprenticeship in a related area of employment. This qualification prepares students by developing an in-depth knowledge of graphics based materials and their practical use within the industry. Students will also develop valuable transferable skills in teamwork and communication that will be of value to them no matter what career they choose to follow.

Points to note

If you are intending on choosing Visual Communication, please consider that there is a large commitment to coursework and you need to choose your other options subjects with this in mind.

Career opportunities

Careers in design following further education are incredibly broad ranging. Design engineering, Engineering, Interior Designer, Architect, Automotive design, Furniture design, Film and TV set design, Theatre design etc. This course is obviously good for students thinking of a career in the Creative Arts – to include Textiles, Fashion, Graphics, Photography and Art.

Technical Award Option: DT – Fashion & Textiles

Contact: Mr Marshall (Curriculum Leader for DT) and Mrs Howard

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: Fashion & Textiles Technical Award

Why study

“A rewarding and fun subject where you get to design products and then make them whilst working independently.”

Assessment

Unit 1: Skills Demonstration – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 2: Extended Making Project – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 3: Fundamentals of Fashion and Textiles – 40% (External Exam)

Course Outline

Unit 1 Students will undertake a number of practical projects which will cover the following 12 skills: colouring fabrics, surface embellishments, fabric manipulation, joining fabrics, applying fastenings and components, decorative and functional edge finishes, sleeve setting, collars, combining materials, using a pattern/template, patch pockets and teamwork. All of the above will be presented in the form of a portfolio complete with photographic evidence.

Unit 2 Students will undertake an Extended Making Project which will give students the opportunity to work on a contextual problem in order to make a single product that will showcase a range of the technical skills learnt in Unit 1. This project will provide evidence of planning, development, testing and evaluation in a coursework style.

Unit 3 Students will be examined on the theory behind materials and their properties and of industrial and commercial practices within the fashion and textiles industry.

Where do students go next?

College courses to build on this course are available locally include:

- Cleveland College of Art and Design - students can extend on this course moving into Level 3 or A/S level.
- Middlesbrough College and Stockton Riverside College offer A-Level Art and Design along with Level 3 Fashion and Textiles. Additional local colleges (Bede, Stockton Sixth Form and Carmel College) offer A-Level Art and Design where students can specialise in textiles.

Please note this list is not exhaustive. Most colleges and sixth forms offer a relevant course to extend your study.

Points to note

If you are intending on choosing Fashion and Textiles, please consider that there is a large commitment to coursework and you need to choose your other options subjects with this in mind.

Career opportunities

This GCSE is excellent for students thinking of a career in the Creative Arts – to include Textiles, Fashion (surface decoration, fashion design, illustration, journalism, pattern cutting and construction), Graphics, Photography and Art.

Technical Award Option: DT – Food and Catering

Contact: Mr Marshall (Curriculum Leader for DT), Miss Reay, Mrs Howard

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: Food and Catering Technical Award

Why study

This qualification is intended for students aged 14-16 who are interested in food preparation in a commercial catering environment and wish to develop skills and knowledge that will prepare them for further study and employment within this sector.

Assessment

Unit 1: Skills Demonstration – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 2: Extended Making Project – 30% (Internal Assessment)

Unit 3: Fundamentals of Food and Catering 40% (Examination)

Course Outline

Unit 1 Students will undertake a number of practical projects which will cover the following 12 skills: using kitchen equipment to prepare food, quality control, using the grill or an open flame, using the hob, using an oven, making sauces, making pastry, making cakes, cheesecakes and mousses, making a bread dough, making pasta, presenting food and teamwork. All of the above will be presented in the form of a portfolio complete with photographic evidence.

Unit 2 Students will undertake an Extended Making Project which will give students the opportunity to work on a contextual problem in order to make a single product that will showcase a range of the technical skills learnt in Unit 1. This project will provide evidence of planning, development, testing and evaluation in a coursework style.

Unit 3 Students will be examined on the theory behind meals and menu planning, cooking methods and recipes, commercial practice, careers opportunities and food and hygiene safety.

Where do students go next?

College courses to build on this course are available locally at:

- Middlesbrough College and Stockton Riverside Level 3 qualifications such as the Diploma in Professional Cookery or Professional Patisserie and Confectionery.
- Hartlepool FE college offer further training in Catering (Level 3 and Level 4).

Please note this list is not exhaustive, most colleges and sixth form offer a relevant course to extend your study. Due to governmental changes A Level qualification in Food and Nutrition have been discontinued.

If you are intending on choosing Food and Catering, please consider that there is a large commitment to coursework and you need to choose your other options subjects with this in mind.

Career opportunities

There are several career opportunities following this type of course – in food catering, chef, hospitality industry, dietetics, baking, pastry making and butchery.

GCSE Option: Film Studies

Point of Contact: Dr P. Brown

Exam Board: WJEC

Film Studies is delivered by specialist staff from the English Department. Students are taught to develop their cine-literacy skills and develop their appreciation of cinema as a major art form and industry of the 21st Century. The course offers a good balance of theoretical, analytical and practical elements.

What skills or personal interests are needed?

An interest in the world and how it is represented by film is advantageous. A mature approach to learning is also important. A willingness to film and be filmed is also necessary, as well as the confidence to share work with others.

What key subject interests would be useful?

A love of film: watching, thinking about and discussing them. Keen readers also tend to enjoy the subject as do students with an interest in drama, the wider media and current affairs.

Components of the Course

The course has three components:

Unit 1 – US Film. This component assesses knowledge and understanding of three US films chosen from a range of options. Assessment consists of four questions on one pair of US mainstream films and one US independent film, and is externally examined. It constitutes 35% of the GCSE grade.

Unit 2 – Global Film. This component assesses knowledge and understanding of three global films produced outside the US, chosen from a range of options. Assessment consists of three questions in three sections – Section A: one stepped question on one contemporary UK film; Section B: one stepped question on one recent global English language film; Section C: one stepped question on one global non-English language film. This unit is externally examined and constitutes 35% of the GCSE grade.

Unit 3 – Production. This component assesses the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of film to a production and its accompanying evaluative analysis. Students produce: one genre-based film extract (either from a film or from a screenplay); one evaluative analysis of the production, where students analyse and evaluate their production in relation to comparable, professionally-produced films or screenplays. This unit is a non-exam component and constitutes 30% of the GCSE grade.

Key skills developed on the course

- Written and verbal communication.
- Information Technology.
- Group work.
- Improving practical production skills.

Pathways from the course

This GCSE will lead to a variety of other courses including Film Studies or Media Studies at A-Level, as well as BTEC and other vocational qualifications. It will also enhance students' progression in English at GCSE and A-Level.

Related career opportunities

GCSE Film Studies will allow students to follow a career path in many areas of the media, both practical and theoretical.

GCSE Option: Geography

Contact: Mrs L. Featherstone (Curriculum Leader for Geography)

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8035

Unit 1: Living with the Physical Environment (35%)

Unit 2: Challenges with the Human Environment (35%)

Unit 3: Geographical applications (30%)

In Geography students follow the AQA Geography syllabus in which three exams are taken at the end of Year 11. During the course there will be assessments and past exam questions to track student progress. Students will also be assessed on their geographical skills such as cartographic, graphical, numerical, statistical and investigative skills, all practiced throughout the course.

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment

This paper looks at the dynamic nature of physical processes and the human interaction of these processes. The unit focuses on three themes:

- The challenge of natural hazards
- The living world
- Physical landscapes in the UK.

Paper 2: Challenges in the Human Environment

This paper looks at human processes, systems and outcomes. It explores the issues on a variety of scales and locations including High Income Countries, Low Income Countries and Newly Emerging Countries. The unit focuses on three themes:

- Urban issues and challenges
- The changing economic world
- The challenge of resource management

Paper 3: Geographical Applications

This paper applies the content studied in the previous units in two ways. The first is an issue evaluation. In this, students are to apply critical thinking and problem solving to a particular issue. Students will receive a pre-release document highlighting the issue they will explore in the exam. The second element is a fieldwork evaluation. Students will participate in two separate fieldwork experiences (one concerned with Physical Geography and the other concerned with Human Geography) where they will collect primary data to interpret, analyse and evaluate in the fieldwork section of this exam.

How can Geography help you?

Geography is a very interesting and enjoyable subject and will help you develop essential skills including communication, teamwork, problem solving and investigative skills, making you more spatially, socially and environmentally aware. Geography has been a popular option choice in recent years and many of our students go on to study A/S level Geography. Geography graduates are among the most employable in a range of occupations. They possess the essential skills that employers look for. This is because the subject combines both knowledge of science and an understanding of the arts.

BTEC Option: Health & Social Care

Contact: Mrs Jackson

Exam Board: Edexcel

Syllabus: 600/4782/3

Unit 1: Human Lifespan Development (Core Unit – Examination)

Unit 2: Health and Social Care Values (Core Unit)

Unit 5: Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Unit 6: The Impact of Nutrition on Health and Wellbeing

The four units above to be studied.

BTEC Firsts in Health and Social Care can help you take your first steps towards a career in caring for people and communities. You will learn the essential skills needed to support people with a wide range of needs, from babies and toddlers to adults and the elderly.

The Edexcel BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Health and Social Care has been developed to:

- give students the opportunity to gain a broad understanding and knowledge of the health and social care sector
- give students a more focused understanding of health and social care through the selection of optional specialist units
- give students the opportunity to develop a range of personal skills and techniques, through the selection of units that are essential for successful performance in working life
- give opportunities for students to achieve a nationally recognised Level 1/Level 2 health and social care qualification
- support progression into a more specialised Level 3 vocational or academic course or into an apprenticeship.

The first core unit of this qualification, which is externally assessed, provides students with a solid foundation in human lifespan development. Students will also gain an appreciation of the importance of health and social care values in the sector.

All students will have the opportunity to experience the vocational elements of the programme, and develop practical skills, such as demonstrating health and social care values that will help prepare students for the world of work.

GCSE Option: History

Contact: Miss Hall (Curriculum Leader for History)

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: GCSE (9–1) History, 8145

Overview of Paper 1 – this paper is worth 50% of the course and focuses on understanding the Modern World and is comprised of a period study (Section A) and a wider world depth study (Section B).

Topics Studied in Paper 1

* Section A – Germany 1890-1945, democracy and dictatorship

* Section B – Conflict and tension, 1918-1939

Overview of Paper 2 – this paper is worth 50% of the course and focuses upon the concept of shaping the nation and is comprised of a thematic study (Section A) and a British depth study including the historic environment (Section B).

Topics Studied in Paper 2

* Section A – Britain, migration, empires and the people, c. 790 to the present day

* Section B – Elizabethan England, c. 1568-1603

Skills and Assessment Objectives:

- Recall, select and communicate knowledge and understanding of History
- Explanation and analysis of key concepts: causation, consequence, continuity, change and significance with a historical context
- Explanation and analysis of key features and characteristics of the periods studied and the relationship between them
- Understand, analyse and evaluate a range of source material as part of a historical enquiry
- Understand, analyse and evaluate how aspects of the past have been interpreted and represented in different ways as part of a historical enquiry

Support for Students:

Resources provided include digital course books, revision guides written in school, video, DVD, CD-ROMs, PC Suite and tasks on the interactive whiteboard. Students are provided with opportunities to attend support sessions after school which include revision sessions and coursework clinics. We teach writing, research and ICT skills, as well as more specific historical skills including source evaluation skills. Students learn to construct reasoned and balanced arguments based on evidence, to appreciate the views of others and to explain why there are different interpretations of people and events.

Progression Routes:

Higher grade passes in History enable students to take a range of A-Levels including History, Law, Government, Sociology, Psychology and Politics. Many students who take GCSE History go on to study this subject at A-Level. History can lead to a wide range of careers including law, archaeology, town planning, journalism, video game production, administration, project management, teaching, television, acting, film and television production (costume drama) museum work and art history.

GCSE Option: MFL - French or Spanish

Contact: Miss M. Rubio (Curriculum Leader for Modern Foreign Languages)

Exam Board: AQA

What am I going to learn?

The skills the students will develop to be successful in learning languages at St Michael's include: reading; learning vocabulary; writing; translation skills; building grammar knowledge; listening; dealing with authentic texts and speaking.

Understanding how the Modern Foreign Languages Specification works.

The Specification for AQA GCSE in languages is divided into three main subject areas, called **themes**:

- Identity and culture
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- Current and future study and employment

Each theme is divided into four topics, making a total of twelve topics to study during the course.

The exam is divided up according to the four **language skills**: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Each one of this has its own separate exam in the form of an end-of-course paper. Each exam is worth 25% of the GCSE.

Exam papers

Paper 1: Listening

What is assessed

Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language

How it is assessed

Written exam:

35 minutes (Foundation Tier) or 45 minutes (Higher Tier)

40 marks (Foundation Tier) or 50 marks (Higher Tier)

25% of GCSE

(Each exam includes 5 minutes' reading time of the question paper before the listening stimulus is played.)

Questions

Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally

Section B – questions in Spanish, to be answered in Spanish or non-verbally

Paper 2: Speaking

What's assessed

Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.

Questions

Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

The format is the same at Foundation Tier and Higher Tier, but with different stimulus questions for the photo card and different stimulus materials for the role-play. The timings are different too:

Role-play – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 2 minutes at Higher Tier)

Photo card – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 3 minutes at Higher Tier)

General conversation – 30 marks (3–5 minutes at Foundation Tier; 5–7 minutes at Higher Tier)

Paper 3: Reading

What's assessed

Understanding and responding to different types of written language

How it's assessed

Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour (Higher Tier)

60 marks (for both tiers)

25% of GCSE

Questions

Foundation Tier and Higher Tier

Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally

Section B – questions in Spanish, to be answered in Spanish or non-verbally

Section C – translation from Spanish into English (a minimum of 35 words at Foundation Tier and 50 words at Higher Tier)

Paper 4: Writing

What's assessed

Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes

How it's assessed

Written exam: 1 hour (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier)

50 marks at Foundation Tier and 60 marks at Higher Tier

25% of GCSE

Paper 3: Reading

Questions

Foundation Tier

Question 1 – message (student produces four sentences in response to a photo) – 8 marks

Question 2 – short passage (student writes a piece of continuous text in response to four brief bullet points, approximately 40 words in total) – 16 marks

Question 3 – translation from English into Spanish (minimum 35 words) – 10 marks

Question 4 – structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 90 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 16 marks

Higher Tier

Question 1 – structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 90 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 16 marks

Question 2 – open-ended writing task (student responds to two compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 150 words in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 32 marks

Question 3 – translation from English into Spanish (minimum 50 words) – 12 marks

GCSE Option: Music

Contact: Mr I. Hird (Curriculum Leader for Music)

Exam Board: AQA

Syllabus Code: 8271

Unit 1: Understanding music (40%)

Unit 2: Performing music (30%)

Unit 3: Composing music (30%)

GCSE Music is a varied and exciting option to take. There are a wide range of skills explored including performing, composing, music technology and learning about the features of different genres of music.

The course is divided into three components; performing, composing and listening.

Unit 1: Understanding music (40% exam)

In this unit students develop their listening and appraising skills through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres. The content for the unit is grouped into four Areas of Study each of which contains a study piece. The Areas of Study are: Western Classical Music 1650-1910, Popular Music, Traditional music and Music since 1910. This unit is assessed through a 90 minute exam during which consists of a number short questions and one essay question.

Students will explore different pieces of music in detail ranging from Haydn, Mozart and Chopin through to The Beatles, Santana and The Arctic Monkeys in order to gain and understanding of how these genres of music work.

Unit 2: Performing Music (30% coursework)

In this unit students develop their performing skills both as a soloist and as part of a band or ensemble. They will be given the opportunity to rehearse and refine performances on their instrument, developing technical control, expression and interpretative skills. For students who are not confident performers or singers, there is the opportunity to explore music production instead. With this route you will use music technology to create an arrangement of two different pieces of music.

Unit 3: Composing music (30% coursework)

In this unit students will have the opportunity to write music in any style they choose. Students will be encouraged to explore a range of musical starting points and investigate a range of techniques for creating and developing ideas in order to turn them into completed pieces of music. Students are required to compose two contrasting pieces of music which will be assessed by the class teacher. Both can be any genre but one must be in response to a stimulus such as a chord sequence, image or story.

Progression Routes and benefits

GCSE Music is ideal for anyone who enjoys music and want to understand more about how it works. As part of the course you will rehearse individually and with others; this will develop both your self-discipline and organisational skills. Your analytical skills will be developed when studying different pieces of music which will be useful for a variety of subjects at A-Level.

Past students have gone on to study A-Level Music or music production courses at college.

BTEC Option: Physical Education

Contact: Mr A. Raper (Curriculum Leader: PE) and Mr T. Hall

BTEC Option: Sport Level 1-2

Exam Board: Edexcel

Syllabus: BTEC Level 1/Level 2 First Award in Sport

Students will study topics such as:

- Components of physical fitness and the principles of training
- Understanding the rules, regulations and scoring systems for selected sports
- Practical sport

The course will also:

- Encourage personal development through practical participation and performance in a range of sport and exercise activities
- Give students a wider understanding and appreciation of health-related exercise, fitness and sports through a selection of optional specialist units
- Give full time students the opportunity to progress to other vocational qualifications, such as the Edexcel BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Sport, or Sport and Exercise Sciences, or onto GCSE AS or A-level and, in due course, to enter employment in the sport and active leisure sector.

Assessment

There is one core unit that is externally assessed by examination. This amounts to 25% of the final grade. Students then take three internal units that are assessed by on-going portfolio work.

Progression Routes

BTEC Sport is an accepted and recognised qualification for those intending to pursue a career in leisure management, coaching, teaching, fitness training and the Armed Forces. Students can continue BTEC study at post-16 and follow a Level 3 BTEC qualification.