

Key Stage 4 Course Booklet 2025-26

**RIGHT choices
RIGHT reasons
RIGHT career**

This booklet has been designed to encourage the conversations that will help you (and your parents) understand which subjects would suit you or which subjects would help underpin a chosen career or pathway.

Ensuring you choose the right subjects to follow in year 10 and 11 (and for the right reasons) will enable you to be motivated to do the best that you can in your GCSEs and to help you on the right pathway for later choices you will need to make post 18.

· Confidence · Ambition · Respect · Determination

KS4 Options Process

Note for the student:

Please refer back to the Student Profile Booklet and SACU career cloud that was completed at the end of term 3. Also, for these option choices, consider the careers suggested and any other information you have researched.

To all Parents

The selection of optional subjects at KS4 is one of the crucial moments in any student's secondary education and all students will be following a two-year Key Stage 4 programme, starting in Year 10.

The purpose of this booklet, and the work already completed on careers in tutor time, is to ensure that the information and guidance provided will support your child through the options process and ensure that their informed choices to maximise their potential.

It will be important that each student understands their own strengths and weaknesses so that they can optimise their chances of success. Equally, we recommend that each student selects courses in which they have a real aptitude as well as a genuine interest.

What will the curriculum look like?

North Oxfordshire Academy is a fully inclusive school; our aim is to offer a broad and balanced curriculum which enables accessibility for all and one which is varied and meets the needs and aspirations of our students. Ensuring the combination of courses our students study provide suitable progression routes into post 16 study and beyond is of paramount importance to us.

Students will all study the following compulsory subjects:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science (some students will be able invited to opt for Triple Science)
- Physical Education
- History or Geography

Students will then choose from the following subjects based on their pathway.

To support the students with making their choices we will be provide:

- This Options Booklet, which contains information on courses and subjects
- Access to an independent careers advisor.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact

y9options@northoxfordshire-academy.org.

Students will be sent a web link to an online form that they will fill in their option preferences. We recommend that you sit with your child whilst they complete this process and discuss their choices with them.

Deadline to fill out the form is April 17th 2026



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Options Blocks

When making their options choices, students will be required to select one option from each of the blocks below. Students cannot select a subject more than once and so each option block must have a different subject selected.

Students should consider:

- Enjoyment
- School report/ Parent's Evenings
- University/ career
- Balance and breadth
- Coursework requirements
- Teachers' advice

Humanities Option	Block A	Block B	Block C
History	Triple Science (Invite only)	Computer Science	Spanish
Geography	Art	Religious Education	Art
	Business	Business	Drama
	Engineering	Engineering	Land Based (Invite only)
	HSC	HSC	HSC
	Sport	Sport	Sport
	Hospitality	Music	
		Music Practice	

In addition to their first choices, students must also select a reserve for each block. These reserves are a second choice and so students may be awarded this option if their first choice isn't available.

Reserve choices:

- Must be subjects students are happy to take as there is a possibility that they will be awarded one or more of these choices.
- Cannot duplicate options students have selected as a first choice – we will always prioritise first choices, even if it means changing the blocks students have selected these in in order to make numbers work.

GCSE or Vocational

Advantages of choosing a GCSE option

GCSEs are a great option if you want to go to into a science-based career, Further (or Higher) Education, Social Care, the Arts or into a business.

Traditional careers such as Law, Medicine and some science-related careers prefer GCSE subjects. Also, top universities will look favourably on GCSE options and many higher and degree apprenticeships also require specific GCSE subjects (some Engineering companies will want you to have good grades in Triple Science and Maths). Please be aware though that GCSEs no longer just have an academic slant; many have a practical emphasis too: Drama and Media for instance have a high practical element, where you can work with cameras and different materials.

If you pick a GCSE as one of your options, for your other options you need to do a GCSE in Humanities but can then choose to do another GCSE or opt for a vocational subject.



Advantages of choosing a vocational option

Choose this route if you want a vocational career, prefer more practical based subjects or you want to study one of these subjects in Further (or Higher) Education.

If you want to study any of the vocational subjects at University (ie. wanted to go into any type of engineering field then Engineering BTEC may be a good option) then you will need to choose that vocational subject to study in year 10/11 – in this instance though, it might be advisable to pick a GCSE for your second option.

If you do not know what career you would like to follow, but prefer to do more practical subjects it might be a good idea to choose a vocational subject. However, please be aware that some GCSEs now have a high practical element too, so look at the information sheets for each subject before deciding.

For all of the above, for your other options you will need to do a GCSE in Humanities but can then choose to opt for another vocational subject or a GCSE.



Careers in Years 10 & 11

The NOA Experience is about equipping each and every student with the necessary skills so that they can make informed choices that enable successful outcomes into viable quality employment and for personal wellbeing and preparation for adult life. In year 10 & 11, careers education, advice and information become even more important in preparing students to make post 16 decisions, and this is reflected in the tutor programme, the range of aspirational trips available and the leadership opportunities that become available. We organise a Careers and Apprenticeships Fair (with a wide range of training providers, businesses, colleges, universities that students can discuss options with) - this is held in February and we recommend that all year 10s attend. There is also a Careers Office and a Careers Library within our main Library and we advise students to make good use of this facility. In year 11, every student will have a 1:1 (or more, in lots of cases) meeting with a qualified Careers Advisor so that they can explore a range of different options for both post 16 and even, thinking ahead, to post 18 option.

Careers Questions that the NOA Experience help students embrace:

- What choices are there post 16/18?
- How can I start my CV & evidence my skills?
- What careers match my aspirations?
- What is the reality behind the different careers & choices?



Year 10 Offer	Year 11 Offer
<p>Universal Offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE/ Careers Tutor programme • University/ FE visits and lectures • 1:1 Careers guidance • Student Leadership (Junior Prefects and Peer Ambassadors) • Banbury Literary Live • Future First assemblies • After School Clubs • Army/ Police Cadets • NOA Apprenticeship Fair • Student Council • Duke of Edinburgh • Newquay challenge visit • Music – peripatetic 1:1 • STEM trips and projects <p>Targeted Offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World of Work days • Unitracks Programme • UL Scholars Club • Care skills workshops 	<p>Universal Offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSHE/ Careers Tutor programme • Industry led assemblies • 1:1 Careers guidance • Careers psychometrics and profiling • Voluntary work experience • Careeres workshops in CV/ interview skills • Student Leadership (Senior prefects, Sports and Music leaders) • Banbury Literary Live • After School Clubs • Army/ Police Cadets • NOA Apprenticeship Fair • 1:1 Apprenticeship interviews with AIM • Business speakers • Music – peripatetic 1:1 • National Skills Show <p>Targeted Offer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unitracks Programme

10 Great Reasons

10 Great Reasons to become a scientist or engineer

1 Develop all this...

- Artificial limbs for the injured and medicine for diseases like Ebola
- 3D games consoles and solar powered laptops
- Make-up that automatically matches skin tone
- Systems to reduce the risk of flooding
- Driverless vehicles and spacecraft for future tourists
- Smart fabrics with in-built digital technology
- Supercomputers that predict the effects of climate change



...and more

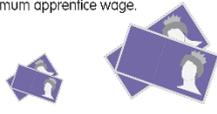
2 Work in your favourite industry

From food, medicine and renewable energy to sport, film and music – **scientists and engineers are needed everywhere**



3 Earn great money

On average, engineering apprentices **earn over double** the national minimum apprentice wage.



Minimum apprentice wage

Engineering apprentice wage

The average starting salary for people with **engineering and technology degrees** is **20% higher** than for all graduates.

4 Make a difference

Help tackle some of the world's **biggest challenges**, like responding to natural disasters, improving cyber security and developing clean energy sources.



5 Be in demand

The UK needs over **2 million** new scientists, engineers and technicians by 2022.

6 Choose your own route

Go to college, do an apprenticeship, get a university degree or combine all three.



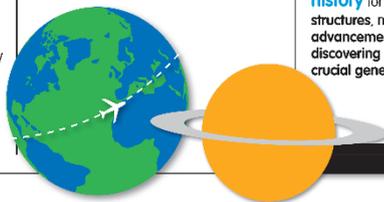
7 Have your pick of future careers

Capture tidal energy, design a robot, discover a cure for cancer... or do a job that doesn't even exist yet!

Continuing with maths and science – especially physics – keeps your options open for as long as possible for jobs in **science, engineering, technology, law, business, space, architecture** and much more.

8 Travel the globe

Work in **dynamic teams** with people from different backgrounds, all over the world.



9 Gain respect

Be remembered for your **work and go down in history** for designing incredible structures, making awe-inspiring advancements in technology, discovering planets or identifying crucial genetic codes.

10 Design, create and innovate

Subjects like design and technology, art and computing can help pave the way to careers that **revolutionise the way we live**.



Take our short quiz to discover your crew and gain career inspiration: thebigbangfair.co.uk/whoscrewareyou



Find out more about careers in science, technology, engineering and maths: thebigbangfair.co.uk/careers

engineering: tomorrowsengineers.org.uk
biology: rsb.org.uk/make-a-difference
chemistry: rsc.org/careers/future
physics: physics.org/careers
maths: mathscareers.org.uk



The Big Bang
UK Young Scientists & Engineers Fair



Tomorrow's
Engineers

Art & Design

Course Description

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

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

In Year 10 pupils explore a wide variety of techniques and materials, giving them the opportunity to develop and improve their skillset before embarking on their major project (60% controlled assessment). In January of Year 11 pupils will receive their exam paper and will respond to one of a range of starting points, creating a full unit of work, fully supported by staff, culminating in a 10 hour exam over two days.

You will develop the following skills:

- Written and verbal communication
- Application of current design and manufacturing techniques
- Core ICT and industrial design specific skills
- Team work and task delegation
- Problem solving and planning
- Health and Safety in a practical environment

Where can it take me?

The Creative Industry holds the record for the fastest growing economy in the UK today. It was valued last year at £101.5bn and continues to grow. The employment opportunities are much broader than you may realise, with 1 in 11 jobs in the UK belonging to the Creative Sector. Whether it's gaming, fashion, interior design, illustration or digital arts, a GCSE in Art and Design is the stepping stone to an exciting creative future.

How will I be Assessed?

Controlled Assessment (60%)	Exam (40%)	GCSE
GCSE coursework involves two major projects, as well as small, skills-based workshops. Pupils will also develop their use of a specialist art vocabulary by carrying out research into the work of artists, using this influence to further develop their work.	The exam unit is worth 40% and is marked as a whole, including all preparation work, research and the exam piece. There is a 10 hour exam at the end of the preparation period, this is planned and the work produced will be a final outcome.	

What does the coursework look like?



Business

Course Description

GCSE Business helps students understand how businesses operate in the real world, from small start-ups to large global companies. Students will explore how businesses are set up, how they grow, and how they make decisions about marketing, finance, operations and people.

Throughout the course, students develop valuable skills such as problem-solving, decision-making, communication and data analysis. They will learn to apply business concepts to real-life contexts, analyse case studies, interpret financial information and evaluate the impact of business decisions on stakeholders and society.

The course encourages independent thinking and helps students understand the world of work, enterprise and entrepreneurship, providing a strong foundation for further study in Business, Economics or related subjects, as well as future careers.

What will you learn?

- Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Marketing and market research
- Business operations and supply chains
- Finance and financial decision-making
- Human resources and leadership
- Business growth and the external environment

You will develop the following skills:

- Entrepreneurial skills
- Research skills
- Analytical skills
- Numeracy skills
- Creativity
- Develop effective communication
- Time management
- Independent learning
- Digital presentation

Where can it take me?

Level 3 in Business/ Enterprise or an apprenticeship in a business area. Followed by a degree or a degree level apprenticeship.

- Account executive across many fields
- Market researcher
- Marketing executive
- Media buyer
- Public relations officer
- Social media manager
- Business development manager
- Event manager
- Web content
- Finance and Accountancy
- Banking and Law

How will I be Assessed?

Exam 100%	GCSE
<u>Paper 1 & Paper 2</u> <i>1 hour 15 minute written examinations</i> <i>1800 marks</i>	

Computer Science

Course Description

GCSE Computer Science helps equip students for a future within the IT and Computer Science sector. Being able to think creatively, innovatively, analytically will enable students to analyze and create programs to help solve problems whilst applying fundamental principles such as abstractions, algorithms and data representation.

What will I Learn?

Computer Systems: Understanding the components of computer systems, including hardware and software. Knowledge of binary representation and data representation.

Algorithms and Programming: Developing skills in designing and writing algorithms. An ability to understand programming constructs and concepts.

Data and Computational Thinking: Handling and manipulating data, including data structures like arrays and record. An understanding of how to break problems down and design solutions algorithmically.

Computer Networks and Cybersecurity: Understand the basics of computer networks and the internet, protocols and communication. Awareness of ethical and legal issues related to computing.

Legal, Ethical and Environmental Issues: Exploring the social and ethical implications of computing. Gain an understanding of legal considerations and environmental impacts related to technologies.

You will develop the following skills:

- Protect management skills.
- Critical thinking being able to evaluate information critically an essential skill when designing and implementing algorithms and programs.
- Adaptability being open to learning new technologies and adapting to changes in the field of computer science.

Where can it take me?

Software Developer – Where you can work on designing and building software applications

Web Development – Involving the creation and maintenance of websites and web applications

Network Administration – Assist with the setup and maintenance of computer networks

Database Administrator – Management and maintenance of database

Cybersecurity – Focus on protecting computer systems and networks from security threats

Continue your development with A Level Computer Science and University to secure a future role within the sector.

How will I be Assessed?

This qualification consist of 2 papers, 1 written and one onscreen each paper is 75 marks and worth 50% of the qualification.

Paper 1	Paper 2	GCSE
1 hour and 30 minutes (Written) This paper covers topics 1 to 5 Computational thinking, data, computers, networks, issues and impact	2 hours (On Screen) Topic 6 – Problem solving with programming	

Drama

Course Description

GCSE Drama develops your acting, analytical and creative skills while building your understanding of a wide range of theatrical genres, plays and practitioners. You will explore play texts both practically and theoretically, learning how to bring them to life from the perspective of an actor, director and designer. Throughout the course, you will create detailed characters and prepare both devised and scripted performances. Your practical work will be supported by a portfolio that tracks your ideas, exploration and understanding of how effective performances are developed and staged.

You will take part in practical workshops to explore different theatre styles and practitioners, applying their ideas to your own performance work. You will study a range of play texts and create varied practical performances. Watching live theatre will help you develop your understanding of the subject, and you will learn to analyse and evaluate both your own work and the work of others. You will also develop the skills to write about the processes involved in creating and refining practical performances.

You will develop the following interpersonal skills:

- Teamwork, communication and collaboration
- Confidence, self-presentation, self-discipline
- Time management and organisation skills
- Public speaking
- Leadership and adaptability
- Analytical, critical and creative thinking.
- How actors, directors and designers develop ideas and apply these practically.

Where can it take me?

- Drama and Theatre: a career in Acting, Stage Management, Directing, Theatre Designer, Technical Director, Theatre Administration, Marketing
- Entertainment Industry: TV, Journalism - both in front of an audience or behind, theatre critic, film critic, script writer, TV presenter
- Education: Drama teacher, Primary teacher, Play Worker

How will I be Assessed?

Practical Assessment (30%)	Theatrical Assessment (70%)	GCSE
You will devise a piece of drama or create a design realisation from stimuli (Internal assessment 10%).	A portfolio of work based on your devised performance (2000 words) (internally assessed 30%)	
You will prepare and perform 2 extracts from a script (external assessment 20%).	You will complete a 1 hour 45 min written exam based on a study of a complete play and a live theatre production (externally assessed 40%).	

What does the coursework look like?



English Language

Course Description

English Language offers two equally-balanced papers, relating reading sources to the topic and theme of writing tasks. The reading sources act as stimulus for writing tasks, providing students with a clear route through each paper.

Paper 1, *Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing*, looks at how writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to engage the interest of readers.

Paper 2, *Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives*, looks at how different writers present a similar topic over time.

Spoken language (previously speaking and listening) emphasises the importance of the wider benefits that speaking and listening skills have for students.

You will develop the following skills:

English Language will enable students of all abilities to develop the skills they need to read, **understand and analyse a wide range of different texts** covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods as well as to **write clearly, coherently and accurately using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures.**

Where can it take me?

English Language provides opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become productive and responsible members of society. It is particularly useful if you are considering a career in **Media, Journalism, Publishing, PR, Psychology, Law**, and many more.

How will I be Assessed?

The qualification is linear meaning all exams will be sat at the end of year 11.

Paper 1: Fiction	Paper 2: Non-Fiction	Spoken Language	GCSE
Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes.	Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes.	Presentation and questions: 5 minutes.	
50% of the qualification. 80 marks	50% of the qualification. 80 marks	The component includes: a short presentation to their class and answer questions on the topic they have chosen.	
The exam includes: Reading of one unseen extracts with short answer questions that focus on retrieval, analysis of language and structure, and forming a judgement. The written section is creative writing (story or description) based on a choice of stimuli.	The exam includes: Reading of two unseen extracts with short answer questions that focus on retrieval, summarising, analysis of language and comparison of texts. The written section is transactional writing (letter, speech, article, etc.) based on a stimulus.	These are all recorded and some will be sent off to the examination board for moderation.	

English Literature

Course Description

The English Literature course is designed to inspire, challenge and motivate students. It guides students a wide range of genres and forms exploring a range of issues and time periods. Our selection of texts focuses on the central focus of the corrupting nature of power. Students are assessed on their understanding and interpretation of the texts through their exploration of the methods the authors use.

Texts selected:

Shakespeare — Macbeth

Modern Text — Animal Farm

Poetry—Power and Conflict cluster from AQA Anthology

19th Century Novel—A Christmas Carol

You will develop the following skills:

- Literal and inferential comprehension
- Critical reading
- Evaluation of a writer's choice of vocabulary, grammatical and structural features
- Comparing texts
- Producing clear and coherent responses
- Accurate use of standard English

Where can it take me?

English Language provides opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become productive and responsible members of society. It is particularly useful if you are considering a career in **Editing, Copywriting, Administration, Advertising, Author** and many more.

How will I be Assessed?

The qualification is linear meaning all exams will be sat at the end of year 11. All of the assessments are closed book.

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th Century novel	Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry	GCSE
Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes. 40% of the qualification. 64 marks The exam includes: Two essays — one on Macbeth and one on your 19th Century text. These essays show your understanding of the text through drawing out key ideas and themes. You will also need to show how you have interpreted the texts through analysing the language and structure and exploring the author's purpose and context.	Written examination: 2 hour and 15 minutes. 60% of the qualification. 96 marks The exam includes: Two essays — one on Animal Farm and one on the poetry anthology. Two questions on unseen poetry—one essay and one short form comparison question. You will also need to show how you have interpreted the texts through analysing the language and structure and exploring the author's purpose and context.	

Geography

Course Description

The course covers locational knowledge, geography of the UK, fieldwork and geographical skills. Students also look at tectonic processes and landscape as well as changing weather and climate. Part of the course also looks at global ecosystems and biodiversity and the management of resources. Finally, students will learn about cities, urban societies and global economic development.

Fieldwork:

Students will also carry out fieldwork and look at both human and physical geography. It is a mandatory requirement of the exam board that all students participate in fieldwork. Previous fieldwork trips have included: River Evenlode, Oxford, Slapton Ley, Devon, and Swanage, Dorset.

Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment

Section A: The challenge of natural hazards
 Section B: The living world
 Section C: Physical landscapes in the UK
 Students will look at 2 case studies in-depth in each section in this paper.

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

Section A: Urban issues and challenges
 Section B: The changing economic world
 Section C: The challenge of resource management
 Students will look at 2 case studies in-depth in each section in this paper.

Paper 3: Geographical applications

This paper evaluates geographical issues and tests geographical skills.
Students must also undertake fieldwork as part of this component.

Where can it take me?

Geography provides students with a broad skillset necessary to become responsible citizens who engage with the world around them. These skills include problem solving, communication, empathy, research and cartographic skills. It is particularly useful if you are considering a career in **Town Planning, Geology, Meteorology, Hydrology, Volcanology, Sustainability, Environmental Consultancy, Travel and Tourism** and many more.

How will I be Assessed?

The qualification is linear meaning all exams will be sat at the end of year 11.

Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	GCSE
Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes. 35% of the qualification 88 marks The exam includes: multiple choice questions, short–open worded response and extended writing questions and calculations.	Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes. 35% of the qualification. 88 marks The exam includes: multiple choice questions, short–open worded response and extended writing questions and calculations.	Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes. 30% of the qualification. 76 marks Pre-release resources booklet The exam includes: multiple choice questions, short– open worded response and extended writing questions and calculations.	

History

Course Description

GCSE History builds on the fundamental skills established at KS3 and allows you to understand the everchanging modern world we live in. The topics selected at GCSE allow you to learn about the political, social, and cultural histories of different countries across different time periods, whilst covering some of the biggest events that have shaped our world and society. Through these topics we discuss the varying historical interpretations and debates on these events and create our own judgements. You will also have an opportunity to engage with real historical sources to investigate *why* they have been made – which has never been more important than in the current age of social media! **Embrace the past and shape the future with GCSE History.**

Paper 1: Medicine in Britain, c1250-present *and* the British sector of the Western Front

- Ideas about the cause of disease and illness
- Approaches to prevention and treatment.
- Medical treatments on the Western Front (WW1)

Paper 2: Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88

- Queen, government, and religion, 1558-69
- Challenges to Elizabeth at home and abroad, 1569-88
- Elizabethan society in the Age of Exploration

and Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

- Origins of the Cold War, 1941-58
- Cold War crises, 1958-70
- End of the Cold War, 1970-91

Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

- The Weimar Republic, 1918-29
- Hitler's rise to power, 1919-33
- Nazi control and dictatorship, 1933-39
- Life in Nazi Germany, 1933-39

Where can it take me?

Studying History at GCSE will take you on an exciting journey filled with valuable skills for life beyond the classroom. Through exploring the past you'll develop **critical thinking**, **analytical skills**, and the ability to interpret complex information. You will learn how to **evaluate evidence** and **master the art of crating compelling arguments**. These skills are **highly transferable** and sought after in various careers such as in:

- Law
- Journalism
- Politics
- Secret service
- Archeology
- Curator
- Author; and many more ...

How will I be Assessed?

At North Oxfordshire Academy we following the Edexcel specification. Students are assessed over three papers at the end of Year 11.

Paper 1: Thematic study and historic environment	Paper 2: Period study and British depth study	Paper 3: Modern depth study	GCSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes • 30% of qualification • 52 marks (16 for the historic environment; 36 for the thematic study) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes • 40% of the qualification • 64 marks (32 for the period study; 32 for the British depth study). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written examination: 1 hour and 30 minutes • 30% of qualification • 52 marks 	

Mathematics

Course Description

GCSE mathematics will take the fundamental skills established at key stage 3 and will be further developed for deeper understanding and application at key stage 4. The interleaving of topics through the scheme of learning and starters allows students to develop fluency and understanding of more difficult concepts. At key stage 4 students are continually developing their problem solving and reasoning skills by using their pre-requisite knowledge and applying these skills appropriately. The above will enhance each student's subject knowledge to achieve their potential, not just in education for their real life applications. Students will experience interleaved mathematics content within other subject area through relevant application throughout the academic year. Every student at North Oxfordshire Academy will have a relevant understanding and appreciation for mathematics in the real world.

You will develop the following skills:

- Numeracy and its everyday application
- Problem Solving Skills and Techniques
- The ability to reason mathematically
- Working independently
- Working as part of a team

Where can it take me?

All mathematics provides opportunities to develop the knowledge and attitudes necessary to become a productive and responsible members of society, with skill used in every day life. Higher tier mathematics is particularly useful if you are considering a university-based career such as **Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry, Engineering, Finance, Computer programmer and many more...**

How will I be Assessed?

At North Oxfordshire Academy we will be following the Edexcel Specification. Students will be assessed over three papers; paper 1 non-calculator, paper 2 and 3 calculator.

There are two tier of entries: Foundation Tier and Higher Tier.

Foundation - Students can achieve up to and including a Grade 5 on the Foundation specification.

Higher - Higher tier is a significantly more challenging specification. Students can achieve a Grade 3 to Grade 9 on the Higher specification.

From September, classroom teachers and Head of Department will be continually discussing with students and parents regarding their tier of entry. In January of year 10, a decision on the appropriate tier of entry will then be made for each individual student based on data from assessments and attitudes towards learning.

Foundation Tier		Higher Tier		GCSE
Number	25%	Number	15%	
Algebra	20%	Algebra	30%	
Ratio & Proportion	25%	Ratio & Proportion	25%	
Geometry & Measure	15%	Geometry & Measure	25%	
Statistics & Probability	15%	Statistics & Probability	15%	

Music

Course Description

This option is ideal if you are considering a career within any area of the Music Industry: Performer, Accompanist, Studio Engineer, Music Events Organiser, Game Music Composer, Music Teacher, Music Technician, Music Journalist, Events Manager... the list is endless!

Skills you would learn on the Music course can also be applied to a number of different subjects/careers since they are so transferable. Having a commitment to learning more about Music will help you to develop teamwork skills, leadership skills and analytical skills, all of which could enable you to perform well at an interview or in any work environment.

Whilst being academically challenging GCSE Music also provides the opportunity to do something practical and creative in the midst of purely knowledge-based courses. It is desirable that all students taking this course have experience of playing an instrument or vocal training.

What will I Learn?

In Music GCSE, you will cover the three main areas of Performing, Composing and Listening. The Performance unit will allow you to develop your skills as a solo performer and give you the opportunity to work as part of an ensemble. Performances can also be developed using sequencing software, as if you were a DJ. In the Composing unit you will develop skills in creating your own music using a range of song writing techniques. You will submit two compositions, which will be set to a brief related to the areas of study from the Listening unit.

The Listening unit will develop your listening and appraising skills through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres. This unit will be assessed through a 1hr 30min written exam.

You will develop the following skills:

- Solo rehearsals
- Ensemble skill development
- Music theory
- Listening and analysing tasks
- Composition and arranging tasks using Logic computer software
- Performances

Where can it take me?

This course can provide you with the opportunity to pursue a massive variety of roles from different sectors within the music industry, such as composer, session musician, music teacher and many more.

This course can also lead you onto studying Music or Music Technology at 6th form which can result in a University course based around the industry.

How will I be Assessed?

Controlled Assessment (60%)	Non-Examined Assessment (30%)	GCSE
The course comprises of three units and two of these (Performing & Composing) are internally assessed during the two years of study.	One unit is externally assessed. Knowledge and skills developed in the Listening unit will be assessed by a 1hr 30 min written exam.	

Religious Education

Course Description

GCSE RE is a valuable qualification; it teaches students to reflect on personal and wider world issues and develops important critical thinking and skills of analysis and evaluation. It encourages students to challenge the status quo whilst maintaining a respectful appreciation of different world views. There are opportunities to discuss, debate and challenge ideas from religions, philosophers and each other in the classroom and explore a range of ideas in our learning, both religious and non-religious. RE is a sought after GCSE subject with many universities and employers looking for as it is an academically rich subject.

What will I Learn?

Religions: Christianity and Islam: A range of core beliefs and practices from both religions are explored and discussed and links between historical teachings and scripture are used to bridge learning to life as a modern day Christian and Muslim.

Human Relationships: Ethical issues surrounding marriage, divorce, contraception, homosexual relationships, the role of women, the role of the family.

Religion and Life: Ethical and philosophical issues surrounding abortion, euthanasia, animal testing, origins of the world, damage to the environment, religious vs. scientific truth.

Religion, Peace and Conflict: Ethical issues surrounding war, peacemaking, the use of nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrent, treatment of victims of war and violent protest.

Crime and Punishment: Ethical issues surrounding the death penalty, the impact of poverty, addiction and mental illness on crime, the aim of serving a prison sentence, forgiveness and reconciliation, types of crime, suffering.

You will develop the following skills:

- A wider knowledge of the ethical issues in the modern world
- Debating and forming opinion verbally
- Structuring in depth analytical and evaluative essays
- Deeper understanding of other people's religious and moral views, difficulties and beliefs
- Ability to contemplate the ultimate questions

Where can it take me?

Doctors & nurses need a firm understanding of medical ethics and many religious teachings have a direct influence on their job

Police Officers need to have a good understanding of multi-faith and multi-cultural issues in order to do an effective job. They must show tolerance & understanding and be against prejudice & discrimination. Many UK laws are based on Christian laws & teachings!

Lawyers & Judges must study Religion & Law as part of their training

A teacher will usually encounter students and parents of all different races & religions and should be free from prejudice.

Social Workers must have a good understanding of religious and cultural issues in order to understand and empathise with the people they are entrusted to help.

How will I be Assessed?

Firstly, students will study Christian beliefs and practices and Muslim beliefs and practices. Towards the end of Y10, students will look at the themes stated above for Paper 2. Each paper is worth 50%.

Paper 1	Paper 2	GCSE
1 hour 45 minutes 4 sections (1, 1, 4, 6 and 12 mark questions to be answered in each section Christian beliefs / practices and Muslim beliefs and practices	1 hour 45 minutes 4 sections (1, 1, 4, 6 and 12 mark questions to be answered in each section Relationships & Family, Religion and Life, Religion, Peace and Conflict and Crime and Punishment	

Science Trilogy

Course Description

The study of science at GCSE is taught in the three discrete strands. Biology, Chemistry and Physics. All students are exposed to aspects of all three sciences whether they study for two GCSEs in science (GCSE Science Trilogy) or whether they complete three separate GCSEs (Triple science). Students will be guided towards the route most suitable for them. Throughout the course pupils will study the key elements of all three sciences. There are also a number of practicals built into the scheme of learning that link the scientific content to the skills that real scientists use in their work.

You will develop the following skills:

- Numeracy
- Literacy and communication
- Practical skills
- Problem solving
- Interpreting data
- Evaluation
- Critical thinking
- Knowledge retention and application

Where can it take me?

Combined science is the right pathway for the majority of students, other than those who are keen to move onto academic science courses at A level and University (even then, Combined Science can still get you there).

It is a GCSE that shows employers and Further Education institutions that you have a good balance of numeracy and literacy skills, as well as being able to work hard to remember and apply a wide breadth of content.

How will I be Assessed?

There are two tiers of entry for all examinations: higher and foundation. The qualification is linear meaning all 6 (75 minute) exams will be sat at the end of year 11. Students will also have had the opportunity to take part on a number of “required practicals” which are assessed in the exams, along with the theoretical content.

The scores from the 6 papers are averaged out and used to give you 2 GCSE grades.

Paper 1	1hour 15 minutes 70 marks (16.7%)	Biology topics 1–4: Cell Biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics	GCSE
Paper 2	1hour 15 minutes 70 marks (16.7%)	Biology topics 5–7: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; and Ecology.	
Paper 3	1hour 15 minutes 70 marks (16.7%)	Chemistry topics 8–12: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry; Chemical changes; and Energy changes.	
Paper 4	1hour 15 minutes 70 marks (16.7%)	Chemistry topics 13–17: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis; Chemistry of the atmosphere; and Using resources.	
Paper 5	1hour 15 minutes 70 marks (16.7%)	Physics topics 18–21: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure.	
Paper 6	1hour 15 minutes 70 marks (16.7%)	Physics topics 22–24: Forces; Waves; and Magnetism and electromagnetism	

Science Triple (AQA)

Triple Science Option is Prior Approval Only:

For Triple Science, the Science Department will invite students to opt for this subject. The reason this option is invitation only is that the expanded range of knowledge that will need to be learnt, greater depth of applied reasoning, the additional number of exams mean that it will only be suitable for those students with a natural aptitude for sciences.

Course Description

In Triple Science, you will cover the same core topics as those in combined science (Trilogy). However, the topics will be covered in extra detail with some additional topics as well. This will allow you to gain a deeper understanding of each of the separate sciences, which is of particular importance for studying any of these subjects at A level. This course is most suited to those students who have a talent and passion for science and wish to take this beyond GCSE.

What will I Learn?

Biology: Culturing microorganisms, monoclonal antibodies, plant disease, the brain, the eye, control of body temperature, plant hormones, DNA structure, cloning, the history of evolution, speciation, understanding genetics.

Chemistry: Properties of transition metals, properties of matter and nanoparticles, yield of chemical reactions, chemical cells and fuel cells, reactions of alkenes and alcohols, synthetic and natural polymers, identification of ions, using materials, the Haber process.

Physics: moments, levers and gears, pressure in fluids, reflection of waves, sound waves, lenses, visible light, black body radiation, insulation, fuses and circuit breakers, static electricity, loudspeakers, induced potential, transformers and the National Grid, pressure in gases, radioactive emissions, nuclear fission and fusion, space physics (whole extra topic).

You will develop the following skills:

- Practical laboratory-based activities
- Required practical sessions
- Independent work
- Group work
- Graphing and mathematical skill development

Where can it take me?

Science provides opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become productive and responsible members of society. Triple science is particularly useful if you are considering a university-based career such as **Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry, Sports Science, Astronomy, Engineering, Nursing, and many more.**

How will I be Assessed?

The qualification is linear meaning all exams will be sat at the end of year 11.

Paper 1 – 1hour 45 minutes (100 marks) Topics 1 – 4: Cell biology; Organisation; Infection and response; and Bioenergetics	Paper 2 – 1hour 45 minutes (100 marks) Topics 5 – 7: Homeostasis and response; Inheritance, variation and evolution; Ecology	GCSE Biology
Paper 1 - 1hour 45 minutes (100 marks) Topics 1–5: Atomic structure and the periodic table; Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; Quantitative chemistry, Chemical changes; and Energy changes	Paper 2 - 1hour 45 minutes (100 marks) Topics 6–10: The rate and extent of chemical change; Organic chemistry; Chemical analysis, Chemistry of the atmosphere; Using resources.	
Paper 1 - 1hour 45 minutes (100 marks) Topics 1-4: Energy; Electricity; Particle model of matter; and Atomic structure.	Paper 2 - 1hour 45 minutes (100 marks) Topics 5-8: Forces; Waves; Magnetism and electromagnetism; and Space physics	GCSE Physics

Spanish

Course Description

The Edexcel Spanish GCSE course builds upon the strong foundation of language learning that has been acquired throughout KS3. Spanish at KS4 consists of 6 main themes: My Personal World, Lifestyle and Wellbeing, My Neighbourhood, Media and Technology, Studying and My Future, Travel and Tourism.

You will develop the following skills:

By using sentence builders consisting of high frequency language, students will develop their ability in Spanish through; reading, listening, speaking and writing. For reading activities, we aim to use as many authentic resources as possible such as; newspapers, articles and magazines. Listening activities can be taken from French radio stations, films and television programmes. Writing and translation is interweaved into all lessons.

Where can it take me?

We firmly believe that languages are the key to opening up a wide range of opportunities for our students. The job prospects are extremely exciting, whether it be; translation, interpretation, working in hospitality, publishing or finance. Students who have a foreign language at GCSE level and beyond will be in high demand due to global economy that is so prevalent in today's society.

How will I be Assessed?

The qualification is linear meaning all exams will be sat at the end of year 11. Students will be entered for either foundation or higher tier in Year 11 and the assessment process is as follows:

Foundation Tier		Higher Tier		GCSE
Listening (45 minutes – 5 minutes reading)	25% (40 marks)	Listening (60 minutes – 5 minutes reading)	25% (50 marks)	
Reading (45 minutes)	25% (60 marks)	Reading (60 minutes)	25% (60 marks)	
Writing (1 hour 15 minutes) <i>Students will describe a photo, produce a 40 word response, translations (five sentences into French) and produce a 90 word response.</i>	25% (50 marks)	Writing (1 hour 20 minutes) <i>Students will produce a 90 word and 150 word response in French. Translation—paragraph from English into French.</i>	25% (60 marks)	
Speaking (7-9 minutes and 15 minutes preparation time) <i>Students will have 15 minutes to prepare responses to a role play and photo card. They will then take part in a 'general conversation' based on the content themes.</i>	25% (60 marks)	Speaking (10-12 minutes and 15 minutes preparation time) <i>Students will have 15 minutes to prepare responses to a role play and photo card. They will then take part in a 'general conversation' based on the content themes.</i>	25% (60 marks)	

Engineering

Course Description

WJEC Engineering gives you an excellent opportunity to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in the context of real-world engineering and by encouraging learning through studying of real engineering companies. It offers hands-on experience of skills needed in the engineering field. Pupils will study current and past engineering developments, relating this to real life experiences. The course provides opportunities to develop design and practical skills, including the use of modern technologies.

What will I Learn?

As an engineering student you will have the opportunity to develop, reinforce and gain a wide range of practical skills within a workshop context. Students will look at how engineering impacts on everything that we make and the great importance that engineering has in the development of exciting new technologies and products. This is a practical based course that allows students to work with a range of different skills and processes to design and make a range of products.

You will develop the following skills:

- Written and verbal communication
- Machining and fabrication techniques
- Core ICT and industrial design specific skills
- Teamwork and task delegation
- Product Analysis skills
- Carrying out quality checks
- Distinguish material properties and uses
- Industrial evaluation techniques.
- Competence with Industry Standard Software – Solidworks

Where can it take me?

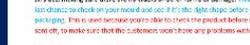
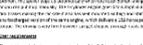
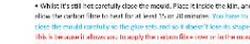
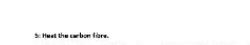
Mechanical engineer, Aerospace engineer, Automotive engineer, Marine engineer, Civil Engineer, Biomedical engineer, Communication engineer, Sound engineer, Fabrication engineer, Electrical/Electronic engineer, Chemical engineer, following routes of study either through Apprenticeships or through University

You also have the prospect of progressing to study Level 3 Engineering in 6th form. Students from the academy have obtained apprenticeships with JDE, Jaguar/Land Rover & Aston Martin.

How will I be Assessed?

Controlled Assessment (60%)	Exam (40%)	Level 2
<p>Unit 1: Engineering Manufacturing (40%) Unit 2: Designing Engineering Products (20%)</p> <p><i>The controlled assessment will be completed over the two years, completed as two portfolios.</i></p>	<p>Unit 3: Solving Engineering Problems.</p> <p><i>Paper Exam in Year 11.</i></p>	

What does the coursework look like?



Health and Social Care

Course Description

Health and Social care is a qualification which will give you knowledge and understanding that would help you in range of careers, either within the health and social care setting or further afield. It teaches you many skills which are transferable between different courses and careers. You will learn about human development along with different health and social care services. You will develop skills in interpreting data relating to someone's state of health in order to design a plan that will allow them to improve their health and wellbeing.

What will I Learn?

This course gives you the opportunity to study how people grow and develop throughout the life stages, from infancy to old age, and the factors that may affect this. For example, major life events such as marriage. You will learn how people adapt to these changes as well as the types of support available to help them. You will learn about understanding human growth and development across life stages and factors that affect it, this will be broken down in to physical, intellectual, social, and emotional changes. You will then investigate how individuals deal with life events.

You will learn about the different HSC services and about care values and their importance in making sure the people who use them, get the care they need. You will learn how to understand the different types of health and social care services and barriers to accessing them as well as demonstrating care values and review own practice. For example, a health and social care service could be a dentist, but a barrier to accessing a dentist could be that a person has hearing difficulties and therefore would struggle to communicate with a dentist.

In the external synoptic assessment information learnt in component 1 and 2 will be brought together and related to a real-life situation, the focus is on health and well-being and skills and techniques learnt throughout the course will be used in response to a brief. You will explore factors that are linked to an individual's health and wellbeing for example, genetic inheritance, diet and personal hygiene.

You will develop the following skills:

- Research skills
- Self-evaluation skills
- Increase skills in the assessment and analysis of information.
- Develop effective communication.
- Manage own workload and meet deadlines.
- Think and act as independent learners.

Where can it take me?

About 3 million people in the UK work in health and social care, this includes doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, healthcare assistants, social workers, occupational therapists, and councilors.

Studying Health and Social care at Level 2, could lead to studying A Levels or Vocational subjects at sixth form or collage as well as apprenticeships.

How will I be Assessed?

Human Lifespan Development (30%)	Health and Social Care Services and Values (30%)	Health and Wellbeing (40%)	Level 2
Internal Assessment (coursework)	Internal Assessment (coursework)	External Synoptic	

Hospitality and Catering

Course Description

Level 2 Hospitality provides you with an excellent opportunity to develop knowledge, skills and understanding relating to the whole Hospitality Industry. This learning comes from studying the key values for individual aspects of the industry. This course offers hands-on experience in developing practical skills required in the Hospitality Industry. Students will complete two units of work throughout the two-year course.

What will I Learn?

You will be provided with the knowledge of how to advance your practical skills whilst at the same time understanding the function of ingredients within products. Students will research how various areas of the industry operate and identify ways to improve. You will also explore the importance of food safety and hygiene within the industry and understand the consequences of not following these practices, these types of skills will prove to be important in everyday life when preparing food safely outside of the classroom environment. This course is a combination of both theory and practical elements with both aspects related to the current coursework topic.

You will develop the following skills:

- Food safety and hygiene
- Independent work
- A variety of core practical skills
- Customer service skills
- Ability to plan, prepare and adapt meals for different nutritional and dietary needs.
- Front and back of the house skills

Where can it take me?

This course can lead you onto studying Hospitality and Catering at 6th form or college which can result in a University course based in the industry.

This course can provide you with the opportunity to follow a massive variety of roles from different sectors within the Hospitality Industry, ranging from hotels to restaurants, chef, restaurant manager, food product developer, waitress, food scientist, food critic are just a few.

How will I be Assessed?

External exam (40%)	Coursework and practical exam (60%)	Level 2
Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry 1.1 – The Structure of the Hospitality and Catering Industry 1.2 – How the hospitality and catering provisions operate 1.3 Health & Safety in Hospitality and Catering 1.4 Food Safety in Hospitality and Catering	Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action 2.1 – The importance of nutrition 2.2 - Menu planning 2.3 - Skills and techniques of preparation, cooking and presentation 2.4 – Evaluation of cooking skills	

Music Practice

Course Description

The Music Technology course is a largely practical programme of study, in which you will learn all of the skills required to work in the music industry outside of performance. The course does not require expertise as an instrumentalist or singer, and focuses on all of the other, less obvious disciplines within the music industry, such as production, studio engineering, journalism and sound tracking for multimedia.

What will I Learn?

As will learn how to produce your own music, you will learn how to discuss music using technical language, how to use a recording studio and how to create a soundtrack for a multimedia product. Through your coursework, you will learn how to operate industry-standard production software Logic Pro X, which is used in professional level recording studios around the world, as well as how to correctly operate all of the hardware components of a modern recording studio, including mixers, microphones and effects units. You will learn all of the production techniques used in your favourite music and be able to emulate these in your own music. You will also learn how to write about music in a way that is both technical and engaging to a reader, as well as how to create and record soundtracks for multimedia, including incidental music, dialogue and sound effects. Through the externally assessed exam, you will learn how to mix and edit music to a set brief, in the same way professional sound engineers and producers operate. You will also learn about the history of music and recording technology, from the early days of recording on tape right up to modern digital production.

You will develop the following skills:

- Music production using state of the art technology and software
- Music journalism through the use of social media such as blogging
- Studio recording and mixing in a professional-standard recording studio
- Creation of sound effects for media such as movies and video games

Where can it take me?

The music industry contributes around £5.8 million a year to the British economy, and includes a very wide range of jobs, including, but not limited to, performer, producer, sound engineer, composer, venue manager, and record executive. Technology is now at the heart of the UK and International music industry, and having studied Music Technology will make graduates far more attractive to potential employers.

How will I be Assessed?

Unit 1 – Using a digital workstation (15%)	Unit 2 – Creating Music (15%)	Unit 3 – Studio Recording (15%)	Unit 4 – Sound Creation (15%)	Written Exam (20%)	Practical Exam (20%)	Level 2
Internally Assessed	Internally Assessed	Internally Assessed	Internally Assessed	Externally assessed <i>2 attempts allowed</i>	Externally assessed <i>2 attempts allowed</i>	

Course Description

Please be advised that this course is very much theory/classroom based and not like your core PE lessons. An interest in the theory element of sport is essential and your participation in sport after/outside of school.

You may be interested in this if you want an engaging qualification where you will use your learning in practical, real-life situations, such as:

- Understanding contemporary issues in sport and how they impact on different sporting activities
- Applying your skills as both a performer in two different sporting activities and as a leader in one sporting activity
- How to be a sports leader, through using your initiative to solve problems and making decisions when dealing with rapidly changing conditions and situations
- Understanding the relationship between sport and the media and applying this to real life examples
- How to evaluate and interpret the different ways in which sport is represented by the media

What will I Learn?

R184: Contemporary Issues in Sport - assessed by an exam. You will understand a range of topical and contemporary issues in sport, including learning about participation levels and barriers to completing sporting activities, how participation levels, about the role of high-profile sporting events, the role of national governing bodies and how technology is used in within sport.

R185: Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities - assessed by a set assignment. You will develop your skills both as a performer in two different sporting activities, and as a leader, developing a range of transferable skills. You will work both independently and as part of a team,

R186: Sports and the media—assessed by a set assignment. You will understand the different sides of a range of media sources and apply real life examples to show the nature of the relationship between media and sport. You will also learn how rapid development in technology is enabling sport to be viewed, replayed and discussed whenever and wherever the spectator wants. You will then develop your ability to evaluate and interpret the different ways in which sport is represented by the media

You will develop the following skills:

- ICT skills
- Analysis Skills
- Leadership skills
- Feedback and improvement skills
- Independent thinking skills

Where can it take me?

This will help you to develop independence and confidence in using skills that would be relevant to the Exercise, Physical Activity, Sport and Health sector. The qualification will also help you to progress on to A levels, apprenticeships or further vocational qualifications at Level 3.

How will I be Assessed?

Controlled Assessment (60%)	Exam (40%)	Level 2
Of the three units, two units will be coursework based (60%). The majority of this will be written assignments with some evidence of practical work as a performer and leader, to support this.	One unit will be an exam will be an hour exam worth 40% of final grade. Unit RO51 Contemporary Issues in Sport.	



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