

# A Pupil Guide to Subject Choices at GCSE

## SENIOR OPTIONS







## Welcome to your Senior Years Option Choices

Entering Year 9 at KHS sees you embark on your learning journey towards GCSE, or equivalent, qualifications. When you leave us at the end of Year 11, you then have a number of opportunities open to you at local sixth form settings at another school, either state or independent, for A levels or other courses at college, or even work or into a professional work-place apprenticeship.

Every pupil is expected to sit the core subjects of Maths, English and Combined Science.

You then have the following subjects to choose from:

- Art & Design GCSE
- BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise
- Classical Civilisation GCSE
- Computer Science GCSE / IT Cambridge Nationals
- Design & Technology GCSE
- Drama GCSE
- French GCSE
- Geography iGCSE
- History iGCSE
- BTEC Tech Award in Music Practice
- PE GCSE

This booklet is designed to help you in your subject choices but always approach your Form Teacher or Head of Seniors for further guidance.





**The Senior Years at KHS** also presents you with many other non-academic learning opportunities outside of the classroom. Pupils follow a **Year 9 Enrichment Programme** which consists of,

Autumn Term—**Stride**; a business and enterprise module designed to foster an entrepreneurial mind-set

Spring Term—**First Aid**; a practical, hands-on course of this important human life skill to enable someone to help themselves or others in a time of need.

Summer Term—**MOMB, Making of Modern Britain**—a whistle stop learning experience beginning in the classroom at KHS and concluding with a residential tour from Surrey to Manchester via Ironbridge, Bristol and Liverpool. It is an introduction to the values and history that have shaped Britain and is insightful for an understanding of politics, economics and law.

There is also opportunity for,

**HPQ— Higher Project Qualification**; students submit a 2,000 word assignment following in-depth research on their chosen subject.

**The Duke of Edinburgh Award**—a student-led programme which requires self-discipline and an ability to work as part of a team. It is split into the following sections which must be signed off by a supervisor—Voluntary, Physical, Skills & Expedition; opportunities to complete these can be found both in and outside school.



## Mathematics iGCSE

EdExcel Pearson Specification A

Assessment Structure:

Two x2 hour calculator papers. The Foundation Tier covers grades 1-5, the Higher Tier grades 4-9.

This core subject allows two tiers of entry depending on individual student ability; questions are designed to be accessible to all students in that tier and papers are balanced for topics and difficulty.

Maths allows students to develop and enhance their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and techniques, acquire a foundation of fundamental skills and to become confident using mathematics to solve problems.

Opportunities for further study in mathematics are wide and varied including at A Level and degree leading to popular careers in Accountancy, Banking, Business, Engineering, Construction and Teaching.

## English Literature & English Language GCSE

AQA

Assessment Structure for Literature: two final exams

Assessment Structure for Language: two final exams which test reading & writing skills. A discrete award for Spoken Language is also given.

In this core subject students develop essential skills across both courses in written and spoken forms of communication. A wide range of literature and texts are explored including Shakespeare, a C19 novel, modern prose and a poetry anthology.

A strong command of our language underpins everything we undertake educationally or in our working lives. Obvious careers for English graduates include Journalism or Teaching but the subject provides a platform for many career possibilities.





## Combined Science GCSE

AQA

Assessment Structure: x21 required practicals will be assessed in the examination papers at the end of Year 11.

The Foundation Tier covers grades 1-5, Higher Tier covers grades 4-9.

Questions that test mathematical skills make up 21% of each paper.

Students will be awarded two grades at the end.

This core subject covers Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Practical work is embedded into lessons alongside theory.

This course is a great foundation for higher study in any of the three discrete Sciences at A Level or degree.

Once your timetable is organised around your core subjects, you then have the following option subjects to choose from:

**Art & Design GCSE**

**BTEC Tech Level 2 Award in Enterprise**

**Classical Civilisation GCSE**

**Computer Science GCSE / IT Cambridge Nationals**

**Design & Technology GCSE**

**Drama GCSE**

**French GCSE**

**Geography iGCSE**

**History iGCSE**

**BTEC Tech Level 2 Award in Music Practice**

**PE GCSE**

The following pages list the exam board for each subject, the assessment structure and details about the course.

Do chat to your Form or Subject Teacher or Head of Seniors for further guidance.





## Art & Design GCSE

AQA

Assessment structure:

Component 1—Portfolio 60%

Component 2—externally set assignment 40%

Exam—10 hours

Students learn how to develop, refine and record ideas, as well as present a personal response and improve their practical skills. In their Portfolio and exam they will successfully use visual language and formal elements.

Art & Design can be further studied at A Level and then onto Foundation level at an Art College or degree. There are many creative career pathways beyond including Fashion, Graphic and Interior Design, Illustration, Architecture, Photography, Advertising, Media, Teaching and lots more besides.

## Classical Civilisation GCSE

OCR

Assessment structure:

Two exams with a mix of short and extended answers.

Two units studied: Myth & Religion (including Greek & Roman Gods plus War & Warfare (comparing Athens, Sparta & Imperial Rome)

Students will undertake reading, writing and research; this subject will suit you if you are interested in history, mythology, stories, warfare and weapons.

Studying Classics can be a platform for a career in Teaching, the Armed Forces or Law after higher education in A levels or a Classics degree.



## Computer Science GCSE

OCR course ref.J277

Assessment Structure:

Two final written exams each worth 50%

Unit 1—Computer Systems

Unit 2—Computational Thinking, Algorithms & Programming

Mathematical skills are part of the learning alongside the ability to think creatively and innovatively. Students will need to be able to work independently on programming projects and should enjoy analysing problems, problem solving and computer programming. It will appeal to those who wish to use the knowledge and skills they learn in the classroom on real world problems. This qualification is a great preparation to study Computer Science at A Level and beyond, as well as a good grounding for other subjects that require computational thinking and analytical skills.

## IT Cambridge Nationals Level 2

Assessment Structure: you will study three mandatory units:

1. R050: IT in the digital world - external exam
2. R060: Data manipulation using spreadsheets—assignment
3. R070: Using Augmented Reality to present information - assignment

Taking this course will enable you to progress onto A Level Computer Science, Level 3 Technical and Applied General Qualifications, T Levels and Digital Apprenticeships.





## **BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Enterprise**

Pearson Edexcel

All students will study three components covering the following areas:

Exploring Enterprises

Planning and Presenting a Micro-Enterprise Idea

Marketing and Finance for Enterprise

Components 1 & 2 internally assessed via assignments, not examination.

Component 3 takes the form of an external assessment.

This course focuses on giving students the knowledge, understanding and skills required to research, plan, pitch and review an enterprise idea. This will include market research, financial transactions, self-reflection and problem-solving. Students will learn about characteristics of enterprises and entrepreneurs, as well as the factors – both internal and external – which affect performance and success of an enterprise.

The BTEC in Enterprise is valuable in its own right as a practical and real-life study of modern life, as well as giving a strong base for sixth form study in disciplines such as Business, Economics and Geography. It will suit learners who are keen to undertake practical research into businesses (not just Googling!) and can organise their time to keep up with coursework requirements. The course will involve use of mathematics, including arithmetic, decimals, percentages and reading from graphs.



## Design & Technology GCSE

AQA

Assessment structure:

Exam 50% - Knowledge of three key areas

Non exam assessment (NEA) 50% - Design and make a product to a brief

The course content enables students to gain a full understanding of the working properties of woods, metals and polymers. Students learn and work in a hands-on way and a methodical, neat approach to project work is required. A desire to research and design new ideas is essential.

This subject gives you many practical and transferrable skills. A levels in Product Design or Graphics may be one pursuit. Career pathways may include Architecture, Product and Graphic Design degrees, Carpentry, Joinery, Mechanical and Motoring Vehicle qualifications.

## Drama GCSE

AQA

Assessment structure:

Component 1: Devising Drama—40% - assessed by practical performance & written portfolio

Component 2: Performance from a Text—20% - assessed by practical performance

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice—40% - written exam including a set text

Working collaboratively is explored, as well as developing own confidence, initiative and creativity, alongside analytical skills studying a live theatre performance.

Dramatic skills are transferrable to all areas of the workplace with specific links to careers in Acting, Theatre Design or Technician, Law, Teaching Journalism and many more.



## French GCSE

AQA

Assessment Structure: students undertake exam tasks in four skills of listening, speaking, reading & writing, all 25% each

Topics covered include,

Theme 1—Identity & Culture

Theme 2—Local, national & global areas of interest

Theme 3—current & future study & employment

Confidence when speaking with an accent, good listening skills, an 'ear' for a new language plus good spelling and the potential to grasp new grammar concepts are all key to studying this option.

French could lead straight into French A Level or another European language. A foreign language is considered highly desirable by many employers.

## Geography iGCSE

Pearson EdExcel B specification

Assessment Structure:

Two written exams—Physical Geography 40%; Human Geography 60%

Pupils will study rivers, climatic and tectonic hazards, economic activity, energy and urban environments. There is a physical and human fieldwork investigation on rivers and urban environments, plus an optional trip to Iceland in Year 10. Mapping and ICT skills are important in collecting, collating and presenting information.

This subject has excellent links with both the Humanities and Sciences and is a robust academic subject for further study at A Level and beyond.



## History iGCSE

Pearson EdExcel

Assessment Structure:

X2 exam papers, 1.5 hours each

Paper 1—Depth Studies—Germany, development of dictatorship 1918-45; Civil Rights in the USA 1918-45

Paper 2—Investigation—The USA 1918-41; Breadth Study—Changes in Medicine 1848-1948

We learn through interrogating sources and interpretations from the past, as well as understanding the content about key events and people who have shaped British, American and World History.

The qualification proves you are articulate, can formulate arguments and are interested in shaping the future.

## BTEC Tech Level 2 Award in Music Practice

Pearson EdExcel

All students will study three components covering the following areas;

Music Products & Styles

Music Skills Development

Responding to a Music Brief

This course is different to studying GCSE in Music as it gives you the chance to take part in practical and vocational activities and gives you the opportunity to apply your knowledge, skills and techniques you learn in a practical way. You must be prepared to get up and perform in front of others—singing or on an instrument. Having individual lessons on voice or an instrument of your choice is not a requirement of the course but is highly recommended as you should be able to show progression (approximately Grade 4 standard by the end).

This qualification will allow you to develop your musical skills and knowledge through practical and creative application in a vocational context—you will have a better understanding of whether the music industry is right for you.



## PE GCSE

WEJC (Welsh Joint Education Committee) Short & Full Course

All students who opt to take PE will complete the same Foundation year in Year 9 before being advised to take with the Short or Full WJEC course.

### Assessment Structure:

#### Short Course (½ Study of GCSE)

1 x 1 hour written exam paper - Introduction to Physical Education (50 marks)

1 x Team Sport\* (28 marks) - marked solely on ability.

1 x Individual Sport\* (28 marks) - marked solely on ability.

#### Full Course (Whole GCSE)

1 x 2 hour written exam paper (100 marks)

1 x Major Sport\* (Team or Individual) - Includes Written Coursework (44 marks)

1 x Team Sport\* (28 marks) - marked solely on ability.

1 x Individual Sport\* (28 marks) - marked solely on ability.

*\*All practically assessed sports are available on the WJEC website*

This subject would suit you if:

You have a love for all sports and are interested in how the mind and body work within sport.

You have a particular interest in science, as the course has heavy cross-curricular links with Biology.

You currently play at least one sport for a club outside of school.

You are currently playing at least one sport to a good level within or outside school and contributing to team fixtures.

Skills required include self-evaluation and analysis of own strengths and weaknesses within sport; being able to apply the topics learnt to a variety of different team and individual sports.

Good use of revision techniques - there is a lot of content in the full course to be covered in one exam paper.

Links to future careers and courses would include an A Level in Physical Education and a degree in Sports Science; Coaching and Fitness Qualifications alongside Sports Psychology or Marketing, PE / Games Teacher, Physio and many more.

