



Pathways to Success

Subject Choices

September 2026

Dear Parents and Students

Welcome to our Pathway to Success Subject Choices booklet for 2026.

The quality of the curriculum is now a key indicator of the effectiveness of a school and I am very proud to say that I think the offer we are making to our Year 8 students is an excellent one.

We are still placing a significant value on the need to study a core curriculum, which will stand young people in good stead for their future; however, we are continuing to offer an element of choice and increased breadth, which means students can choose from 16 subjects, ranging from Art & Design to Engineering to Hairdressing and Religious Studies to Photography! It really is a fantastic offer, and we ask that you and your child think hard about the subjects they choose. Feedback from survey forms completed by previous year groups show that 98% of parents like the opportunity for their child to pick subjects that they enjoy and in which they will be successful, something we take very seriously and which we have maintained in this year's offer.

Year 9 is a continuation of KS3, but it is transitional year; we don't 'start GCSE' in that year but use it to consolidate learning from Years 7 and 8 so that students have the skills needed to be successful when they start their GCSEs properly in Year 10. Of course, we continue to embed our key themes of understanding diversity, developing character and thinking hard throughout all the subjects chosen.

I wish all our students success with their choices and look forward to them building on the excellent start they have made at Cowplain.

Best wishes

Mr I R Gates
Principal

Welcome to your Pathway to Success

Your Curriculum

Your Choice

Your Future

Year 9 is an important year. At Cowplain, we allow students to begin to specialise their curriculum in preparation for the start of GCSEs in Year 10. Students will continue to study a Core curriculum, which we believe includes all the cornerstones for a balanced curriculum. This booklet has been written to help students through the process so they can make the right choices for their future.

What must I study in Year 9?

Every student is required to study a core, balanced curriculum that will ultimately lead to GCSE exams in:

- English Language and English Literature
- Mathematics
- Science
- Geography
- History
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)
- Ethics and Philosophy
- Physical Education Core
- Spanish – *highly recommended for sets E, F and G*

What can I choose to study?

Students have a free choice to specialise their study with the following foundation courses:

Art and Design	Hair and Beauty Therapy
Business	Media
Computing	Music
Dance	Photography
Drama	Physical Education
Engineering	Religious Studies
ESports	Spanish
Food Preparation and Nutrition	Textiles

Subject Choices

All students can choose two subjects to specialise in in Year 9. For half of our students we highly recommend they continue to study Spanish. Those whom we do not recommend Spanish to, can choose it, or a third subject. The expectation is that these studies continue to the full GCSE course in Years 10 and 11. At the end of Year 9 students will also be able to choose either Geography or History, or both, to study at GCSE.

We know that some students already have a very clear idea of the subjects they would like to study. However, we recommend reading the subject information pages, so they are informed of what each subject entails. For additional curriculum information please look at the curriculum subject on the curriculum page on the website which has a complete breakdown of what is studied in each year.

If a student is uncertain about the right pathway to take, then we encourage them to speak to their teachers as well as talking to their tutor, in addition to talking to their parents. Should any student want to meet with a member of SLT to discuss their choices they can email me for an appointment at i.clarke@cowplainschool.co.uk.

Featured Pathways

In addition to the subject information, the 'Featured Pathways' offer combinations of subjects; these do not have to be followed, but are tailored to provide the foundation for further study or employment:

Pathway	Suggested Subjects
Arts	Art and Design, Business, Computing, Dance, Drama, Engineering, Religious Studies, Media, Music, Photography, Textiles
Business	Business, Computing, Food Preparation and Nutrition, Hair and Beauty Therapy, Physical Education, Spanish
Digital Media	Art and Design, Business, Computing, Engineering, Esports, Media, Music, Photography
Russell Group	Business, Drama, Dance, Music, Religious Studies, Spanish
Technical	Business, Computing, Drama, Engineering, Esports, Food Preparation and Nutrition, Hair and Beauty, Music, Photography, Physical Education

Examples:

If you follow the Arts Pathway, your choice from the subjects listed above could be:

Art and Design, Dance and Media; or Dance, Drama, and Music

However, as you have a free choice for your options, it is possible to mix pathways to personalise your choice:

Arts/Russell Group – Engineering, Spanish and Dance; or

Digital/Technical – Business, Media, Engineering and Computer Science

Before you make your final choices

Think about what subjects you like. It will be easier to study a subject that you enjoy or that interests you. However, you should not make a choice because you like the teacher – who may not be teaching your group; or because your friends are doing the course - you may not be placed in the same group.

Remember - You must make your decision and return the completed Subject Choices Form to your Tutor by **Monday 23 March 2026.**

GCSE English Language

Compulsory Subject

Mode of Assessment: Two exam papers

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

1 hour 45 minutes

Paper 2 (Transactional Reading and Writing) 50%

1 hour 45 minutes

Current Exam Board = AQA

Content:

- Reading a range of fiction and non-fiction extracts that show a range of perspectives and ideas
- Writing creatively and writing to argue and persuade. This includes writing stories, descriptions, articles and speeches
- Speaking and listening- students will take part in group speaking and listening and debates

Year 9

Non-fiction texts - understanding the effects of non-fiction texts, historical context, how language is used to manipulate the reader

Creative writing – understanding different forms of creative pieces, understanding structure, using advanced vocabulary as well as language techniques

Year 10

Language paper 1 - students will read a range of fiction articles including longer pieces and explore key themes, language choices and structure. Students will also have many opportunities to write creatively

Language paper 2 - students will read a range of non-fiction articles and compare ideas, language and perspectives. Students will also write for a range of purposes including to argue and persuade

Year 11

Language paper 1 – looking at all the key skills for each question, gaining confidence on longer exam style written responses

Language paper 2 – looking at all the key skills for each question, gaining confidence on longer exam style written responses

GCSE English Literature

Compulsory Subject

Mode of Assessment: Two exam papers

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

1 hour 45 minutes

Paper 2 (Modern texts and poetry) 60%

2 hour 15 minutes

Current Exam Board = AQA

Content:

- Reading a range of modern and pre-1914 texts
- Writing and critical thinking
- Linking historical cultural aspects to a range of modern and pre-1914 texts

Year 9

Contemporary literature – exploring ethnicity, historical context, effects of language, how characters are built, extending our spoken and written vocabulary. Students will read two modern novels and a range of non-fiction texts that address contemporary issues.

Poetry - collecting ideas and exploring a range of poems including spoken word poetry

Year 10

Romeo and Juliet – read and understand the play, explore Elizabethan context, understand themes and ideas in a text

A Christmas Carol - read and understand the novella, explore Victorian context, understand themes and ideas in a text

Poetry – annotate all the poems in the Power and Conflict section, link context ideas with language in the poems

An Inspector Calls - read and understand the play, explore pre- and post-war context, understand themes and ideas in a text

Year 11

Literature paper 1 – revision of Romeo and Juliet and A Christmas Carol

Literature paper 2 – revision of An Inspector Calls and Poetry

GCSE Mathematics

Compulsory Subject

Mode of Assessment: Three exam papers (Higher or Foundation Tier)

Paper 1 (Calculator) 1 hour 30 minutes

Paper 2 (Non-Calculator) 1 hour 30 minutes

Paper 3 (Calculator) 1 Hour 30 minutes

Current Exam Board = OCR

The aims and objectives of this qualification are to enable students to:

- Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts
- Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems
- Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions
- Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context

Mode of Assessment:

Two tiers are available: Foundation and Higher.

- The qualification consists of three equally weighted written examination papers

Study in Year 9:

Number: FDP conversions, Finance

Developing Algebra: Equations and Inequalities, Straight Line Graphs

Geometry: Pythagoras' Theorem, Trigonometry, Perimeter/Area/Volume, Transformation, Angles

Ratio and Proportion: Sharing into Ratios, Direct and Inverse Proportion, Compound Units

Statistics: Averages

Study in Year 10:

Number: Indices, Standard Form, Surds, Types of Number

Developing Algebra: Algebraic Manipulation, Types of Graphs, Equations and Inequalities, Simultaneous Equations

Geometry: Pythagoras' Theorem, Trigonometry, Congruence and Similarity, Vectors, Transformations

Ratio and Proportion: Sharing into Ratios, Direct and Inverse Proportion

Statistics: Collecting, Representing and Analysing Data, Probability

Study in Year 11:

We rotate between 2 weeks of teaching each of the mathematical topics; Number, Proportion, Algebra, Geometry and Statistics and Probability.

Revision, Exam practice and Exam techniques

GCSE Separate Sciences

Compulsory Subject - 3 GCSEs

All students will follow the 3 Separate Sciences. There are two tiers Higher and foundation, students will be monitored to decide which tier they will be entered in for each of the separate disciplines. This allows us to tailor the pathway for each individual student.

Mode of Assessment: Six exam papers (equally weighted)

Papers 1 and 2 - Biology

1 hour 45 minutes each

Papers 3 and 4 - Chemistry

1 hour 45 minutes each

Papers 5 and 6 - Physics

1 hour 45 minutes each

Current Exam Board = Edexcel

Content:

- **Biology:** cells, organisation, infection, bioenergetics, homeostasis, inheritance, variation and evolution, ecology
- **Chemistry:** atomic structure and periodic table, bonding, structure and properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, organic chemistry, atmospheric chemistry
- **Physics:** forces, energy, waves, electricity, magnetism and electromagnetism, particle model of matter, atomic structure, space physics

Physical Education - Core

Compulsory Subject

Mode of Assessment: Students are only internally assessed in this subject

Content:

Within Core PE, we aim to teach students about life through physical activity developing their physical, mental and social health to prepare them for life after school.

The following sports are currently taught in Years 9, 10 and 11:

Athletics	Health related fitness
Australian Rules Football (tag)	Kinball
Badminton	Netball
Basketball	Rugby
Dodgeball	Spikeball
Football	Striking and fielding
Gymnastics	Table Tennis
Handball	Tennis
	Tchoukball

GCSE Art and Design: Fine Art

Featured Pathways: Arts, Digital Media, Technical

Mode of Assessment:

Component 1 (portfolio 60%) students develop responses to initial starting points or project briefs and realise intentions informed by research, the development and refinement of ideas and meaningful engagement with selected sources. Responses will include evidence of drawing for different purposes and needs and written annotation.

Component 2 (externally set assignment 40%) students respond to a starting point theme or word. This response provides evidence of the student's ability to work independently within specified time constraints, realise intentions that are personal and meaningful and explicitly address the requirements of all four assessment objectives. A 10-hour controlled assessment concludes component 2.

Current Exam Board = AQA

Important Information: It is desirable/useful that students studying this course have access to sketching pencils or paints at home to complete their Art home learning assignments. Students should be aware that work in sketchbooks will be required at home or at after school 'studio sessions' and should allow for 1-2 hours per week.

Content:

- Engage in the creative process as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.
- Become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials, and techniques.
- Develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical, and expressive skills.
- Develop ideas and personal outcomes or solutions with increasing independence.
- Acquire and develop technical skills through working with a broad range of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies with purpose and intent.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of art in historical and contemporary contexts, societies, and cultures.

Year 9

Foundation Year – Students will explore media and materials such as tonal pencils, chalk, charcoal, ink, oil pastels, watercolour paint, acrylic paint, gouache paint, lino printing and etching printing. Topics include Pop Art and Tropical Nature.

Year 10

Students continue to explore a range of artistic media, materials techniques, and processes. Topics include Sweet Treats and Expressive Portraiture.

Year 11

Component 1 (portfolio 60%) Comprised of 2 (or more) projects, from Year 10 and Year 11. **Component 2** (externally set assignment 40%) Independent project based on a starting point theme or word phrase provided by AQA to be completed over 12 weeks with a 10-hour controlled assessment to create a final piece/s.

GCSE Business

Featured Pathways: Arts, Business, Digital Media, Technical

Mode of Assessment: Two Exam Papers 50% each

Each exam is 90 minutes

Current Exam Board = OCR

Content:

In this course students will study the world of business, what their different departments do, and how they interact, both in the UK and worldwide. Students will learn how businesses are affected by the world and how businesses affect us and our daily lives.

- Business activity – how businesses are planned and organised
- Influences on business - economics and globalisation
- Business operations - production, ethics and communication
- Finance - key business finance and documents
- Marketing - marketing techniques
- Human Resources - recruitment and law

Year 9

Students look at the basic elements of business and core content through a variety of mini projects and standard lessons. Students cover elements of the above content including: famous entrepreneurs, failures, how businesses are structured, the departments within business, business finance, ethics, coming up with business ideas and marketing.

Year 10

Students delve into the content specific to the GCSE for Paper 1, covering: Enterprise, business planning, business costs and profits, ownership types, aims and objectives, organisational structure, marketing, business communication, Human Resources, motivation and retention and employment law.

Year 11

Students complete the GCSE specific content for Paper 2 including: Production, sales and customer service, consumer law, business location, suppliers, finance, ethics and environment, economic climate and globalisation, all in time to revise for the final two exams.

Computing/IT (Level 2 Qualification)

Featured Pathways: Arts, Business, Digital Media, Technical

Mode of Assessment: 2 NEAs (Spreadsheets and Augmented Reality) and
One exam at the end of Year 11.

Current Exam Board = OCR: Cambridge National Level 2 IT

Content:

A mixture of theory and practical lessons, preparing students for a Level 2 Qualification which will be taught in years 10 and 11.

- Skills of essential IT
- Cyber security
- Investigation of the pace of technological change
- IT Infrastructure on a global scale
- Legislation and security

Year 9

Students look at the essential elements of IT, building on the skills they have learnt in Years 7 and 8, including how IT is used within businesses, using Microsoft programmes and cyber security. Students begin to develop their skills using Microsoft Excel and Augmented Reality in preparation for Year 10 and 11.

Year 10

Students build on their Excel skills as they prepared for and complete their first NEA (coursework) on Spreadsheets. They will continue to understand the use of IT in the modern world, including building their skills using Augmented Reality software.

Year 11

This year begins with preparation and completion of the second NEA on Augmented Reality. Following this, students will have time to revise for the examination at the end of the year on IT in the Digital World.

GCSE Dance

Featured Pathways: Arts

Mode of Assessment: One exam paper (40%)
Practical (60%)

Practical Component 1: Performance and Choreography

Two set phrases, a duet/trio performance piece and a solo or group choreography

Practical Component 2: Dance Appreciation

Critical appreciation of your own work and the anthology

Current Exam Board = AQA

Content:

Practical

- Performance of two set phrases, Breathe and Flux
- Duet/trio performance based upon the set phrases Scoop and Shift
- Solo or group choreography based on a stimulus supplied by the exam board AQA
- Students will also get the chance to work with Rachel Madocks school on their Dance Live piece.
- Students will also get the chance to audition to perform on stage at Disneyland Paris.

Written

- Knowledge and understanding of hypothetical choreography
- Performance skills
- Critical appreciation of your own work
- Critical appreciation of the six anthology works

Course overview

Year 9

This year is a foundation, where students learn and build on prior knowledge of dance. Students will explore various genres including; Ballet, Tap, Lyrical, Hip Hop, Musical Theatre and Jazz. Students will enhance his/her technique and work on developing each student's character in order for them to become a well-rounded dancer. This prepares him/her for the challenges of the AQA GCSE Dance specification.

Year 10

This year focuses on learning the content needed for GCSE. Students start with a task to get him/her thinking hard - choreography. This then leads on to critically appreciating their own work, engaging students to understand how to meet all of the criteria. Students will then work on performing skills during the duet/trio. This is where students use their tricks and talents to show the moderator what he/she can really do as a dancer. Finally, students learn the two set phrases Breathe and Flux. This challenges students to work with a metronome and focus on his/her precision of action, space and dynamics.

Year 11

This year brings together all of the different elements. It involves filming under moderation conditions and completing a choreography piece which is 40% of the overall grade. All whilst understanding diversity, by looking at the different anthology of works; thinking hard by using the different writing styles to enhance 6 and 12 mark questions; and developing character by mastering what he/she has learnt over the past two years.

GCSE Drama

Featured Pathways: Arts

Mode of Assessment:

Component 1: Written Exam (40%) (1 Hour 45 Minutes)

Component 2: Devising (40%) Practical assessment (10%) & Coursework (30%)

Component 3: Scripted Practical exam (20%)

Current Exam Board = AQA

Practical Exam

- Performance of two extracts of a script
- Devised drama performance
- Devising Coursework - Reflection on the learning and decision-making process

Course Overview

Year 9

This year is a foundation year, where students learn and build upon their prior knowledge of Drama. Students will study a set text 'Blood Brothers' practically and sit a mock assessment working towards some of the questions in the AQA exam. Students will continue to develop their understanding how to read, rehearse and perform scripts in two mock performance assessments over the year. The students will study three Practitioners and create their own short plays and complete coursework that reflects on their learning journey and builds essential skills towards Year 10 & 11. Students will be encouraged to participate in visiting theatre on school trips to watch small-scale touring companies staging vibrant and engaging plays.

Year 10

In Year 10 students explore the set text practically 'Things I Know to be True' by Andrew Bovell and Frantic Assembly. Students will sit two written mock assessments based on watching a Live piece of theatre and the set text. There is also the non-examination assessment, where students explore making a short, devised play. Students will participate in workshops and are assessed on a final performance and three pieces of coursework.

Year 11

In Year 11 the revision takes over for the set text which continues from Year 10 'Things I Know to be True' and exam skills for the Live theatre review question. The set text is still explored practically, and students will direct each other with these scripts as well. There is a third assessment, which is externally assessed by a visiting examiner, where students perform two scripted scenes from a classic or contemporary play.

Engineering (Vocational Certificate)

Featured Pathways: Technical, Business, Russell Group

In Year 9 students will be introduced to Engineering covering all aspects of the design and development process. In Year 10 students will begin the VCert Engineering course, learning about the different engineering disciplines as well as practical skills needed for making prototypes. All the theory and skills lead to a final exam and independent project completed at the end of Year 11

Mode of Assessment: One external exam paper (40%)

One Controlled Assessment (written) (60%)

Current Exam Board = NCFE: VCert

Content:

The content of the VCert is taught in preparation for the exam in Year 11. A portfolio of work is prepared independently in response to a brief set by the exam board in Autumn of Year 11.

- Students are taught a basic understanding of what Engineering involves
- Learners will be taught health and safety in the workplace and the regulations that are involved
- It will provide students with experience of using different tools and materials to enable him/her to use these within further education or apprenticeships

Year 9

Students study design, product development, technical drawing skills and manufacturing.

Year 10 and 11

The content of the VCert is taught in preparation for the exam in early Year 11. The portfolio of work is set at Christmas in Year 11 and independently completed by Easter in Year 11.

We ask for a voluntary contribution of £20 per year. This is used directly to cover the costs of materials for your child.

Esports (Level 2 Qualification)

Featured Pathways: Digital Pathways

Year 9 is a foundation Esports year designed to introduce students to the esports industry, competitive gaming environments, leadership skills and responsible online participation. This year acts as a taster programme, allowing students to explore Esports from multiple angles before undertaking a Level 2 pathway in Years 10 and 11.

During Year 9, students will develop an understanding of esports culture, leadership, teamwork and online communication, alongside gaining introductory qualifications that support progression into further esports.

This pathway is part of a new curriculum offer. While the Year 9 programme is confirmed, progression routes into Key Stage 4 are subject to final approval. The school is planning for students to undertake the Pearson BTEC Level 2 Award in Esports in Years 10 and 11, with final details confirmed prior to students commencing Year 10.

Year 9 Qualifications and Learning Focus

In Year 9, students will study Level 1/2 qualifications alongside focused modules to build their skills and knowledge in esports.

- **Esports – Level 1/2 Qualification in Leadership Skills**
 - Online Gaming and Social Interactions
 - Esports World Cup
 - The Evolution of Esports & Gaming
-

Mode of Assessment:

- Group projects & presentations (KS3)
 - Learner Evidence Record (KS3 Leadership Qualification)
 - Coursework-based assignments (KS4)
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Current Exam Board / Awarding Bodies

- Leadership Skills Foundation
- Pearson (BTEC)

Food, Nutrition and Cooking (Vocational Certificate)

Featured Pathways: Business, Technical

In Year 9 students will be introduced to Food and Cookery skills covering all aspects of catering business from menu design to execution. In Year 10 students will begin the VCert Food and Cookery course, learning about the different preparation techniques, dietary requirements as well as practical skills needed for making specific dishes. All the theory and skills lead to a final exam and independent project completed at the end of Year 11

Mode of Assessment: One external exam paper (40%)

One Controlled Assessment (written) (60%)

Current Exam Board = NCFE: VCert

Content:

- Students are taught a basic understanding of Food groups, provenance, and legislation.
- Learners will be taught health and safety in the workplace and the regulations that are relevant in the Food industry.
- It will provide students with experience of using different techniques and ingredients to enable him/her to use these within further education or apprenticeships.

Year 9

Students study food from different countries and techniques used in kitchens.

Year 10 and 11

The content of the Food, Nutrition and Cooking VCert is taught in preparation for the exam in Year 11. A portfolio of work is prepared independently in response to a brief set by the exam board in Autumn of Year 11.

Students are expected to bring in their own ingredients as well as a suitable container to take their products home. We ask for a voluntary contribution of £20 per year. This is used directly for your child to cover costs of sundry ingredients and cooking equipment such as greaseproof paper, foil and herbs and seasonings.

GCSE Geography

Featured Pathways: Business, Russell Group

Mode of Assessment:

Component 1: Investigating Geographical Issues (40%)

1 hour 45

Component 2: Problem Solving Geography (30%)

1 hour 30

Component 3: Applied Fieldwork Enquiry (30%)

1 hour 30

Current Exam Board: WJEC (Eduqas) Specification B

Content:

- Changing Places, Changing Economies
- Changing Environments
- Environmental Challenges

Year 9:

The GCSE course starts in the summer term and investigates the physical processes that shape our coast and how human activity might change the coastal landscape. Students will then investigate different approaches to managing the coast to reduce the risk of erosion/flooding.

Year 10:

Students will learn the physical processes that determine weather, climate, river landforms and flooding; and how these impact human activity and ways of reducing risk.

Students will study contemporary issues facing urban and rural areas in the UK, such as town centres, migration, and creating sustainable communities, then compare this to the problems facing cities in other parts of the world.

Students will investigate how ecosystems are under threat (focussing on Tropical Rainforests) and the issue of climate change.

Year 11:

Students will carry out two fieldwork enquiries at local locations.

Students will study the impacts of globalisation, trade, development and aid in countries at different levels of wealth. The final topic will explore the water supply, demand and the issue of water security, both in the UK and globally.

VTCT Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy

Featured Pathways: Business, Technical

Mode of Assessment: External Exam (40%)

Internal assignment (60%)

Current Exam Board = VTCT

Content:

It is vital to remember that this is a business course that focuses on the Hair and Beauty sector.

Students are not allowed to cut hair until he/she leaves school. Students will style their own, others and model hair, as well as learn the basics of nail and make up design.

Most of the course is about researching and writing about the hair and beauty sector, preparing business plans and designs and justifying the choices made.

Students will cover 3 units:

Business and entrepreneurship in the hair and beauty sector

- Understand the structure and concept of hair and beauty businesses
- Understand enterprise and entrepreneurship in the hair and beauty sector
- Understand marketing and its role in the promotion of hair and beauty products and services

Anatomy, physiology and cosmetic science

- Understand the role of cosmetic ingredients
- Understand the structure and function of the integumentary system LO3: Understand the development of hair and beauty products

Design in the hair and beauty sector

- Understand design briefs in the hair and beauty sector
- Know how to plan and develop a design brief project
- Know how to present and review a design brief project

To enrich understanding of the industry, students will also be introduced to:

- Basic hair styling
- Basic skin care treatments
- Nail care services

GCSE History

Featured Pathways: Business, Russell Group

Mode of Assessment: Two exam papers

Paper 1 Germany and Elizabeth

2 hours (50%)

Paper 2 Health of the People and America

2 hours (50%)

Current Exam Board = WJEC (Eduqas)

Content:

- Germany: 1919-1939
- America: 1930-91 Opportunity and inequality
- Britain: Health of the People from c1000 to the present day
- Elizabethan England: c1568-1603

Year 9

Students do not start the GCSE course until the last term where he/she will begin with the health of the people in the Middle Ages. This will look at the importance of the Church in influencing treatments and patient care, as well as restricting scientific knowledge.

Year 10

Students will finish looking at health of the people, by analysing the developments and the speed of change in the Renaissance, Scientific revolution, and Modern period. Students will also be given a historical environment such as the battlefields of WW1, where he/she will look at how health and treatments have developed as a result. Students then move on to look at the reign of Elizabeth 1st and how she dealt with her government and opposition to her rule. This will include looking at how she dealt with problems such as poverty, religion and the Spanish Armada.

Year 11

Germany in transition will look at how the country recovered from serious problems caused by the aftermath of WW1 and then how the great depression led to rise of Hitler. Students will look at Hitler's domestic and foreign policies, analysing sources from the time and historical interpretations, to make judgements on their reliability and usefulness. The final topic will look at the USA and how it has changed politically, economically, and socially. Students will see the growth of the civil rights movement, the influence of the media upon society, and American foreign policy in Cuba and Vietnam.

GCSE Media

Featured Pathways: Arts, Digital Media

Mode of Assessment: Linear exam (70%)

Component 1 examination paper, 1 hour and 45 minutes

Component 2 examination paper, 1 hour and 15 minutes

Non -Examined Assessment (NEA) completed as coursework: (30%)

Key concept areas to be tested:

- Audiences: Who buys media products and why?
- Codes and conventions: What is a media text and how are they put together?
- Representation: How does the Media influence us?

Current Exam Board = OCR

Content for component 1:

- Print advertisements and their influence on social ideology
- Video games creation and development
- Television industries, audiences, and the conventions as well as social, political and historical contexts can influence the character and storyline.
- Film promotion and marketing

Content for component 2:

- Music videos as a force for change
- Magazine and stereotypes used to influence the demographic.
- Newspapers and media bias
- Radio programming and its place in the modern world

Year 9

Sitcoms – industries, audiences, historical context, character stereotypes

Music videos - the meanings behind the moving image, linking to theoretical ideas

Action Movies - understanding stereotypes, gender roles and genre of films

Video games – gender roles in video games, connotation of costume, linking ideas to theory

Print advertisements – understanding how stereotypes are used in advertisements, influence within some media products, links to theoretical ideas

Year 10

Music video – understanding stereotypes, camera angles, connotations, costume and scene

Magazine front covers – exploring context, ethnicity, gender, feminism and masculinity

Radio – exploring the history of the media product, context and audience

Newspapers – exploring layout, image and language as well as bias in media

NEA

Year 11

Print advertisement – connotations of language, layout, design and linking ideas to theory

Television – exploring context, stereotypes, gender roles, connotations of costume and scene

Movies – comparison to print advertisement, exploring stereotypes and gender roles

Video games – understanding regulation, audience, websites, social media and how they are used to grow a franchise

GCSE Music

Featured Pathways: Arts, Digital Media, Technical

Mode of Assessment: One exam paper (40%)
Two Controlled Assessments (60%)

Exam Paper - Listening and Appraising (90 minutes)

Content from Areas of Study 2, 3, 4 and 5

Controlled Assessments

- Integrated Portfolio - Solo performing and a free choice composition (30%)
- Practical Component - Ensemble performing and a composition based on a brief (30%)

Current Exam Board = OCR

Course Content:

- Area of Study 1: My music
- Area of Study 2: The concerto through time
- Area of Study 3: Rhythms of the world
- Area of Study 4: Film and video game music
- Area of Study 5: Conventions of pop music

Course Breakdown:

Year 9

Solo and Ensemble performing skills; Arts Award (Bronze); Elements of Music Theory; Composing Skills; Area of Study 3 (Rhythms of the world)

Year 10

Area of Study 5 (Conventions of pop music); Area of Study 4 (Film and Video game music); Area of Study 2 (The concerto through time)

Year 11

Area of Study 1 (My music) - Controlled Assessments (Integrated Portfolio & Practical Component); Exam preparation

GCSE Art and Design: Photography

Featured Pathways: Arts, Digital Media, Technical

Mode of Assessment:

Component 1 (portfolio 60%) students develop responses to initial starting points or project briefs and realise intentions informed by research, the development and refinement of ideas and meaningful engagement with selected sources.

Component 2 (externally set assignment 40%) students respond to a starting point theme or word. This response provides evidence of the student's ability to work independently within specified time constraints, realise intentions that are personal and meaningful and explicitly address the requirements of all four assessment objectives. A 10-hour controlled assessment concludes component 2.

Current Exam Board = AQA

Important Information: It is desirable/useful that students studying this course have access to a camera or good mobile phone camera to complete their Photography home learning assignments. Students should be aware that many photoshoots, and portfolio work, will be required to be undertaken at home or at after school 'studio sessions' and should allow for 1-2 hours per week.

Content:

- Photography is producing images using light-sensitive materials such as photographic film, or digital methods of development and production to create static or moving images.
- Themes may include portraiture, location photography, studio photography, experimental imagery, documentary photography, photo-journalism, moving image, or fashion.
- Become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials, and techniques.
- Develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical, and expressive skills.
- Develop ideas and personal outcomes or solutions with increasing independence.
- Understand how sources relate to historical, contemporary, social, cultural and issues.
- Understand how ideas, themes, subjects, and feelings can inspire creative responses.

Year 9

Foundation Year – Students will explore the history and fundamentals of photography, use DSLR cameras, create a portfolio, and learn how to use Photoshop to edit their images.

Topics include Intro to Photography & Skills, and Manual Manipulation & Alternative Techniques.

Year 10

Students continue to explore a range of photographic techniques, and processes.

Topics include The Built Environment and Portraits & Possibilities.

Year 11

Component 1 (portfolio 60%) Comprised of 2 (or more) projects from Year 10 and Year 11.

Component 2 (externally set assignment 40%) independent project based on a starting point theme or word phrase provided by AQA to be completed over 12 weeks with a 10-hour controlled assessment to create the final piece/s.

Physical Education (Level 2 Qualification)

Featured Pathways: Business, Technical

Year 9 is a foundation sport year introducing students to theory and practical examination PE. At the end of Year 9, students will then move on to complete the Cambridge National Level 1-2 in Sports Studies

Please note that students taking the course **are required to be playing a competitive sport either for a school team or outside of school for the duration of the course**. They will be assessed on two sports as part of the Performance and Leadership in Sports activities unit of work.

Mode of Assessment: Exam questions/Practical Sport Assessment/Coursework

Current Exam Board = OCR Cambridge National

Content:

The course consists of classroom theory work where students learn about a variety of topics shown below and practical lessons where sport is covered in more detail focussing on key aspects of skills and tactics. This is to prepare the students for theory and practical lessons which will be taught in Years 10 and 11.

Topics taught in Year 9:

- Performance enhancing drugs in sport
- Diet and Nutrition
- Olympics
- Technology in sport
- Sport in the greater world
- Leadership in sport

GCSE Religious Studies

Featured Pathways: Arts, Business, Digital Media, Russell Group, Technical

Mode of Assessment: Three exam papers

Paper 1 (Ethical Issues in the Modern World)

2 hours (50%)

Paper 2 (Christianity)

1 hour (25%)

Paper 3 (Hinduism)

1 hour (25%)

Current Exam Board = WJEC (Eduqas)

Content:

Ethical Issues in the Modern World (Paper 1):

Relationships – arranged marriage and wedding ceremonies, homosexuality, sex before marriage, divorce and adultery

Life and Death – abortion, euthanasia, organ transplants, the afterlife and funeral ceremonies

Good and Evil – suffering and evil in the world, crime and punishment including capital punishment, forgiveness

Human Rights – wealth and poverty, prejudice and discrimination, human rights, extremism

Study of Christianity and Hinduism (Papers 2 & 3)

Beliefs, Teachings and Practices – festivals, reincarnation, crucifixion, religion in modern society, heaven and hell

Year 9

What is reality? Humanism and Atheism, Inspirational Figures, The Big Story, Film - 'The Truman Show'

Year 10

Hinduism (Visit to Bhaktivedanta Manor), Human Rights, Life and Death, Film - 'Me Before You'

Year 11

Good and Evil, Relationships, Christianity, Film – 'Risen'

GCSE Spanish

Featured Pathways: Business, Russell Group, Technical

Mode of Assessment: Four exam papers

Paper 1 - Speaking 25% (7-9 minutes for Foundation, 10-12 minutes for Higher)

Paper 2 - Writing 25% (1 hour 10 minutes for Foundation, 1 hour 20 minutes for Higher)

Paper 3 - Reading 25% (45 minutes for Foundation, 1 hour for Higher)

Paper 4 – Listening 25% (35 minutes for Foundation, 45 minutes for Higher)

Current Exam Board = Edexcel/Pearson

Content:

By studying this course, students will learn how to communicate in everyday situations and become more confident in understanding Spanish. Students will also learn about Spanish culture and gain an insight into the Spanish speaking world.

Year 9

In Year 9 students will develop their appreciation and understanding of Spanish culture and the Spanish speaking world looking at tourism, history, literature, media (music, films, television).

Year 10 and 11

The new Spanish GCSE is structured around three main themes that cover a range of contemporary topics and real-life scenarios. There is also a greater emphasis on core grammar, vocabulary, and phonics to encourage more authentic language use.

The three main themes are:

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

- Identity and relationships with others (family, friends, marriage/partnership, role models)
- Healthy living and lifestyle (physical/mental well-being, food and drink, sport)
- Education and work (life at school/college, post-16 education, career choices and ambitions)

Theme 2: Popular culture

- Free-time activities (music, cinema and TV, sport, gaming)
- Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Celebrity culture or Media and technology (social media, mobile technology)

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

- Home, town, neighbourhood and region
- Social and global issues (charity/voluntary work, the environment, poverty/homelessness, sustainability)
- Travel and tourism (holidays, destinations, transport, attractions)

Students will be entered for either Foundation or Higher and assessed on four skills (Speaking, Writing, Reading and Listening). Each skill is worth 25% of the final grade.

GCSE Textiles

Featured Pathways: Business, Technical

Mode of Assessment: One exam paper (50%)

One coursework portfolio (50%)

Current Exam Board = EDEXCEL Design and Technology: Textiles

Content:

Year 9

Students will learn about textiles, woods, plastics, papers and boards and metals within the theory content of the course. Students will develop their sewing machine skills, learn how to create their own patterns creating high quality products.

Years 10 and 11

Students will also get to build up a creative portfolio based around a brief or theme set by the Examination Board. Students will focus on research, design, make and evaluate and be able to produce a product linked to the specialism of Textiles.

We ask for a voluntary contribution of £20 per year. This is used directly to cover the costs of materials for your child.

The Cowplain School

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