



LYMM HIGH SCHOOL

GCSE CHOICES
2026

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KEY DATES

w/c Monday 12th January 2026	Year 9 Choices Assemblies (for students)
Thursday 29th January 2026	Year 9 Choices Evening (for students and parents)
Thursday 12th February 2026	Year 9 Parents' Evening (for students and parents)
23rd February - 6th March 2026	Year 9 Choices interviews with a member of SLT (for students)
Monday 9th March 2026	Choices Deadline

Contents

	PAGE
Important Information	2-7
Compulsory Subjects	8
English (<i>Language & Literature</i>)	10
Mathematics	11
Science	12
Physical Education	13
Life Programme	13
Further Choices	14
Technology	
Art	16
Design Technology	17
Fashion & Textiles	18
Hospitality & Catering (VTQ)*	19
Food Preparation & Nutrition	20
Photography	21
Humanities	
Geography	22
History	23
Religious Studies	24
Modern Foreign Languages	
Languages	25
Performing Arts	
Dance	26
Drama	27
Music	28
Music Practice (VTQ)*	29
Science	
Separate Science	30
Social Science	
Business Studies	31
Digital Information Technology (VTQ)*	32
Computer Science	33
Psychology	34
Media	
Media Studies	35
Physical Education	
Physical Education	36-37
Health & Social Care (VTQ)*	38
Choices Form	42-43

*VTQ (Vocational & Technical Qualifications)

Introduction

This is a very exciting time for your child as they embark on the process of choosing which subjects to study at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11). This week they will have received information about different Key Stage 4 subjects during a full week of Year 9 Choices assemblies. We will also be hosting a Choices Evening on Thursday 29th January where you can hear about the process and have the opportunity to speak to staff regarding the different subjects on offer. We hope that this, in addition to the guidance in this booklet, enables you and your child to make well-informed decisions for their option choices in Year 10 and 11, choices that will form the basis of further study or training at Key Stage 5.

The Year 9 Choices evening has two components: a brief presentation in the Main Hall where the Choices process is outlined; and a subject 'marketplace' in the Sports Hall where you can ask teachers and Heads of Subject/Faculty any questions about their subject area. The timings are based on surname in order to

maximise your opportunity to find out information and to ask questions, these can be found in the table below.

There are a number of compulsory subjects, these are GCSE English Language, GCSE English Literature, GCSE Mathematics, and GCSE Combined Science (equivalent to two GCSEs). In addition, every student will continue to participate in Physical Education and Life Programme lessons. The latter covers Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) amongst other things. The other four subjects are chosen by students through the Choices process.

At Lymm High School we are proud to be able to offer a breadth of different subjects, which can be found in this booklet. From this list students will choose four subjects, with three reserve choices. Your child should select subjects that they are passionate about and enjoy doing, or in the case of new subjects, that the content inspires and motivates them. They should also consider which subjects they may wish to study in the

future, such as A-Level's, apprenticeships etc. or beyond as they progress to university, apprenticeship or employment.

Although our aim is that students will be able to study their four first choices, there may be occasions where it is not possible due to timetabling constraints. We therefore ask that your child lists three reserve subjects in order of preference. These must be seriously considered and valid option choices.

We hope you will find this booklet helpful when supporting your child in the Choices process. We would also like to remind you that Year 9 Parents Evening takes place on Thursday 12th February, which will provide you with a further opportunity to discuss choices with your child's subject teachers. If you need any additional support, please contact your child's form tutor or Head of Year, Mrs Levy.

TIME	GROUP	VENUE	CONTENT
5.45 – 6.15pm	Student Surnames A–K	Main School Hall	Presentation from Senior Leadership Team
6.15 – 7.00pm	Student Surnames A–K	Sports Hall	Subject 'Marketplace'
6.30 – 7.00pm	Student Surnames L–Z	Main School Hall	Presentation from Senior Leadership Team
7.00 – 8.00pm	Student Surnames L–Z	Sports Hall	Subject 'Marketplace'

Assessment & Qualifications

OVERVIEW

Most of the courses that your child studies will lead towards a recognised qualification, details of which can be found throughout this booklet. There are a range of different qualifications available and they are assessed in a variety of ways.

GCSE QUALIFICATIONS

GCSEs (General Certificates of Secondary Education) are the main qualifications taken by 14–16-year-olds in England. GCSEs are assessed mainly by written, end-of-course examinations, although in some subjects there are also some elements of controlled assessment and coursework. Details of the assessment format and requirements for each course are provided in the individual subject information pages.

In recent years the GCSEs have been reformed and instead of the old A*–G grading system, a new 9–1 grades was introduced.

- A grade 9 is the highest grade and represents the top of the old A* grade.
- A grade 7 is aligned with the old A grade.
- A grade 4 is aligned with the old C grade.

VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS (VTQs)

VTQs are a different type of qualification to GCSEs but still equivalently challenging and rigorous. The predominant difference is that in VTQs students' progress is assessed continually throughout the 2 years of study by regular controlled assessments which are teacher assessed and then moderated by the exam board. There is also an externally assessed element in these courses, which in some subjects can be taken during Year 10. Specific course details are outlined in this booklet on the subsequent subject pages.

The VTQs on offer this year at Lymm High School are:

- BTEC Digital Information Technology (page 32)
- BTEC Health and Social Care (page 38)
- BTEC Music Practice (page 29)
- Cambridge National Level 1/2 Certificate in Hospitality and Catering (page 19)

Progression

After KS4, students are required to remain in further education or training whether that be A-Levels, Applied courses or apprenticeships.

All of our KS4 courses lead to qualifications that are both recognised, and valued, by Sixth Form schools and colleges, universities and employers. We do not offer any 'soft options' that might help the school's position in performance tables, but would not benefit individual students.

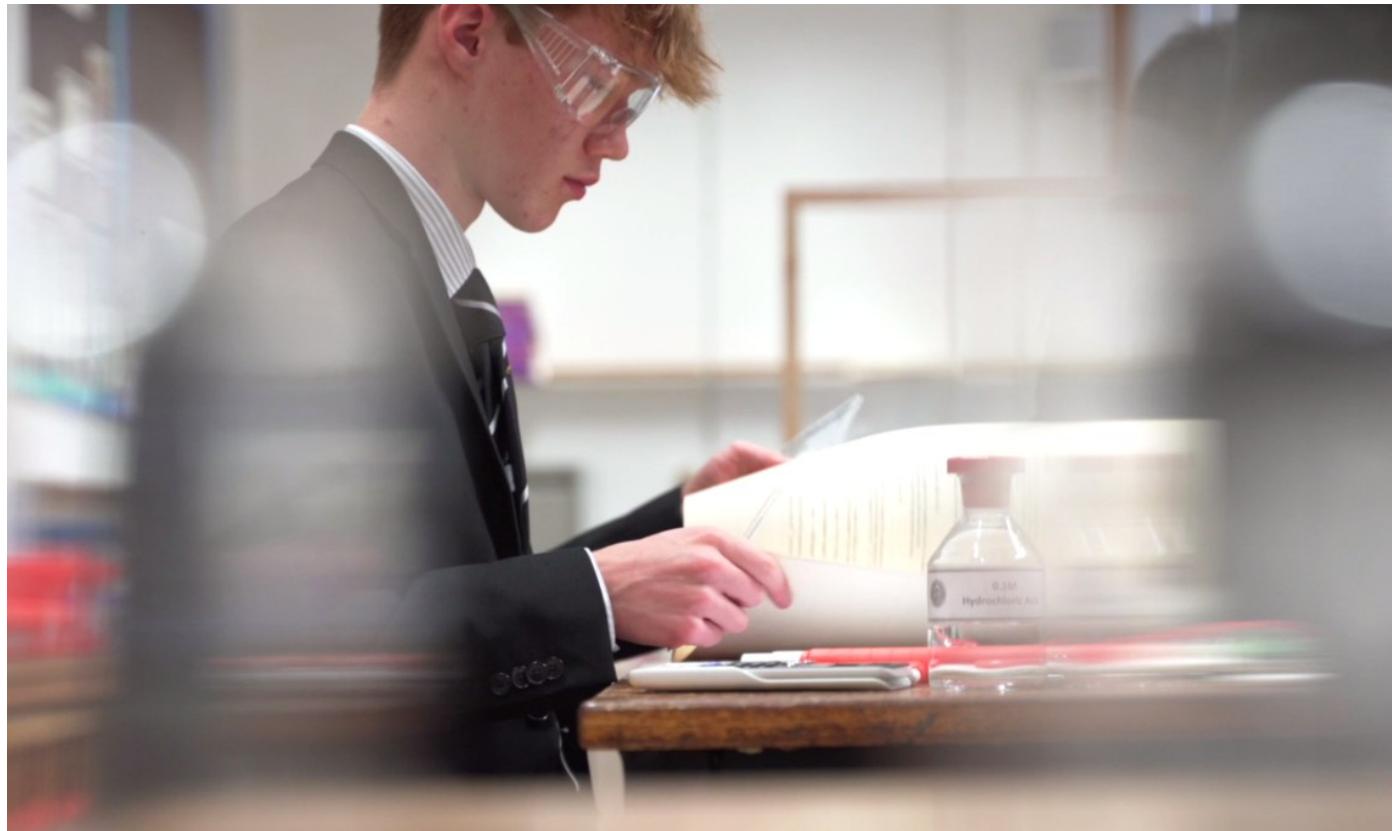
It is important to bear in mind that the option choices your son or daughter make now may impact on their post-

16 pathways. Therefore, if they are unsure of the path they wish to take after school, they are advised to speak to subject specialists on Choices Evening and choose a range of courses that will show a breadth of knowledge and skills across a variety of subjects. Further details of the post-16 courses available at Lymm High School can be found in our Sixth Form prospectus (available from our website or from Sixth Form Student Services).

The Russell Group Informed Choices website is a good place to research appropriate A' level subject choices in

light of potential university courses. Although it may seem a little early to be looking this far ahead, it is always sensible to ensure choices made now will not hinder students' options at a later date.

<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>



English Baccalaureate

In November 2025, the Government confirmed that they will be removing any expectation that students undertake studies in subjects that would qualify them for the English Baccalaureate (or "EBacc"). The EBacc is not a qualification in itself, but a suite of the following subjects:

- GCSE English Language and Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Science
- GCSE History or Geography
- GCSE in a Modern or Ancient Language

All students have to take English, Maths and at least two Science GCSEs. Whilst we never made the EBacc compulsory, we believe it is something that parents and students should seriously consider, as a means of keeping options open for further study and future careers.

As you can see from the next section, we especially believe that there are strong reasons for studying languages up to GCSE. Although they rarely say so explicitly, there is evidence that some universities do like EBacc subjects when looking at GCSE performance. The EBacc subjects are also the A' level subjects that,

traditionally, are most valued by the top universities and this is worth bearing in mind. Regardless of the EBacc, our aim at Key Stage 4 is to continue to offer a broad and balanced suite of qualifications which best meet the needs of all our students. Your child will be offered advice and guidance as to the most suitable range of choices for them and, in the end, it will be down to you and them to decide what is best.

Why study a Modern Foreign Language at GCSE?

All students are very welcome to choose continued study of one of our three languages and we do strongly encourage you to take at least one.

The cognitive benefits of learning a language other than English are clear; according to research, speakers of more than one language have improved memory, problem-solving skills, listening skills, multi-tasking ability and critical thinking skills.

Today's world is increasingly diverse and interconnected, with many businesses and careers operating on very much a global scale – speaking

another language can open doors and offer opportunities not afforded to those who are monolingual.

Learning a language at GCSE also helps students understand about other people, cultures and countries and will always be useful, whatever you choose to do later in life. Being able to speak another language means you will stand out in the workplace, and can enhance your opportunities in business, finance, government, law, medicine, technology, the military, industry, marketing and many other areas.

At Lymm, we offer GCSEs in French, German and Spanish and these are tiered (Higher and Foundation) in a similar way to GCSE Maths.

We also offer language trips to France and Germany, and an exchange with schools and families in Spain. These are a fantastic way to improve language skills, meet new people and gain confidence in a chosen language.

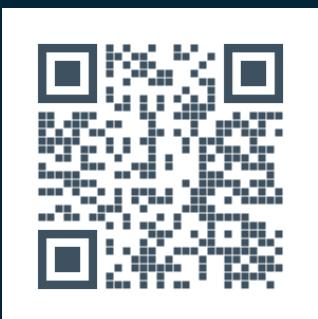
If you have any questions about choosing a language at GCSE, please speak to your subject teacher or Miss N Freebairn, Head of Modern Foreign Languages.



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Compulsory Subjects

For further information about
our curriculum and to see the full
range of subjects on offer, visit
our website at
www.lymmhigh.org.uk





English Language / English Literature

OVERVIEW

English is a compulsory subject for all students at Key Stage 4.

The principal aim of the GCSE course is to develop critical and creative thinkers, with the spoken and written communication skills needed to succeed in life. Enabling students to express themselves, in school, in the workplace, and beyond.

Mrs C Hartley
Head of Faculty
chartley@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE English Language/ English Literature

Exam Body: AQA

All students follow the AQA specifications for English Literature and English Language. Additional information on examination requirements are available from your class teacher and please do not hesitate to contact your English teacher should you have any questions about English GCSE. You can also contact Mrs Hartley if you wish.

Course Outline

All pupils will undertake both GCSE English Literature and Language. Texts have been chosen to allow a breadth of study, cultural capital and comprehension of literary heritage.

Within English Literature across Years 10 and 11, students will study Shakespeare in the form of *Macbeth*, modern drama in J.B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls*, 19th Century fiction in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, and a vast range of poetry through AQA's Power and Conflict anthology.

Within English Language, students will explore a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, examining varying genres and text forms. These include articles, speeches, letters, short stories and extracts from seminal works of literature.

The GCSE courses as a whole provide students with the opportunity to develop essential language skills, pivotal for expressing themselves and influencing the world around them.

Assessment

100% Written Exam

Literature

Paper 1: Shakespeare and 19th-century novel (40%)

Paper 2: Modern prose or drama text, AQA Anthology and an Unseen Poetry (60%)

Language

Paper 1: Explorations in creative reading and writing (50%)

Paper 2: Writers' viewpoints and perspectives (50%)

NEA Spoken Language

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level English Literature, A' level English Language. English is an ideal subject to complement study of a range of courses at advanced level and degree level, from Mathematics and Sciences to Humanities subjects.

Possible careers: journalism, law, politics, marketing, media, management, consultancy, teaching, social workers, social media management, communications consultant, editor, speech and language therapist.

Mathematics

OVERVIEW

Studying Mathematics at GCSE develops excellent problem-solving skills. These skills, as well as being highly satisfying in their own right, are highly valued by employers and provide key building blocks for the study of many other subjects.

Mr C Newns

Head of Mathematics
cnewns@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Mathematics

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

Students will already have been following a scheme of work in Year 9 that naturally flows into the GCSE course. In Years 10 and 11, students will continue to study Mathematics in the areas of number, algebra, ratio, geometry, probability and statistics.

The setting structure continues into Year 10 and, depending on their performance in Year 9, they will be placed in either a higher tier set (initially working towards GCSE grades 4 to 9) or a foundation tier set (working towards GCSE grades 1 to 5).

Our intention is to continue to challenge our brightest students beyond the scope of the GCSE course and into areas of A' level, through a more advanced qualification, equivalent to a GCSE, Level 2 in Further Mathematics. This is in addition to the GCSE and will be taken at the end of Year 11. This will be taught in normal maths lessons for pupils in set 1A. This is NOT part of the option process.

Assessment

100% Written Exam

Two Tiers: Higher and Foundation

100% Written examination (three examinations at the end of Year 11, 1 x Non-calculator paper 33.3%, 2 x calculator papers 33.3% each)

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level Mathematics, A' level Further Mathematics, Level 3 Core Mathematics. Ideal complement to a range of other courses at advanced and degree levels such as the Sciences, Economics and Geography.

Possible careers: engineer, doctor, accountant, actuary, operational researcher, statistician, computer programmer, biochemist, astronomer, oceanographer, geophysicist, software developer, sound engineer, nuclear scientist, pharmacist, management consultant, economist, architect, cartographer, mathematician, meteorologist, teacher, pilot, psychologist and philosopher.

Science

OVERVIEW

Science is a core subject of the curriculum and is taught as three separate subjects: Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Students will be encouraged to look at Science in a broad and enquiring way so that they may achieve a rounded and complete understanding of the subject. From here a large number opt for Science subjects at A' level.

Dr F Dodds

Head of Science

fdodds@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy)

Year 10 and Year 11

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

Students will have an opportunity to gain a good understanding of concepts across the three sciences, including:

Biology – cell biology; organ systems and health; infection and response; respiration and photosynthesis; homeostasis and response; inheritance, variation and evolution; and ecology.

Chemistry – atomic structure and the periodic table; bonding, structure, and the properties of matter; quantitative chemistry; chemical changes; energy changes; rate and extent of chemical change; organic chemistry; chemical analysis; chemistry of the atmosphere; and using resources.

Physics – energy; electricity; particle model of matter; atomic structure; forces; waves; magnetism and electromagnetism.

Students will also be required to develop their scientific enquiry skills in order to become scientifically literate so that they can question the world around them and engage in debate on the evidence used in decision making. There will be questions on each paper relating to specific investigations which the students will have completed in each science discipline. Papers will also have a greater emphasis on mathematical skills and analysis of experimental results.

Assessment

All units will be assessed at the end of Year 11. Questions will be a selection of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response. Students will gain two GCSEs in Science.

There will be six examinations, each lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes:

- Biology paper 1 and paper 2
- Chemistry paper 1 and paper 2
- Physics paper 1 and paper 2

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Possible careers: medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, law, astrophysics, weather forecaster, environmental chemist, dietician, research scientist, consultancy – just to name a few.

Other Information

All students will study aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics throughout the 2 years and this route leads to two GCSEs in Science.

For students who are especially committed to Science, they may want to consider opting for Separate Science as one of their four option choices.

This would lead to three GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics (see page 30 for more details).

Trilogy (combined) science

2 GCSEs (Combined Science: Trilogy)

- No coursework, required practicals will be assessed in the exam

Overall grade: a 'double grade' determined by the sum of their marks on all 6 papers which will be presented as 9 9, 9 8, 8 8, 8 7, 7 7, 7 6, 6 6, 6 5, 5 5, 5 4, 4 4, 4 3 etc.

Separate science

3 GCSEs (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

- No coursework, required practicals will be assessed in the exam

Overall grade: Each of Biology, Chemistry and Physics are given separate GCSE grades on a scale of 9–1.

Physical Education

OVERVIEW

At Key Stage 4 all students will follow a programme of core PE. Students will also be able to study GCSE PE as part of the Choices process.

Please see PE in the Further Choices section for more information (page 36).

Mr J Kerwin

Head of Physical Education
jkerwin@lymmhigh.org.uk



Life Programme

OVERVIEW

All students will continue to follow a non-examined course in Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) through the Life Programme.

Course Outline

This course equips students with the knowledge and skills to deal with a range of issues they face as they grow up.

It covers:

- Drugs and alcohol education
- Emotional health and wellbeing
- Sex and relationship education (SRE)
- Nutrition and physical activity
- Work-related learning
- British values, equality issues, living in a democratic society and the rule of law
- Personal finance
- Safety
- Careers education

Other Information

Students in Year 10 and 11 study Religion, Philosophy & Ethics (RPE) as part of the Life Programme. These lessons will cover a range of different topics drawing on ethics, philosophy, human rights and equality issues. They will examine these from a faith and non-faith perspective.

Please note, students will not gain a qualification in RPE as part of this.

If students wish to follow an accredited course of study leading to a GCSE they can do so by opting to take a GCSE in Religious Studies as part of the Choices process (page 24).



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Further Choices

**Students must choose at least one
of the following courses:**

History, Geography, Computer
Science, a language or Separate
Science as one of their four choices
from this section.

**They may also choose more than
one of these courses, we would
encourage them to consider taking
both a language and either
Geography or History.**



Art

OVERVIEW

Art is a successful GCSE course concerned with the development of visual ideas through set projects. Students will be encouraged to be creative and produce in-depth imaginative responses in a variety of 2 and 3-dimensional media. Students will be expected to demonstrate a wide range of drawing and making skills.

Mrs S Taylor

Head of Art
staylor@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Art

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

Students will record from direct observation and experience whilst developing their own personal response to a project or theme. Suggested areas of study may include: sculpture, printmaking, photography, painting, mixed media and drawing.

Students will be given the opportunity to make visits to galleries and they will explore a wide range of artists to inspire and broaden their knowledge within the field of art and design.

Assessment

The GCSE course comprises of the following elements:

- Portfolio of work (60%)
- Externally set project (40%)

Prior Knowledge and Experience

If you are creative and have an enthusiasm for art and design, this course will give you the opportunity to develop these skills further.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level visual arts-based subjects including Photography, BTEC Level 3 Art and Photography courses.

Possible careers: Successful A' level or BTEC Level 3 portfolios allow many students to move straight onto an art-based Degree or foundation course, which would provide them the opportunity to develop a career within the Art and Design industry.

Design Technology

OVERVIEW

Design Technology is a practical and valuable subject which involves the study of polymers, metals, timbers, electronics and textiles as well as the development of drawing and designing skills.

At its core is creativity and imagination. Students learn to design and make products and systems that solve genuine, relevant problems within different contexts. These are all skills that are directly transferable to other subject areas but cannot be as effectively developed in those areas.

Mr T Beardsall
Head of Technology
tbeardsall@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Design and Technology

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

This qualification is modern and relevant, so students can learn about contemporary technologies, materials and processes, as well as established practices.

This GCSE places greater emphasis on understanding and applying iterative design processes. Students will use their creativity and imagination to design and make prototypes that solve real and relevant problems.

Students will develop skills in core technical principles, specialist technical principles, and designing and making principles. The practical portfolio will be supported by academic theory.

This course enables students to have a broad knowledge of all aspects of design which can be later specialised. Students will be guided through their design project and portfolio of work.

Assessment

The GCSE course comprises the following elements:

- Non-exam assessment (NEA) design and make task (50%)
- 2-hour written exam (50%)

Prior Knowledge and Experience

This course is designed for enthusiastic students who have a passion for design and technology.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level 3D Design.

Any design-related course such as resistant materials, graphic products and engineering.

Possible careers: product designer, engineer, interior designer, architect, graphic designer, vehicle designer, jewellery designer.

Other Information

The course is an academic GCSE, although there are many aspects of the course which are practical and computer-based.

Fashion & Textiles

OVERVIEW

The Fashion & Textiles course is an exciting insight into the world of fashion and textiles. It has been designed to encourage students to design and make products in textiles with creativity and originality, using a range of materials and techniques.

It allows full credit to be given to candidates who undertake innovative, creative and professional work.

Mrs S Taylor

Head of Art
staylor@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Fashion and Textiles

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

This is a course which explores art through fashion and textiles. Students will have the opportunity to design and make quality textile products, such as fashion garments and interior furnishings.

Research will be conducted through sketchbooks, visual records, collections and preparatory studies as part of themes and projects. Students will be encouraged to develop designs and final outcomes from their original drawings and studies.

The main focus of this course is practical work. Students will be given the opportunity to learn how to draft patterns and make fashionable products in a variety of different fabrics. Students will also become familiar with a variety of techniques to manipulate and decorate fabrics.

Assessment

The GCSE course comprises of the following elements:

- Portfolio of work (60%)
- Externally set project (40%)

Prior Knowledge and Experience

If you are creative and have an enthusiasm for fashion or interior design, this course will give you the opportunity to develop these skills further.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level visual arts-based subjects and BTEC Level 3 Fashion.

Possible careers: successful A' level or BTEC Level 3 portfolios allow many students to move straight onto a Fashion or Textiles Degree or even a foundation year. This would provide them the opportunity to develop a career within the Fashion or Textiles industry.

Hospitality & Catering (VTQ)

OVERVIEW

This course is designed to give students an opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of nutrition and healthy eating. The course will concentrate on the main areas of menu planning, food preparation and nutrition, which are all valuable life skills.

Students will explore the hospitality and catering industry and understand how it functions. They will investigate different sectors and roles within the industry.

Mrs H Thompson

Head of Food Technology
hthompson@lymmhigh.org.uk

Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering Award

Exam Body: WJEC

Course Outline

The qualification provides learners with a broad appreciation of work in the hospitality and catering sector and wider opportunities for progression into further education, employment or training. This approach also enables students to learn in such a way that they develop:

- Skills required for independent learning and development
- A range of generic and transferable skills
- The ability to solve problems
- The skills of project-based research, development and presentation
- The fundamental ability to work alongside other professionals, in a professional environment

Assessment

Students complete two units in this subject. Successful completion of this qualification could support entry to qualifications that develop specific skills for work in hospitality, catering and food areas.

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry. This unit is externally assessed using an on-screen, e-assessment. Learners are then awarded Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Distinction, Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Distinction.

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action. Internal Assessment to be completed in year 2 of the course.

Learners are then awarded Level 1 Pass, Level 1 Merit, Level 1 Distinction, Level 2 Pass, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Distinction.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

An interest in cooking and love of food. An open mind and a willingness to try new foods.

Future Pathways

Where Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering is achieved together with other relevant Level qualifications, such as GCSEs in English and Mathematics and Science, learners may be able to access Level 3 qualifications relevant to the hospitality and catering sector.

Other Information

Students will have the opportunity to gain certification in food safety. Students will need to purchase their own chefs jacket.

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

OVERVIEW

Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills to give them a strong understanding of nutrition.

Mrs H Thompson

Head of Food

Hthompson@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

This qualification focuses on the real-life food environment which is relevant and relatable. Food preparation skills are integrated into five topic areas.

- Food, Nutrition and Health
- Food Science
- Food Safety
- Food Choice
- Food Provenance

Through studying these areas students will develop a thorough knowledge and understanding of the importance of food in their diet, the working characteristics of ingredients, important food safety points, what influences our food choice and how food is grown, reared or caught and prepared for mass production.

Students will be given the information and skills needed to become independent learners in preparation for their NEA tasks in year 11.

Assessment

The GCSE course comprises the following elements:

- Non-exam assessment (NEA) 1: Food Science Investigation Task (15%)
- Non-exam assessment (NEA) 2: Food Preparation Task (35%)

1hour 45min written examination (50%)

Prior Knowledge and Experience

This course is designed for students who have a passion for food and the food environment and can demonstrate good organisational skills.

Future Pathways

Upon completion of this course, students will be qualified to go on to further study Food Science at KS5, or embark on an apprenticeship within the food industry. At degree level, Food Science, Nutrition and Dietetics are popular choices.

Possible careers: Food Scientist, Research and Development, Dietetics, Nutritionist, Food Marketing.

Other Information

The course is an academic GCSE, although there are many aspects of the course which are practical to ensure links are made with the theory topics.

Photography

OVERVIEW

Photography is increasingly popular as a GCSE choice. It encourages the exploration of photography as an artistic medium. It combines well with more traditional subjects, providing an outlet for creativity.

Photography can be a useful addition to a student's portfolio of qualifications and can also help to secure admission to Art College or University.

Mrs S Taylor

Head of Photography

taylor@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Photography

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

Candidates will be introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of lens-based and light-based media, techniques and processes, including both traditional and new technologies through set projects and themes.

They will explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to lens-based and light-based media from both the past and present. Students will be expected to engage in both practical and critical activities, which demonstrate the students understanding of different styles, genres and traditions.

Students will record from direct observation and experience whilst developing their own personal response to a project or theme.

Assessment

The GCSE course comprises the following elements:

- Portfolio of work (60%)
- Externally set project (40%)

Prior Knowledge and Experience

If you are creative and have an enthusiasm for photography, this course will give you the opportunity to develop these skills further.

Further Pathways

Qualifications: A' level visual arts-based subjects, including Photography, BTEC Level 3 Art courses.

Possible careers: Successful A' level or BTEC Level 3 portfolios allow many students to move straight onto an art-based Degree or a foundation year. This would provide them the opportunity to develop a career within the Photography, Media, and Art and Design industry.

Geography

OVERVIEW

Geography is the study of the earth's landscapes, peoples, places and environments. It is, quite simply, about the world in which we live.

Mr C Elwood

Head of Geography
celwood@lymmhgh.org.uk

GCSE Geography

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

This course offers a balanced framework of physical and human themes, and investigates the link between them. Students will travel the world from the classroom, exploring case studies in the UK, newly emerging economies (NEEs) and lower income countries (LICs).

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

Assessment

100% external exam. This course is assessed in the Summer of Year 11

Examined unit 1 (35%): Living with the physical environment

Examined unit 2 (35%): Challenges in the human environment

Examined unit 3 (30%): Geographical applications

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' levels such as Geography and other subjects within Earth Sciences and Humanities.

Possible careers: There are many careers that people who study geography can follow. Examples include: conservation worker, architect, weather forecaster, earth scientist, coastal engineer, social worker, marketing, teacher, university lecturer, banker, lawyer, insurance, military GIS specialist, aerial surveyor, diplomat, aid worker, armed forces, town planner, surveyor, travel agent and TV researcher.

History

OVERVIEW

A GCSE in History enables students to develop and extend their knowledge of key events, periods and societies in local, British and wider world history; and of the wide diversity of human experience.

Miss V Howard
Head of History
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GCSE History

Exam Body: Edexcel

Course Outline

Students will also engage in historical enquiry to develop as independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers. Alongside this, students will develop the ability to ask relevant questions about the past and to investigate issues critically.

The course is composed of both breadth and depth topics on a wide range of historical subjects including the significance of Elizabeth I as our first female monarch, the rise of Adolf Hitler as leader of Germany in the 20th century, the history of capital punishment, and the development of nuclear weapons throughout the Cold War.

Assessment

100% external exam. This course is assessed at the end of Year 11.

- Examined unit 1 (30%): Crime and Punishment in Britain c1000 to present day. Depth Study (Whitechapel 1870–1900).
- Examined unit 2 (40%): British Depth Study (Early Elizabethan England: 1558–88) and Period Study (Superpower relations – Cold War: 1941–91).
- Examined unit 3 (30%): Modern Depth Study (Weimar and Nazi Germany: 1918–39).

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level History. One of many degrees in subjects such as History, Politics, Archaeology, Law, International Relations, International Studies and American Studies.

Possible careers: There are many careers that people who study History can follow. Examples include: lawyer, teacher, journalist, entrepreneur, historian, librarian, TV researcher.

Religious Studies

OVERVIEW

On this course, students are tasked with reflecting on important questions about life, ethics and modern society from their own perspectives and the perspectives of others (particularly religious views such as those of Muslims and Christians).

The GCSE Religious Education course aims to provide students with a broad knowledge of religious beliefs and teachings as well as the main issues surrounding key ethical issues.

Students will cover beliefs and practices in Christianity and Islam. They will also examine the ethical and moral implications of the issues surrounding war and peace, crime and punishment, marriage and the family and matters of life and death.

Mrs F Bisset-Mahon

Religious Studies Co-ordinator
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GCSE Religious Studies

Exam Body: Edexcel

Course Outline

The GCSE course comprises of two examinations

Paper 1 – Religion and Ethics: Christianity (50% of overall grade)

- Christian Beliefs – This unit examines the core beliefs of Christianity, including the Trinity, creation and eschatology (end of days).
- Living the Christian Life – This unit looks at the ways that religious beliefs may impact the life of a Christian.
- Marriage and the Family – This unit investigates different Christian and non-religious attitudes towards issues such as marriage, homosexuality, same sex relationships and equality.
- Matters of Life and Death – This unit studies the issues surrounding the end of life, including euthanasia, abortion, life after death and animal rights.

Paper 2 – Religion, Peace and Conflict: Islam (50% of overall grade)

- Muslim Beliefs – This unit examines the core beliefs of Islam.
- Living the Muslim Life – This unit looks at the ways that religious beliefs may impact on the life of a Muslim.
- Peace and Conflict – This unit investigates different Muslim and non-religious attitudes towards issues such as conflict, war, holy war and weapons of mass destruction.

- Crime and Punishment – This unit studies the issues surrounding crime and the ways in which punishment is / should be used. This includes justice, the aims of punishment, forgiveness and the death penalty.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Students don't have to be religious to enjoy studying this course, as long as they enjoy questioning beliefs and debating important issues.

The following skills will be helpful:

- An ability to express ideas vocally and in the written word
- An interest in people, society and ethics
- An open mind
- The ability to understand things from other people's perspectives

Future Pathways

This course enables students to develop transferable skills that are helpful in many academic subjects and careers such as:

- Strong communication skills
- Evaluation and analysis skills
- The ability to empathise and understand different perspectives
- Essay writing skills
- Persuasive language skills

Many students who take this GCSE go on to study A' level Religious Studies or related subjects such as English, Law, Psychology, Sociology and History.

Possible careers: medical profession (links to medical ethics), solicitor, police officer, youth worker, politician, academic.

Languages (French, German & Spanish)

OVERVIEW

Our experienced teachers will help students build on KS3 content to cover a broad range of topics including: family and friends, the digital world including social networks and new technology, holidays, life at home and school, future plans and career choices. Students will also have the chance to participate in a trip to the country of their chosen language as part of an exchange or cultural visit.

Miss N Freebairn

Head of Languages
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GCSE Languages

Exam Body: AQA

Which language should you choose?

We would love to see as many students as possible continuing with both their languages (either French & German or French & Spanish) and each year we do have a number of 'dual linguists' who do very well.

Some students relish the opportunity to focus on one language, others enjoy learning two. Dual linguists find that the skills learnt in one language transfer to the other, making both easier. However, you must pick the best path for you.

Having studied French for 3 years, and having followed a more intensive 2 year course in their second language of German or Spanish, students are equally equipped to do well in whichever languages they choose.

We encourage students therefore, to consider which language they enjoy, find most stimulating and are prepared to work hard at, and ask their teacher any questions they may have.

Assessment

There is no coursework in GCSE French, German or Spanish. There are two tiers of exam: Foundation and Higher. In the Higher tier, students can be awarded grades 9–4, at Foundation tier, grades 5–1 are possible.

Students will complete four exams:

A speaking exam worth 25% of the overall mark. Students will be asked to complete a role play, reading aloud task with a short conversation, and photocard with a general conversation. The examination lasts 10–12 minutes, with an additional 15 minutes independent preparation time.

A listening exam worth 25% of the overall mark. Students will answer comprehension-style questions in English based on what they hear, and will transcribe sentences in the target language.

A reading exam worth 25% of the overall mark. Students will answer comprehension-style questions in English based on what they read, and translate from the foreign language into English.

A writing exam worth 25% of overall mark. Students will need to translate into the target language, and complete 90- and 150- word written tasks (the bullet points for these will now be in English).

Prior Knowledge and Experience

At GCSE, you will build on vocabulary and grammar studied in KS3. You must have studied your chosen language during KS3 in order to take it at GCSE.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level French, German and Spanish.

Possible careers: teaching, translation, interpreting and tourism, business and many more.

Dance

OVERVIEW

GCSE Dance will help the performer to gain an understanding and appreciation of dance, through the study of choreography, performance, evaluation and appreciation. It will also help to develop life skills such as critical and creative thinking, the ability to co-operate with others and decision making.

Miss J Finnigan

Teacher of Dance
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GCSE Dance

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

Throughout the course, students will develop their skills as a performer, a choreographer, and a dance critic. The majority of the course will be practical choreography, technique and performance. Students will choreograph their own dances and perform on their own as well as in a group. The majority of the course uses contemporary dance techniques, although there are some opportunities for students to use other styles of dance within their choreography. Students will have many opportunities to take part in dance workshops led by guest teachers and dance practitioners, as well as experience live performances by professional dance companies.

Assessment

Component 1- Performance and Choreography

Performance

Set phrases through a solo performance (approximately one minute in duration)

Duet/trio performance (three minutes in a dance which is a maximum of five minutes in duration)

30% of GCSE

40 marks

Choreography

Solo or group choreography – a solo (two to two and a half minutes) or a group dance for two to five dancers (three to three and a half minutes)

30% of GCSE - 40 marks

Component 2: Dance appreciation

Knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes and

performing skills. Critical appreciation of own work. Critical appreciation of professional works

40% of GCSE

Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes

80 marks

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Students would come from attending a dance school or club outside or inside school and have some performance/choreography experience. Students will have many opportunities to perform within a Lymm High School dance club and other performing arts projects. It is a physically demanding course that will require lots of energy and commitment, especially to lunchtime and after-school rehearsals.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level Dance.

Possible careers: professional performer, choreographer, community dance practitioner, dance teacher, arts officer, dance photographer, dance journalist, dance movement therapist, dance press and public relations specialist, dance project coordinator or administrator, dance company manager, dance education specialist, yoga/pilates instructor, youth worker, set/lighting/costume designer.

Other Information

Students will have to perform as part of their assessment so they must enjoy performing. If they have never seen a live dance performance, they should try to see at least one before they begin the course. The course is suitable for those who have experience in dance technique and performance.

Drama

OVERVIEW

GCSE Drama both develops students' understanding and knowledge of the art form, whilst also developing students' personal and social skills. It requires students to work creatively both as individuals and as part of a team.

Students will be taught the discipline of performance and presentation skills which are essential, transferable qualities regardless of future career aspirations.

Mrs R Richards

Head of Drama

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GCSE Drama

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

The course is highly practical. Lessons will develop students' understanding of theatre style and genre; they will also study published plays and contemporary theatre companies' approaches to theatre making. Students will be recognised for how they develop ideas (the process) and also how they perform (the product).

There are key performance projects that take place during the course, helping to develop confidence whilst also allowing students opportunities to explore new techniques and fresh ideas. It is a course that allows students time to develop their passion for performance and how to engage and communicate with the world around them. It is a demanding but extremely rewarding subject that supports a great range of other subjects.

Assessment

The course is organised into practical assessments and written coursework which support the practical element. There is also a 1 hour 45-minute written examination paper.

Component 1 (40%): Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre. Students will study a set text which will be taken from a prescribed list of six plays. Initially, the play will be explored practically with students exploring different ways to stage the text. The students will answer an exam question based on their practical exploration of the play and will also write a response to a piece of live theatre that they have seen during the course. The assessment for this unit takes the form of a 1 hour 45-minute written examination.

Component 2 (40%): Devising drama (practical). Students will create and

devise an original piece of drama which will be examined by their teachers and moderated by AQA. Students are also required to complete a written log of the process of their developing performance piece.

Component 3 (20%): Texts in Practice. Students will explore and interpret a play text and will rehearse and perform two extracts from it. This could take the form of a monologue, dialogue or a small group performance. This component is externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Students should have an interest in theatre and performance. Students should be excited about furthering their knowledge and interest gained at Key Stage 3.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level Drama & Theatre. Students will develop a range of transferable skills in drama and this links superbly with other subjects at A' level such as English, History and Social Sciences.

Possible careers: The course can be used to access careers in the Arts (performance, technical, media, publishing, education, drama therapy etc). It is also considered as extremely valuable in developing the skills needed in many creative jobs such as communication skills, team work, creative thinking, analysis and evaluation, and presentation skills.

Other Information

Students are encouraged to work under their own initiative and organise rehearsals in their own time in order to excel. There is an expectation for students on this course to contribute to the extra-curricular programme and to participate in organised theatre trips.

Music

OVERVIEW

Music at GCSE is for students who have a passion for music of all genres, a desire to pursue practical performance with your voice or instrument, and a desire to be expressive and experience creating musical compositions.

GCSE Music is available to all students who have a passion for the subject and practical experience of playing or singing and reading music.

Mr D Starkey

Head of Music
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GCSE Music

Exam Body: Edexcel

Course Outline

During this course, students will learn how to improve their performing skills on their specialist instrument/s including voice. Students will gain an insight into composing music from the initial ideas to the finished product and produce recordings of both their performances and finished compositions.

Students will study a variety of music: instrumental music 1700–1820, vocal music, music for stage and screen, and fusions. Students will learn how to analyse the pieces they study, and will have opportunities to use music technology for recording and scoring their compositions.

Assessment

Performing (30%): culminating in a controlled assessment recording of one solo piece and one piece as part of an ensemble.

Composing (30%): controlled coursework assessment, culminating in two original compositions.

Listening (40%): examination based on the set pieces of music studied throughout the course. This consists of several short answer responses to listening and one longer, extended response question.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Some formal experience as a performer on an instrument or voice is essential. Students should also be open to listening to music in a wide variety of styles.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level Music and/or Music Technology.

Possible careers: GCSE Music and subsequent study of the subject can lead to a variety of careers in music, sound production, teaching, music as therapy, publishing or associated media careers.

It will improve confidence in front of an audience. It will also enhance aural perception and listening skills and give life-long enjoyment!

Other Information

This course is for those who enjoy performing music and are learning an instrument, having singing lessons or play with a group or band. Students might also enjoy creating songs or computer-generated music for which this course can provide a formal outlet. There are many opportunities for students to participate in instrumental or vocal ensembles in an extra-curricular capacity and we would strongly encourage this to support the learning in the classroom.

Music Practice (VTQ)

OVERVIEW

This course is for those students who have both a passion for music production, creation of popular music and an interest in the music industry.

Mr J Gornall

Teacher of Music

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BTEC Level 1 / Level 2

Award: Music Practice

Course Outline

Three Components:

Component 1: Exploring Music Products and Styles

Learners will produce two portfolios for assessment. These will focus on chosen styles or genres and on products that can include live performance, multitrack recording, music for film or computer game, original song or composition, or a sequenced project using Logic Pro X on an iMac.

Component 2: Music Skills Development

Learners will explore the professional skills required in the music industry. This will introduce audio recording using our studio, and development of mixing down recorded tracks. It will also include use of MIDI in sequencing music.

Component 3: Responding to a Music Brief

Learners will be given a brief, released by the exam board. This might be producing a cover version of an existing song, with the brief being to recreate the song in a different style/genre (e.g. a Ska version of *Last Christmas* by Wham).

Components 1 and 2 are assessed internally, Component 3 is an external assessment.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Students should be enthusiastic, passionate and knowledgeable about music. Students need to have some musical skill, this can include voice.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level Music Technology, A' level Music.

Possible careers: BTEC Music is a vocational course designed to explore the music industry, it can therefore lead to a variety of careers in music, sound production and teaching. It will also provide students with ICT skills that can lead to careers where computing skills are essential.

Other Information

If writing, playing and performing is of interest to students, then Music GCSE is for them. If their interest is in music playing, recording and editing with a real interest in the industry, then BTEC Music Practice is for them. Speak to a member of the music department for clarification about the two options.

Separate Science

OVERVIEW

Students will have an opportunity to gain a good understanding of concepts across the three sciences, including:

Biology

- cell biology
- organ systems and health
- infection and response
- respiration and photosynthesis
- homeostasis and response
- inheritance, variation and evolution
- ecology

Chemistry

- atomic structure and the periodic table
- bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- quantitative chemistry
- chemical changes
- energy changes
- rate and extent of chemical change
- organic chemistry; chemical analysis
- chemistry of the atmosphere

Physics

- energy
- electricity
- particle model of matter
- atomic structure
- forces
- waves
- magnetism and electromagnetism
- Space

Students will also be required to develop their scientific enquiry skills in order to become scientifically literate so that they can question the world around them and engage in debate on the evidence used in decision making.

There will be questions on each paper relating to specific investigations which the students will have completed in each science discipline throughout the course. Papers will also have a greater emphasis on mathematical skills and analysis of experimental results.

Mrs A Cormack

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Ms T Farmer

Head of Biology
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Dr Dodds

Head of Science
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Exam Body: AQA

Assessment

Questions will be a selection of multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.

There will be two examinations for each subject at the end of Year 11, each worth 50% of the grade for that subject and lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes:

Biology paper 1 and biology paper 2

Chemistry paper 1 and chemistry paper 2

Physics paper 1 and physics paper 2

By opting for Separate Science students will receive three separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

This course builds on the knowledge and skills developed in Key Stage 3 Science and follows on from material that students will have studied in Year 9. In order to thrive on this course students must demonstrate an enjoyment of all three sciences. We would recommend that they have gold or platinum level end-of-year predictions in Key Stage 3 Science. For foundation tier science papers, students are expected to be competent in Key Stage 3 Mathematics; for higher tier papers, students are expected to be competent in foundation tier GCSE Mathematics.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level Biology, A' level Chemistry, A' level Physics.

Possible careers: medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, nursing, biomedical science, physiotherapy, radiography, dietician, pharmacy, analytical chemist, environmental chemistry, engineering, architecture, finance, research scientist, law, consultancy – just to name a few.

Other Information

All students will study aspects of Biology, Chemistry and Physics throughout the 2 years and this route leads to three separate GCSEs in science: one for Biology, one for Physics and one for Chemistry. This route is perfect for students who are keen scientists and want to study the sciences in greater depth. It lays a solid foundation for studying A' level Science or a career in an analytical or science-related field.

Business Studies

OVERVIEW

GCSE Business enables you to explore the world of business. You'll consider how and why business ideas come about, and what makes a successful business. You'll learn how to develop an idea, spot an opportunity and turn it into a successful business. You will understand how to make a business effective, manage money and see how the world around us affects small businesses and all the people involved. Then you'll move on to investigating business growth. How does a business develop beyond the start-up phase? You'll learn about key business concepts and issues and decisions you need to make when growing a business and working in a global business. You'll learn about meeting customer needs, making marketing, operational, financial and human resourcing decisions and you'll explore how the wider world impacts the business as it grows.

Theme 1 concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business.

Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with an emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. It also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows.

Ms K Hill

Head of Business Studies
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GCSE Business Studies

Exam Body: Edexcel

Assessment

Theme 1: Investigating small business – written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes, 50% of the qualification, 90 marks

Content Overview

- Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity
- Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice
- Topic 1.4 Making the business effective
- Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business

Theme 2: Building a business – written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes, 50% of the qualification, 90 marks

Content Overview

- Topic 2.1 Growing the business
- Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions
- Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
- Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
- Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions

The paper will consist of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

There are no specific requirements that you must have but you should enjoy communicating and explaining your ideas; thinking creatively and making decisions; working with numbers to solve business problems; learning about the world of work through research and investigation as well as practical tasks.

You might have an interest in business and want to start your own business one day.

You should have an enquiring mind and be interested in learning about the world around you, how businesses are set up, and what it is that makes someone a great entrepreneur.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level and BTEC Business, A' level Economics.

Possible careers: accountancy, law, marketing, sports management or the leisure and tourism industry, teaching.

Other Information

The assessments use real and relevant business examples and the content provides opportunities to engage with local, business enterprise examples. You can develop your own knowledge and understanding by watching programmes such as *The Apprentice* and *Dragon's-Den*, which will give you an insight into business-related topics and highlight skills that may be learnt.

BBC Bitesize has a specific GCSE Business Section that covers the content of the course in an engaging and clear way.

Digital Information Technology (VTQ)

OVERVIEW

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Digital Information Technology is ideal for you if you would like to find out more about the IT industry. The digital sector is a major source of employment in the UK. Digital skills span all industries, and almost all jobs in the UK today require employees to have a good level of digital literacy. The UK has positioned itself to be the 'Digital capital of Europe' as it continues to invest billions every year in digital skills and commerce.

Mrs J Binks

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BTEC Tech Award in Digital Information Technology

Exam Body: Pearson

Course Outline

This course will give you the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in a practical learning environment. You will also develop key skills, such as user interface (UI) design and development and learn how to develop a project plan for your own UI designs.

Everyone taking this qualification will study three components, covering the following content areas: User Interface and User Experience (UI/UX), are design elements that are intertwined and are critical aspects of any software, app, or website. Understanding how UI and UX is planned and developed can introduce you to concepts of human/computer interactions (HCI), human psychology, and marketing and design principles.

You will develop an understanding of UI UX and IT project management, which is often implemented to introduce technological improvements by rolling out change projects.

Understanding how projects are structured is of vital importance. This qualification will enable you to use project-planning tools, models and techniques within a digital context.

Cloud Computing is an important computing concept to grasp in today's web-based connected world. You will understand how computers are networked online and use web-based services to improve data security and manage the costs of handling large volumes of data.

Assessment

The three components are:

Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design Principles and Project Planning Techniques (Year 10) – Learners will develop their understanding of what makes an effective user interface and how to effectively manage a project. They will use this understanding to plan, design and create a user interface.

Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data (Year 10) – Learners will understand the characteristics of data and information and how they help organisations in decision making. They will use data manipulation methods to create a dashboard to present and draw conclusions from information.

Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practices (Year 10 & 11) – Learners will explore how organisations use digital systems and the wider implications associated with their use.

Components 1 and 2 are assessed through non-exam internal assessment. There is one external assessment, Component 3, which provides the main synoptic assessment for the qualification.

Component 3 builds directly on Components 1 and 2 and enables learning to be brought together and related to a real-life situation. This will be completed in either January/February or May/June of Year 11.

Further Pathways

Once you have completed the qualification, you will have developed a practical understanding of the digital sector. You will have built useful skills, which are not generally covered in GCSE courses, and you will have developed a good understanding of whether the IT sector is for you, and if so, which part of it you might want to study further. If you decide to go on to further study of the IT sector, the best option for you will depend on the grades you have achieved in this and the other qualifications you have taken, and what you enjoy doing. You could progress to a Level 3 programme, such as A' levels, a T' level or a BTEC National, either on its own or in combination with A' levels.

Computer Science

OVERVIEW

Computer Science is an exciting and valuable GCSE that equips students with essential skills for the digital age. The course is highly practical, with a focus on hands-on learning through Python programming, one of the most popular and versatile coding languages. You'll develop problem-solving, logical thinking, and programming skills while creating real-world projects that bring your ideas to life. Alongside coding, you'll gain a deeper understanding of how technology shapes our world. With technology playing a crucial role in nearly every industry, Computer Science opens doors to a wide range of careers and further education opportunities, making it an excellent choice for future-ready students.

Mrs J Binks

Head of Computing and ICT
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GCSE Computer Science

Exam Body: OCR

Course Outline

The OCR GCSE Computer Science course is divided into two main components, each focusing on essential aspects of computing and programming:

1. Computer Systems (01)

This unit covers the theory of how computer systems work. Topics include:

- Systems architecture (e.g., the CPU and its components).
- Memory and storage (RAM, ROM, and secondary storage).
- Networks, connections, and protocols.
- Cybersecurity and system vulnerabilities.
- Ethical, legal, and environmental issues in computing.

2. Computational Thinking, Algorithms, and Programming (02)

This unit focuses on problem-solving and programming skills. Topics include:

- Algorithms and their design.
- Programming concepts (with a focus on Python).
- Data representation (e.g., binary, hexadecimal, and character sets).
- Computational logic and boolean algebra.
- Practical Programming
- Although not formally assessed in the final exam, practical programming is a key component of the course. Students undertake a programming project to develop skills in writing, debugging, and testing Python code.

Assessment

The course is assessed through two written exams, each contributing 50% of the final grade:

Computer Systems Exam (01)

Computational Thinking, Algorithms, and Programming Exam (02).

This structure ensures a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical application."

Prior Knowledge and Experience

This is a course that has real relevance in our modern world. While students will no doubt already have some knowledge of computers and related areas, the course will give them an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works.

This course is ideal for those students who are interested in the internal components of a computer system and are seeking a future computing career. In order to thrive on this course students need to be strong mathematically. We would recommend that they have gold or platinum level predictions in Maths.

Psychology

OVERVIEW

Psychology is 'the science of mind and behaviour'. Psychologists find reasons why we behave in certain ways and psychology can therefore help people to change their behaviour.

Mrs J Edge

Head of Social Sciences
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GCSE Psychology

Exam Body: AQA

Course Outline

The course will provide students with a sound understanding of the various methods and approaches in psychology at an introductory level. They will develop knowledge of methods and approaches through various topic areas representing the core areas of social, cognitive, developmental, biological and individual differences.

Assessment:

Unit 1: Cognition and Behaviour
External written examination (1 hour and 45 minutes) covering memory, perception, development and research methods (50%)

Unit 2: Social context and behaviour
External written examination (1 hour and 45 minutes) covering social influence, language, thought and communication, brain and neuropsychology and psychological problems (50%)

Prior Knowledge and Experience

No prior knowledge of the subject is required, but strong numerical skills and an aptitude for written communication, demonstrating strong analytical thinking, will be essential. Students will also need to be able to demonstrate an enjoyment of, and aptitude for, all three sciences. We would recommend that students opting for this subject have predictions of gold or platinum in Science and Maths.

Further Pathways

Qualifications: There are clear links between this course and A' level study of Psychology, as well as courses such as BTEC Health and Social Care.

Possible careers: social work, teaching, law, journalism, human resources, childcare, media, marketing, PR and Civil Service.

Other Information

Please see www.aqa.co.uk for further details.

Media Studies

OVERVIEW

The media plays a central role in contemporary society and culture. Through media language, representations, messages and audience targeting, the media shapes our perceptions of the world. The media has real relevance and importance in our lives today, providing us with ways to communicate, with forms of cultural expression and the ability to participate in key aspects of society.

The economic importance of the media is also unquestionable. The media industries employ large numbers of people worldwide and operate as commercial industries on a global scale.

Through the study of the media at GCSE and beyond you will develop an in-depth understanding of how the media communicates meaning, represents different groups of people, makes a profit and targets and responds to audiences potentially leading to an exciting career in ever expanding industries.

Miss M Lorenzelli

Head of Media
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GCSE Media Studies

Exam Body: Eduqas

Course Outline GCSE

Media Studies is designed to enable students to develop investigative, critical thinking and decision-making skills through consideration of media issues that are important, real and relevant to students. The non-examination assessment will provide students with practical and creative skills through opportunities for personal engagement and imagination. Students will also understand how to use media concepts to analyse their work.

Assessment

Component 1: Exploring Media Language and Representation

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes, 40% of qualification.

This component assesses media language, representation, industry and audience within context (social, cultural, historical, political and economic). Students will study the following media forms: newspapers, radio, film, advertising, video games, and magazines. Learners will be assessed on four of these forms.

Component 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes, 30% of qualification.

This component assesses media language, representation, media industries and audiences, focusing on the study of the TV and music industry.

Component 3: Creating Media Products

Non-exam assessment, 30% of qualification.

Students will be asked to produce an individual media print production for a given audience and industry in response to a brief set by Eduqas. Students will apply knowledge and understanding of media language, representation, industry and audience allowing them to practically apply their learning.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

The course has a mix of theory and practical production work. An aptitude for written communication and demonstrating strong analytical thinking is essential as many of the examination questions are extended essay tasks. Artistic capabilities are not essential, but design and creative programmes, such as Photoshop, will be used. A genuine interest in the media is something that we ask our students to have and develop.

Other Information

Please see [eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/media-studies](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/media-studies).

Physical Education

OVERVIEW

This subject offers an exciting opportunity to learn about the human body in a sporting context. Students studying this course combine practical performance with theoretical knowledge to gain an in-depth understanding of human movement. This knowledge is then applied both in the classroom and on the playing field in order to refine and develop their performance in all practical areas.

Mr J Kerwin

Head of Physical Education
jkerwin@lymmhigh.org.uk

GCSE Physical Education

Exam Body: Edexcel

Course Outline

In this course, students will develop their knowledge and understanding of the following components:

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Movement analysis
- Physical training
- Health, fitness and wellbeing
- Sport psychology
- Socio-cultural influences
- Practical Performance – individual and team activities

Assessment

Practical assessment (30%) Practical performance in three activities from a set list: this can be only in the role of performer.

Personal Experience Programme (10%)

Written exam (60%) Two papers (scientific and social) taken in the summer of Year 11.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

Students should be involved in sport on a regular basis through extra-curricular clubs, school sport, or local club sport.

Future Pathways

Qualifications: A' level PE, BTEC (National) Sport Development and Coaching.

Possible careers: sports coaching, sports development, teaching, nutrition, physiotherapy, sports medicine, sports science, leisure industry and sports psychology.

Other Information

Lesson time will be predominantly used to develop theoretical understanding of the course. Practical involvement in school extra-curricular is a basic expectation of students undertaking this course. The list on page 37 contains the permitted team and individual activities that students must select from. Students must select:

- one team activity
- one individual activity
- one activity of their choice, either a team or individual activity

Students will be required to perform in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer. They will be required to demonstrate their skills in isolation/unopposed situations and demonstrate their skills in a formal/competitive situation while under pressure.

Individual Activities

- Amateur Boxing
- Athletics
- Badminton
- Canoeing
- Cycling
- Dance
- Diving
- Platform Diving
- Figure Skating
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Equestrian
- Kayaking
- Rock Climbing
- Sailing
- Sculling
- Skiing
- Snowboarding
- Squash
- Swimming
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Trampolining
- Windsurfing

Team Activities

- Acrobatic Gymnastics
- Association Football
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Camogie
- Cricket
- Dance
- Figure Skating
- Futsal
- Gaelic Football
- Handball
- Hockey
- Ice Hockey
- Inline Roller Hockey
- Lacrosse
- Netball
- Rowing
- Rugby
- Sailing
- Sculling
- Squash
- Table Tennis
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Water Polo

Specialist Activities

- Blind Cricket
- Goalball
- Powerchair Football
- Table Cricket
- Wheelchair Basketball
- Wheelchair Rugby



Health & Social Care (VTQ)

OVERVIEW

The BTEC Technical Award in Health and Social Care gives students an introduction to the health and social care sectors. It has been designed to give students the knowledge and understanding of the different settings that people might access, as well as knowledge of development and wellbeing at different lifestages, needed for working with a variety of people at all age ranges.

Miss H Steele

Head of Health & Social Care
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BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care Level 1/Level 2

Exam Body: Edexcel

Course Outline

Component 1 - Human Lifespan Development. This component explores how we grow and develop through the different life stages, events that happen throughout these life stages and how we cope with them. This component is assessed through written coursework.

Component 2 - Health and Social Care Services and Values. This component investigates the different services that are available to us in health and social care, the barriers that prevent us accessing the correct services for specific conditions and the values needed to provide quality health and social care. This component is assessed through written coursework.

Component 3 - Health and Wellbeing. This component examines factors which are indicators for health. It allows us to identify factors that could have a positive or negative effect on growth and development and use this knowledge to produce health improvement plans for individuals. This component is assessed through one external exam.

Assessment

The course comprises three components, two internally assessed through coursework (60%) and one externally assessed through an exam (40%). The exam is taken in May of Year 11.

Prior Knowledge and Experience

There is no prior knowledge required to take this course, however it is a vocational course where knowledge gained will help towards pursuing further education, employment or training schemes in professions within the health and social care industry. An interest in this area and a passion to understand growth and development will be significantly beneficial to learners.

Further Pathways

Qualifications: BTEC Level 3 in Health and Social Care. Other related subjects such as child care, social work or education.

Possible Careers: a wide range of health and social care careers are available including, but not limited to, social worker, child care, midwife, nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, caring assistant, dietician.

Other Information

This BTEC qualification is largely assessed through coursework and allows you to see progress as you advance throughout the course. This does mean that you must meet deadlines for coursework to achieve expectations.

Notes

Notes

Notes

YEAR 9 CHOICES 2026

Please complete and take with you to your choices interview which will take place between 23rd February to 6th March.

Student's Name :

Form Group:

Student Signature:

Parent Signature:

Staff Signature :

YOUR GUIDE TO CHOICES SELECTIONS

NOTE: COMPULSORY subjects are already set and cannot be changed.

You will need to select your subjects from the following lists, please ensure you select:

ONE Subject from the **FIRST CHOICE** list

THREE Subjects from the **FURTHER CHOICES** list

THREE BACKUP Subjects from the **FURTHER CHOICES** list

COMPULSORY Subjects: *These are the core subjects **ALL** pupils will be expected to take.*



Mathematics (GCSE)



Science (Double option worth two GCSEs)



English Language & Literature (GCSE)



Physical Education (non-accredited)

PLEASE NOTE:

- Before selecting Separate Sciences, Computer Science or Psychology, please check the recommended subject guidelines.
- To gain separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, you **MUST** choose Separate Sciences as one of your choices.

FIRST Choice: You must tick **ONE** additional subject from this list:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Geography
<input type="checkbox"/>	History
<input type="checkbox"/>	French
<input type="checkbox"/>	German

<input type="checkbox"/>	Spanish
<input type="checkbox"/>	Computer Science
<input type="checkbox"/>	Separate Sciences

Please write your **FIRST** Choice below:

FIRST



FURTHER Choices: You must tick **THREE** additional subjects from this list:

<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Health & Social Care (VTQ)
<input type="checkbox"/> Business Studies	<input type="checkbox"/> History
<input type="checkbox"/> Computer Science	<input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality & Catering (VTQ)
<input type="checkbox"/> Dance	<input type="checkbox"/> Media Studies
<input type="checkbox"/> Drama	<input type="checkbox"/> Music
<input type="checkbox"/> Design Technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Music Practice (VTQ)
<input type="checkbox"/> Digital Information Technology (VTQ)	<input type="checkbox"/> Photography
<input type="checkbox"/> Fashion & Textiles	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Food Preparation & Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychology
<input type="checkbox"/> French	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious Studies
<input type="checkbox"/> Geography	<input type="checkbox"/> Separate Sciences
<input type="checkbox"/> German	<input type="checkbox"/> Spanish

Please write your **THREE** Further Choices in **order of preference** below:

1	<input type="text"/>
2	<input type="text"/>
3	<input type="text"/>

Please write your **THREE BACKUP** Further Choices in **order of preference** below:

1	<input type="text"/>
2	<input type="text"/>
3	<input type="text"/>

Key Dates:

w/c Monday 12th January 2026 | Year 9 Choices Assemblies (for students)

Thursday 29th January 2026 | Year 9 Choices Evening (for students & parents)

Thursday 12th February 2026 | Year 9 Parents' Evening

23rd February to 6th March 2026 | Year 9 Choices interviews with a member of SLT (for students)

Monday 9th March 2026 | Choices Deadline





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