

GCSE OPTION CHOICES BOOKLET

**Years 8 and 9
Options Evening**

Thursday 18th January 2018

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Dear Student

Please read this booklet carefully with your parents. It provides important information about the pathways and courses available to you at Key Stage 4, so that you can make the best choices.

We want to make sure that you think carefully about the decisions you have to make. Listen to the information and advice given to you before you make your choices about which subjects you would like to study. **These decisions are very important; you need to get them right.** Once courses have been started it is very difficult to make changes, reasons such as, "it's too hard" or "I didn't think it would be like that" will not be accepted.

Who should you talk to and where can you get advice?

- Year 10 and 11 students in your tutor group
- your form tutor
- your subject teachers
- your parents

How to go about making decisions

It is a good idea to decide on the basis of:

- ✓ what you are good at – so that you get the best results
- ✓ what you enjoy
- ✓ what will help you in your future career
- ✓ subjects where you have found out all the relevant information

It is **NOT** a good idea to base your decisions on:

- X what your friends choose
- X which teacher you hope you will have
- X what others say
- X subjects that you do not know much about but **think** you may like

The choices that you make are very important, so you need find out as much about your options as possible. Do ask questions at home, of your current teachers and any of us here at the Academy.

Yours sincerely



Dan Neal
Principal

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum

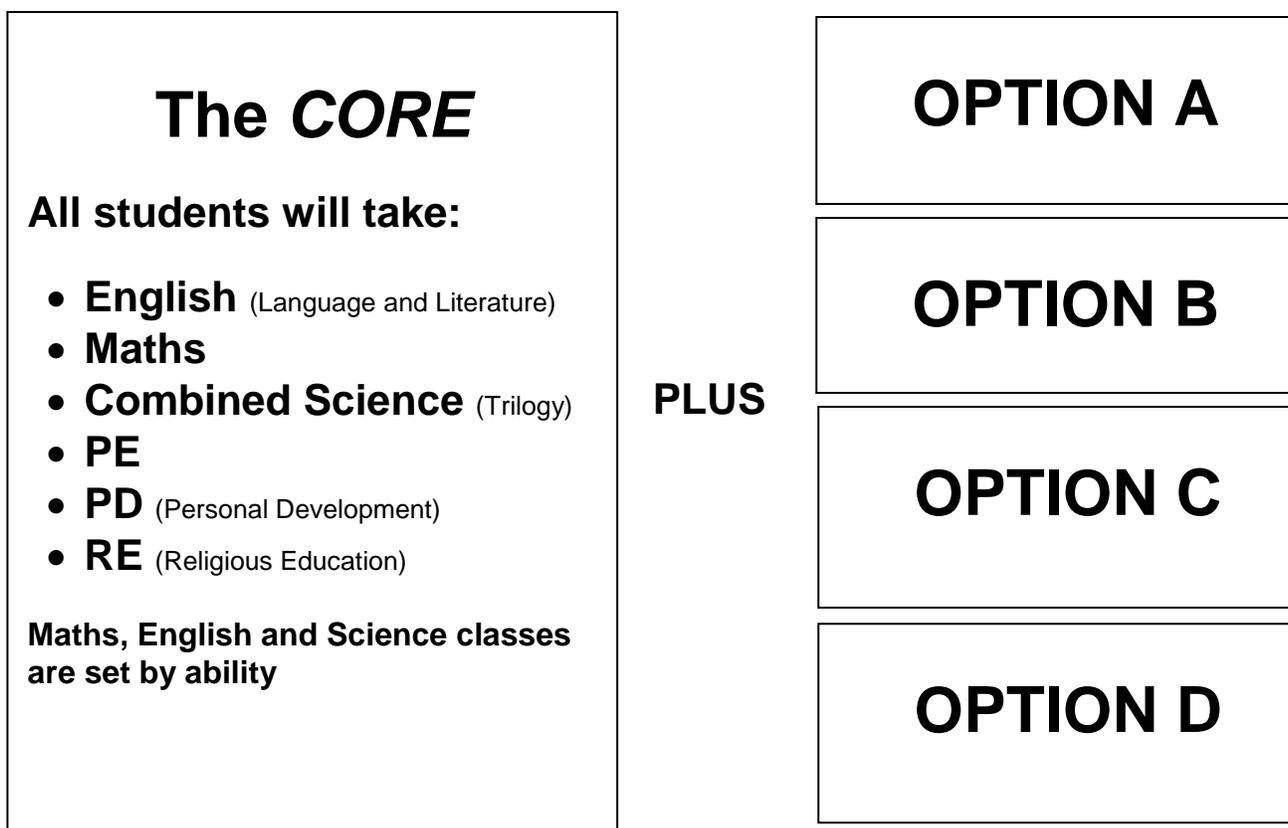
Key Stage Four (KS4) traditionally starts in Year 10 and 11, however for current Year 8s we are planning to start this from Year 9 onwards which has been termed as a 3 year Key Stage 4 curriculum. KS4 is such an important phase because it will decide your first set of national qualifications. You will hold these for the rest of your life so it is vital we help you to get it right. The KS4 curriculum is divided into core and options.

Core

The core is the part of the curriculum that you cannot choose. By law, every KS4 student must follow courses in English Language and Literature, Maths, Science, PE, RE and Personal Development (PD). Maths, English and Science classes are set by ability, based on end of year assessment data.

Options

On top of your core subjects, you will be allowed to choose 4 additional subjects taken from the option blocks.



English

Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA [8701]

What will I learn on this course?

Students will experience a wide range of fictional and non-fictional texts, learning how to analyse them. They will learn how to structure their own writing to develop specific effects for a reader and appreciate how their writing can manipulate a reader's emotional reactions. Students will be introduced to many different worlds and characters, those typical of their own lives and also the experiences of those living in other cultures or past historical periods.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Students are encouraged to read a wide range of novels, plays and poetry, to offer a view on themes and characters and appreciate why writers choose to use particular words in their writing. Students will be offered many opportunities to produce their own expressive creative writing through the use of metaphorical language and rhetorical devices. Progress in spelling, punctuation and grammar will be routinely sought through a range of classroom resources.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

KS4 learners should be avid readers; this should include a love of fiction in a range of genres but also an interest in the wider world brought about through reading newspapers, magazines and trusted internet websites which are all relevant and useful reading activities.

How will I be assessed?

The GCSE is a linear course of 100% examination at the end of Year 11. 20% of the marks for the writing sections in exams are allocated to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Language Paper 1 (50%) assesses students' reading and comprehension skills on a short fiction text from the twentieth century and also expects them to produce one piece of either descriptive or creative writing in response to one given title or picture stimulus.

Language Paper 2 (50%) requires similar reading and comprehension skills to be applied to two non-fiction texts from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Students will also be asked to respond to a writing task in which they must offer a view in an argumentative or advisory style.

Speaking and Listening assessment takes the form of one speech/presentation, including responses to class questions, it does not, however, form part of the final overall GCSE grade.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

Students will be able to access the full range of A Level subjects rather than being limited to science and maths courses. Any student who is able to access AS Level courses without a C grade in English will have to study the GCSE course again in Sixth Form. All universities and many employers have demanded at least a C grade in English at GCSE and many courses such as Law and Engineering have required an entry level of B grade or above.

English Literature

Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA [8702]

What will I learn on this course?

Shakespeare's plays are still very much part of the GCSE curriculum programme of study in English Literature, Romeo and Juliet is the present chosen text. Students will study the presentation of characters, themes and language and will be required to respond to short extracts in great analytical detail, as well as essay titles to demonstrate a wider knowledge of the themes, characters and relationships in the plot. There will be study of a wide range of poetry from a published exam board anthology; to include the works of the Romantic poets, in the exam there will be an emphasis on the skills of comparing and contrasting poems. Other texts which make up the course will include the fiction and drama of British writers from 1914 onwards.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Students will read texts as a class; they will also often be expected to read independently at home. Students are asked to comment on language, meaning and effects, as well as a writer's intentions, in literature through class discussion and to identify meaningful aspects of texts which can support relevant and in-depth responses to exam questions.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

A student should have a willingness to share a point of view and to accept alternative viewpoints to their own. Students should be curious about their own world, experiences and feelings and open to exploring those of others.

How will I be assessed?

The final GCSE result is now made up of 100% examination in Year 11. The exam has two parts and includes study of all three literary forms prose, poetry and drama.

Literature Paper 1 – covers the study of Shakespeare and also the 19th century novel, we presently study A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens.

Literature Paper 2 – will include either post 1914 prose or drama and the study of both a poetry anthology and poetry that is not seen prior to the exam.

Students are assessed on their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar, just as they are in English Language, although this represents only 5% of the total marks.

English Language and English Literature are assessed as separate GCSE qualifications.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

An appreciation of literature and an ability to understand the experiences of others and the world around us can help to develop the skills required to manage and lead others as well as negotiate and make decisions successfully. Success in English offers the opportunity to study English Language and Literature at A level and will then allow students to study a range of both classic and modern subjects at university.

Mathematics

Qualification type: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA (Syllabus 8300)

What will I learn about on this course?

The course is designed to cover:

- number and algebra;
- geometry and measures;
- statistics and probability.

The content will build upon work from KS3, in some cases consolidating this but in most cases extending.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

In the lessons you will learn new mathematical techniques and develop a greater understanding of mathematics. To help you do this you will receive plenty of practise that will allow you to demonstrate your new skills, including the use of past examination questions to help with familiarity. There will be an emphasis on independent learning and problem solving. Students will look at the connections between different aspects of mathematics and learn to apply these to new situations.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to have good communication skills – increasingly GCSE mathematics students are being asked to effectively communicate their ideas, thinking and reasoning. Problem solving skills are also essential and the ability to independently explore a problem is required for you to be able to tackle unfamiliar challenges.

How will I be assessed?

There are three equally weighted examinations at the end of the course that assess your understanding. Exams can be taken at either foundation or higher tiers. Foundation tier covers grades 1-5 and higher tier covers grades 4-9. Each tier requires you to complete one exam without the use of a calculator and two where a calculator can be used. Each paper has a mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases throughout the paper.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

GCSE mathematics can lead you to post-16 studies in mathematics at A2 level. The skills learnt at GCSE mathematics are those needed for careers in finance, engineering, research, computing, game design and physics.

Combined Science: Trilogy

Qualification type GCSE

Exam board: AQA

This course leads to two GCSEs

What will I learn on this course?

In biology you will learn about plant and animal cells and how they work. We also study how the body coordinates itself via the nervous and hormonal control systems and then how blood glucose, temperature and water levels are controlled.

In chemistry you will learn fundamentals such as atomic structure, metals and their uses. Your knowledge will be broadened and deepened to include properties of materials, rates of reactions, electrolytic techniques as well as quantitative chemistry.

In physics you will learn about energy and its role in the modern world including the need for clean, reliable energy resources. You will also learn about waves and the electromagnetic spectrum. The course moves on to cover forces and motion; electricity and magnetism is covered as well as radioactivity and nuclear power.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Lessons will be practical and theory based including research and project work, often using ICT and other media sources.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

Data analysis and interpreting graphs are useful skills that will be further developed during the course. It is important that students are capable of using ICT to research and produce work that can then be presented to the class. Lessons will often require students to work in groups to carry out practical work to investigate scientific concepts.

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed in terminal exams worth 100% of the grade

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

This course provides a firm foundation for progression to AS and A-level Sciences (grade 6 required). It can lead on to HE college based courses and apprenticeships in pure sciences, applied sciences, medicine, dentistry, veterinary sciences and a host of other careers pathways.

Physical Education (Core)

What will I learn on this course?

Physical Education and School Sport plays a major part in life at Charnwood College and we pride ourselves on supporting every student in fulfilling their sporting potential or in leading a healthy balanced lifestyle.

Physical Education remains a compulsory subject in Years 10 and 11 and all students have one hour of curriculum time dedicated to Physical Education. The emphasis in KS4 is on participation and enjoyment to promote a prolonged interest in sport and physical activity. Students are given the opportunity to study a personalised pathway of participation that suits their needs and interests. Students are to opt for activities they would like to study but must ensure that they choose from at least two of the strands below:

- Competitive route
- Aesthetic route
- Active route
- Leadership route
- Alternative route

To improve in any activity, students can attend our extensive extracurricular programme.

How will I be assessed?

All students within PE are assessed on all activity areas covered within PE on the following; Technique and Performance; Tactics and Strategies; Analysis and Evaluation; The Benefits of a Healthy Active Lifestyle; Problem Solving, Leadership and Teamwork.

This course is not examined.

How can this subject help me beyond GCSE?

The course aims to encourage students to pursue active and healthy lifestyles. Students will develop physical competence and enjoyment of physical activity, with a view of promoting lifelong participation, but also valuable personal qualities such as confidence, perseverance, initiative, ability to work with others, leadership, independence and concern for others. This is achieved through a wide and varied curriculum and extra-curricular programme.

Personal Development

What will I learn on this course?

A full range of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) and Citizenship Topics will be covered. All topics in the non-statutory government guidelines are covered in the Personal Development Curriculum. In Year 10 students will follow topics on money management, relationship and sex education, domestic violence, politics and careers education.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

There will be an emphasis on open discussion and debate around topical issues.

Year 10:

Money Management - Students will develop an understanding of types of bank account and the different forms of credit and debt. Emphasis in lessons is based around students developing a grasp of what tax is, why we pay tax, etc.

Relationship and Sex Education - Students will develop an understanding of what builds positive relationship, the laws associated with sex, how to remain safe and methods of support that are available within College and the local area.

Politics - Students study how laws are made, who they are made by and why they are needed in society.

Domestic Violence - The aim of this topic is to raise awareness of domestic violence and abuse. Students will learn how to recognise the signs and where to go for support.

Careers Education - Students will develop an understanding of what employers are looking for in potential employees. They will also get the opportunity to research a variety of career paths.

Year 11:

In Year 11 Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) is taught through assemblies, morning tutorial and a programme of off-timetable days known as "Learning for Life Days." Students will be taught age specific materials covering a range of PSHE topics. Each day will be delivered by teachers and external companies.

The topics for our Year 11 Learning for Life days will be:

- Careers and Post 16 advice
- Enterprise
- Interview skills
- Learning to Learn

Art (Fine)

Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: OCR (Syllabus J161)

What will I learn on this course?

GCSE Art and Design offers an inspiring programme of study in which you will learn to refine and develop practical art skills to enable you to produce final outcomes supported by sketchbook and experimental work. You will learn how to annotate work effectively to provide insights and explanations to your practical ideas and thought processes. Researching the work of other artists and designers is encouraged relating to the topics being studied.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

The lessons are mainly practical based, initially focusing on developing skills using a broad range of media and a variety of techniques. You will cover different projects during the course, which will include a combination of research, recording/drawing, artist study, development and final pieces. The projects allow you to work within the parameters of a given topic and set of criteria, but also to develop an individual style and/or direction to enable you to build up your coursework portfolio.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

Prior skills and experience is not essential, but obviously useful. However interest and enthusiasm for Art and Design is vital. A willingness to learn and practise new skills is important if you are to be successful in this subject.

How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed throughout the course and given regular written and verbal feedback to support and guide your development. All of the artwork that you produce will be assessed and form the evidence required for the Portfolio Unit. There will also be a practical exam with a choice of starting points in Year 11.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

The GCSE course provides an excellent starting point for students to continue their education further and is great preparation for progression to A Level in fine art. It could lead towards a career in areas such as: fine art, media, games development, games technologies, advertising, theatre, stage and film set design, graphic design, interior design, landscape and gardening design and illustration.

Business

Qualification type: GCSE **Exam board:** Edexcel

What will I learn on this course?

This course includes work on all aspects of the main functions of businesses and also the environment in which they operate. You will gain an understanding of marketing and enterprise, people in business, finance and production.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Lessons are often active with students taking on the role of entrepreneurs (business leaders) making key decisions about how to start and run a business. Students work in groups and present ideas to others.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

Students need to be able to work in groups and carry out independent research. Students should be able to explain ideas in a written format.

How will I be assessed?

The controlled assessment in GCSEs Business has been removed so students will now be assessed entirely by exams. Students will be assessed on two papers with both consisting of 90 marks each. There will now be an introduction of quantitative skills (calculation and interpretation) with a minimum of 10% of the subject marks to be allocated to these skills.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

Students can continue to study related courses at Post 16. This might include A Level Business as well as A Level Economic. Students require a level 5 in Business GCSE in addition to four other GCSEs at 5+ in order to get onto one of the A Level courses.

Computing

Qualification type: GCSE **Exam board:** OCR

What will I learn on this course?

The course will cover the technical aspects of computing. This will include how the CPU works; the relationship between the CPU, RAM and the hard disc; Networking; developing algorithms; computing in society; computers and the law; binary and logic gates.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Lessons will be a mixture of theory and practical where the programming language Python 3.5 will be mainly used to create usable programs, such as text based games and functional programs. In both cases there will be a need to import and export data from an external file, for example in importing questions and exporting the users scores.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

Students need to be able to think logically and have a reasonable standard of numeracy. They will need to be able to present information effectively both verbally and in written format.

How will I be assessed?

The course is 100% examination and consists of two exams

- Computer systems 50%
- Computational thinking, algorithms and programming 50%

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

This course leads to progression onto A level computing and A level ICT courses. A grade C or above in computing would be required for these courses. Computing GCSE's are highly valued by prospective employers.

Design and Technology

Qualification: GCSE

Exam Board: OCR

Assessment: 50 %Controlled Assessment – A single Non exam Assessment (NEA) 50% Principles of Design and Technology exam.

What will I learn on this course?

The course includes both practical and written elements. You will learn how to design and manufacture products from wood, metal and plastic developing an understanding of a wide range of materials and processes. You will produce initial designs all the way through to product completion. Evaluation skills will also be taught to assess whether your product fulfils the needs of your intended user and how you could improve your final outcome.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

The lessons are mostly practical based with some written, STEM and design work. You will be using tools and equipment in a workshop environment. It is not expected that you have used these machines before but a 'have a go' attitude and a willingness to not be put off by mistakes is a *must*. You will be expected to design all products made in the workshop, and may use traditional, hand drawn or computer based CAD methods to do this.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You do not need to have any prior skills or experience in any of the design areas before starting the course but a desire to learn and to improve your skills a *must*. All of the practical skills will be taught to you but as with any skill the more you practice, the better you will get. It is essential that you have a genuine interest in design and make and an inquisitive mind.

How will I be assessed?

Half of your GCSE will be assessed during lesson time as part of the Iterative Design Challenge. This is a non-exam assessment and takes the form of a folder of work supporting a final prototype(s). The challenge is based on a theme and changes every year. In year 11 you will also undertake an examination based on the principles of design technology. This will involve both core knowledge that spans all design subjects and more in depth specific material knowledge. 15% of this exam will assess learners' mathematical skills.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

This course could lead on to many vocational career opportunities or an apprenticeship, such as an electrician, engineer, plumber or construction worker. Other students stay on to do A-level product design which can lead onto a university place in engineering, product design, industrial design or architecture. You will also learn life skills that could help you as you progress into adulthood.

Expressive Arts

Qualification type: GCSE

Exam Board: OCR

What will I learn on this course?

You will work through a number of projects that explore different starting points including a number of published plays. You will develop performance, devising and analytical skills in preparation for the three examined units.

The two controlled assignments are completed in Year 10 and 11. In the first unit you will explore one published play through workshops and will be assessed through the performance of two extracts from the text and a written performance concept. In the devised unit you will work as a performer or designer. For this you will develop a devised performance or designs from one of the ten starting points. Alongside this you will complete a written portfolio of your developing ideas and evaluate the process and final performance/product.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Most of the lessons will be practical; they will consist of you working in groups of different sizes to explore starting points and plays. You will also be required to make written notes on the practical work that you will have explored in the lesson. These should cover character, structure, genre and context.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to be willing to work as part of a group. You should also be able to listen to the ideas of other and share your work in a performance. Being imaginative and creative will help you achieve your potential.

How will I be assessed?

You will do two examined units; in Years 10 and 11 that will stand for 60% of your final grade. This will include working as a performer or designer on two extracts from one published play text and devising or designing from a starting point set by the exam board. For the written exam (40%) you will answer questions on a set text and complete an evaluation of live theatre.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

The career opportunities beyond this subject are wide and varied. Many students have left Charnwood College to train professionally in drama at some of the top performing arts schools in the country (LIPA, RADA and Central School of Speech and Drama). Aside from acting, other possible careers using drama are directors, teachers, children's entertainment, and youth workers. Companies like to see people who have studied drama because it shows that you can adapt to situations, present ideas and know how to work as part of a team.

French

Qualification type: GCSE **Exam board:** AQA

What will I learn on this course?

In French we learn how to talk about everyday topics and build on the language you have already acquired at KS3. The themes covered are: identity and culture; local, national, international and global areas of interest and current and future study and employment.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

You will build on the four skills areas – listening, speaking, reading and writing – that you started to develop in KS3. A typical lesson will incorporate several of these skills. Learning may take place through quizzes, ICT activities and role play. There will also be opportunities to work in groups and learn independently.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You will need to have studied French at KS3. Communication skills are useful; there is a focus on communication in the language, so you must be prepared to talk! You may wish to revise what you have learned at KS3 over the summer to ensure that you have refreshed the necessary knowledge to make a great start in Year 10.

How will I be assessed?

25% listening exam

25% speaking exam which includes role play, photo card and general conversation.

25% reading exam including translation

25% writing exam.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

If you achieve a grade B or above, you can opt to study a language at AS/A Level.

A language counts towards your E-Bacc qualification.

A language GCSE may improve your job prospects; increasingly employers are seeking employees with languages for their European and World markets.

We also offer an enrichment programme in Year 12, working in French with KS3 students.

Geography

Qualification type: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

What will I learn on this course?

You will learn about:

- *Living with the physical environment:* Natural hazards, ecosystems, coasts and rivers.
- *Challenges in the human environment:* Urban issues and challenges, changing economic world, resource management.
- *Geographical applications:* Key geographical issues, fieldwork skills.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

In the lessons you could be working independently, with others in a pair or small groups or as a class. You may be researching using clips, textbooks, resources, the internet, or from your own fieldwork. You will present your work in a variety of ways, including written work, oral presentations, posters and debates. Lessons will be as varied as the subject.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to have good communication skills – enabled through discussion, written work, oral work and be able to ask questions and find answers to them. You need to be able to use number and statistics when you collect and use fieldwork data. You need to be able to use new technologies, e.g. satellite mapping and be able to solve problems and make decisions. You need to be able to interpret sources and use evidence in your answers.

How will I be assessed?

You will have three exams based on the work you do over the three years, 1 will be based on physical geography, one on human geography and a final exam on fieldwork and key geographical issues.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

GCSE geography can lead you to post 16 studies in geography at AS and A2. Geography is also very helpful for understanding a changing world, making an excellent contribution to your general education. An interest in geography can be the starting point for almost any career. The skills learnt through studying geography are highly valued by employers as they lead to dynamic, enquiring individuals who have the skillset required for almost any job. Geography is recognised as a facilitating subject by universities and employers which means it is very useful.

Health and Social Care

Qualification type: Cambridge National Level 1 /2 Certificate **Exam Board:** OCR
(Syllabus J811)

Cambridge Nationals are vocationally related qualifications that take an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment. They are industry relevant, geared to key sector requirements and very popular with schools and colleges because they suit such a broad range of learning styles and abilities.

What will you learn on this course?

- Essential values of care for use with individuals in care settings.
- Communicating and working with individuals in health, social care and early years settings.
- Understanding life stages.
- Creative activities to support individuals in health, social care and early years settings.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

In the lessons you could be working independently, with others in a pair or small groups or as a class. You may be researching using primary or secondary sources. You will be observing a care setting and analysing the policies and practice in this care setting. You will be presenting your work in a range of ways, including posters, reports and oral presentations.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to have good organisational and communication skills. You should be enthusiastic about researching independently as you will be gathering primary data from a range of clients and care settings. You need to have good application skills as you will be required to apply theories of human development to case studies of care settings.

How will I be assessed?

There is one examined unit and three centre assessed units. Each unit is marked out of 60. The examined unit tests your knowledge and understanding of essential care values used by practitioners in health, social care and early years settings. Assessments for the other units will be through extended coursework tasks which include analysing and demonstrating effective communication skills and designing a creative activity for children in an early years setting.

How can this qualification help me in the future?

The Cambridge level 1/2 Certificate in health and care can lead you to post 16 Level 3 BTEC National Diploma or an apprenticeship in health and social care. Health and social care is also very helpful for understanding psychological and sociological issues impacting on health. This course can be the starting point for many careers in care such as child care.

History

Qualification type: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA

What will I learn about on this course?

You will be taught the following four units:

- Conflict and Tension 1918-1939
- Germany 1890-1945
- Britain: Health and the People - a study of the development of medicine from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century
- Elizabethan England 1568-1603 – this includes a historic environment investigation, the location of which will change each year.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

In lessons you could be working independently, in small groups or as a whole class. You may be researching using given resources, textbooks, media clips, the internet or your own homework tasks. You may be asked to present your work in a variety of ways, including through written notes or extended answers, presentations and debates. Lessons will be as varied as the different topics in the course.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to have good communication skills which we will develop through regular discussions, group work (including role play) and written work. You need to be interested in how and why people in the past acted in the ways they did and be willing to ask questions and find answers to them. You need to be able to interpret and evaluate information and apply it to given tasks. You need to be able to select relevant information to support an argument and show an understanding that there are different points of view.

How will I be assessed?

There are two examinations at the end of the course that assess your understanding of the topics.

- **Paper 1** – Understanding the modern world – Germany 1890–1945 & Conflict and Tension 1918-1939
- **Paper 2** - Shaping the Nation – Britain: Health and the people & Elizabethan England 1568-1603, including the Historic Environment questions

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

Through your study of history you will gain a better understanding of the events, people and developments that have shaped the world we live in today. The skills we develop at GCSE history are held in high regard by all employers and academic institutions. Many GCSE history students go on to study the subject further at A Level and university and are well placed to consider careers in law, journalism and education.

Music

Qualification type: GCSE

Exam board: EDEXCEL

What will I learn on this course?

You will study musicals, world music, traditional 'western' classical music from 1600 – 1899, popular music and 20th century music. You will also compose and arrange music individually and perform music both individually and in groups. You will also extend your keyboard piano skills.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

You will be listening to and analysing music from all genres as highlighted above. You will also perform music on your chosen instrument or vocal songs, compose and arrange music on the Sibelius computer software and learn the theory of the written language of music.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to be able to play and perform on an instrument or sing and have a basic knowledge of the theory of music.

Other skills that would help you in the course are self-motivation, computer literacy, the ability to logically and imaginatively develop of ideas, musical skills and interests.

How will I be assessed?

40% of the total mark is a one hour and 30 minute exam. 30% of the total mark is on two performances. 30% of the total mark is compositions. Your understanding of music theory will be assessed throughout the course based on your practical, listening and appraising skills.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

The career opportunities beyond this subject are wide and varied. Many students have left Charnwood College to study music at university. A GCSE in music can lead to music AS and A2 and music technology AS and A2.

Physical Education (GCSE)

Qualification type: GCSE

Exam Board: OCR

What will I learn on this course?

The course will be divided into, and assessed as, two distinct areas of study; the theory of physical education, and practical performance. The theory element of the course covers a wide range of topics from the social aspects of involvement in a healthy active lifestyle, to the effects of exercise on the body systems and how they interact during sport. You will be assessed in a range of practical activities and on your ability to analyse performance. Your final practical mark will consist of your three best activities identified from the 'team sport' and 'individual' activity assessment groups.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Lessons will involve the study of the influence of sport on a healthy active lifestyle and the participation in a range of practical activities. One lesson each week will be a classroom based theory lesson, with the other lessons involving practical participation. A wide range of activities will be covered during the course including all major team games; netball, football, basketball and badminton. Individual activities may include athletics and trampolining. Students may also have the opportunity to be assessed in sports which they perform in their own time to a suitable level that are not offered on the College curriculum. This is likely to be competitive sport rather than recreational activities.

What skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You will need the ability to perform at a good standard in several sports and have a keen interest in developing your all round skills and knowledge. It will also be an advantage if you are able to perform well in examination situations in order to achieve a good grade on the theory component.

How will I be assessed?

The final grade is made up of 40% from the practical activities and 60% from an examination on the theory components of the course.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

There are opportunities to continue to pursue your interest in sport in the Sixth Form through A Level PE or the OCR Cambridge Technical Diploma in Sport. GCSE PE is good preparation for 'A' level PE because of the exam component. Many students from Charnwood College have progressed through top universities to careers in sport such as teaching, sports development, personal training, physiotherapy and sports coaching. Organisations also seek to employ young people with many of the qualities associated with physical education; good communication, organisation and leadership skills.

Performing Arts

Qualification type: BTEC

Exam Board: Pearson

What will I learn on this course?

You will work on three units that cover the following aims

- Development of key skills that prove your aptitude in performing arts, such as reproducing repertoire or responding to stimulus .
- Work through processes that underpin effective ways of working in the performing arts, such as development of ideas, rehearsal and performance.
- Develop attitudes that are considered most important in the performing arts, including personal management and communication.
- Develop knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, processes and attitudes in the sector, such as roles, responsibilities, performance disciplines and styles.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Most of the lessons will be practical; they will consist of you working in groups of different sizes to explore starting points, professional repertoire and structures, depending on the art form being explored. You will also be required to make written notes on the practical work that you will have explored in the lesson

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to be willing to work as part of a group. You should also be able to listen to the ideas of other and share your work in a performance. Being imaginative and creative will help you achieve your potential.

How will I be assessed?

You will do three units; Exploring the Performing Arts, Developing Skills and Techniques for the Performing Arts, Performing to a Brief.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

The career opportunities beyond this subject are wide and varied. Many students have left Charnwood College to train professionally in Drama, Dance and Musical theatre at some of the top performing arts schools in the country (LIPA, RADA, Laines and Central School of Speech and Drama). Aside from performing, other possible careers using Performing Arts are directors, Choreographers teachers, children's entertainment, and youth workers. Companies like to see people who have studied Performing Arts because it shows that you can adapt to situations, present ideas and know how to work as part of a team.

Separate Science: Biology

Qualification type GCSE

Exam board: AQA

Biology is part of the Triple Science offer.

What will I learn on this course?

In biology you will learn about plant and animal cells and how they work moving on to how tissues and organs are formed and work together to form the digestive, respiratory and circulatory systems. You will also study how the body coordinates itself via the nervous and hormonal control systems and then how blood glucose, temperature and water levels are controlled. You will also cover DNA, cell division, inheritance and evolution to understand the variety of life and how we got here. Finally looking at plants, you will study photosynthesis and how plants transport substances around them and support the wide variety of life on the planet.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Lessons will be practical and theory based including research and project work, often using ICT and other media sources.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

Data analysis and interpreting graphs are useful skills that will be further developed during the course. It is important that students are capable of using ICT to research and produce work that can then be presented to the class. Lessons will often require students to work in groups to carry out practical work to investigate scientific concepts.

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed in terminal exams worth 100% of the grade

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

This course provides a firm foundation for progression to AS and A-level biology (grade 6 required). It can lead on to HE college based courses and apprenticeships in pure sciences, applied sciences, medicine, dentistry, veterinary sciences and a host of other careers pathways.

Separate Science: Chemistry

Qualification: GCSE

Exam board: AQA

Chemistry is part of the Triple Science offer.

What will I learn on this course?

In Chemistry you will learn a variety of topics from the fundamentals such as atomic structure, metals and their uses and current hotly debated topics such as crude oil and fuels. Later your knowledge will be broadened and deepened to include properties of materials, rates of reactions, electrolytic techniques as well as quantitative chemistry. Finally you will embark on the more challenging aspects of chemistry to prepare you for Advanced Level studies. These will include study of energy released by different fuels, modern analytical techniques and organic chemistry also known as 'chemistry of carbon'.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

The lessons will include a variety of activities from class practicals, teacher demonstrations, IT presentations, small group discussions to debates on current topics and presentation of researched topics to your peers. You will also be required to make notes as and when necessary to reinforce your learning.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

Independent research and learning, which will continue to be developed throughout the course, is extremely important in order for you to be able to gain an in-depth knowledge of the topic being studied and therefore achieve your full potential. You also need to be willing to work on your own and as part of a team. You should be able to listen to opinions of others while being able to put your own point across supported with sound evidence and then form your own judgements based on the strongest evidence.

How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed in terminal exams worth 100% of the grade

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

A successful chemistry GCSE qualification will provide you with a comprehensive foundation to continue on to chemistry Level 3 courses including foundation for chemistry AS/A levels (grade 6 needed).

It can lead on to FE college based courses and apprenticeships.

Separate Science: Physics

Qualification type: GCSE **Exam board:** AQA

Physics is part of the Triple Science offer.

What will I learn on this course?

In this course you will learn about energy and its role in the modern world including the need for clean, reliable energy resources. You will also learn about waves and the electromagnetic spectrum. The course moves on to cover forces and motion, explaining a number of everyday phenomenon including the physics behind car safety. Electricity and magnetism is covered as well as radioactivity and nuclear power. The medical aspects of physics are covered later including topics on x-rays, ultrasound and the eye.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Lessons will be both theory and practical based with opportunities for group and individual work. ICT will play a role, and research and presentation skills will be developed.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You must be an able scientist. The ability to work in groups and individually is important. Mathematical and analytical skills will be developed as well as the ability to complete scientific investigations. An ability to research independently and apply learned concepts to new situations is vital.

How will I be assessed?

Terminal exams are worth 100% of the grade

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

Foundation for physics at AS/A levels (at least grade 6 will be required). It can lead to Higher Education degree courses in pure sciences, applied sciences, engineering, medicine, dentistry, accounting, finance and a whole host of other career pathways.

Sociology

Qualification type: GCSE

Exam Board: AQA (Syllabus 8192)

What will I learn on this course?

You will be encouraged to develop a critical understanding of sociological evidence and how sociologists research society. You will make links between individual behaviour and society. You will study a number of different topic areas including crime and deviance, families and education.

What will I be doing in lessons?

You will also be applying your sociological research knowledge to case studies. There will be a particular focus on how our culture shapes our individual identity. In the lessons you could be working independently, with others in a pair or small groups, or as a class. You may be researching using video clips, text books or the internet. You will present your work in a variety of ways including written work, oral presentations, posters and debates. Lessons will be as varied as the subject.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You need to have good communication skills as you will be working both individually and with others. You will be doing your own primary research using questionnaires and interviews. You need to be able to use number and statistics when analysing patterns of social behaviour. A keen interest in current affairs is an advantage to students of sociology.

How will I be assessed?

There are two examinations at the end of year 11, each of these is 1 hour and 45 minutes long. Paper 1 tests your knowledge and understanding of the sociology of families, education and research methods. Paper 2 tests your knowledge and understanding of the sociology of crime and deviance, social stratification and sociological theory.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

GCSE sociology can lead you to Sixth Form studies in a range of subjects, particularly sociology and psychology at AS and A2. Sociology is also very helpful for understanding a changing society, making an excellent contribution to your general education. An interest in sociology can be the starting point for almost any career but it is particularly relevant to jobs involved in the criminal justice system, personnel management, social research and journalism.

Spanish

Qualification type: GCSE **Exam board:** AQA

What will I learn on this course?

In Spanish we learn how to talk about everyday topics and build on the language you may have already acquired at KS3, if you have studied Spanish in Year 9. The themes covered are: identity and culture; local, national, international and global areas of interest and current and future study and employment.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

You will build on the four skills areas – listening, speaking, reading and writing – that you started to develop at KS3. A typical lesson will incorporate several of these skills. Learning may take place through quizzes, ICT activities and role play. You will have opportunities to work in groups and learn independently.

What sorts of skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

You will have studied Spanish in Year 9 and you need to be prepared to work hard. You **MUST** speak to your languages teacher **before** you choose this option, as there is a lot of material covered in a short space of time. Communication skills are useful; there is a focus on communication in the language, so you must be prepared to talk!

How will I be assessed?

25% listening exam

25% speaking exam which includes role play, photo card and general conversation.

25% reading exam including translation

25% writing exam.

We only choose your best two speaking and your best two writing assessments to send to the exam board, from the six that you produce over the two years.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

If you achieve a grade B or above, you can study a language at AS/A Level.

A language counts towards your E-Bacc qualification.

A language GCSE may improve your job prospects; increasingly employers are seeking employees with languages for their European and World markets.

Sport Science (Cambridge Nationals)

Qualification type: Cambridge Nationals Vocational

Exam Board: OCR

What will I learn on this course?

Within the Sport Science qualification, students study key areas of anatomy and physiology and sports psychology. Students will complete two mandatory units and a choice of optional units. The externally assessed unit contributes 25% of the marks for the Certificate size qualification. Each optional unit is assessed through a practical task-based assessment with OCR-set tasks to support your students in producing assessment evidence.

What will I be doing in lessons on this course?

Unit R041: Reducing the risk of sports injuries. Taking part in sport and physical activity puts the body under stress. Students will learn how to reduce the risk of injury when taking part in sport through activities such as warm-ups, and knowing how to respond to injuries and medical conditions in a sport setting are all vital skills within the sport and leisure industry.

Unit R042: Applying principles of training. The role of a coach is to keep their performers in peak condition by monitoring individuals' fitness and designing bespoke training programmes. Students will learn the principles of training and how different methods target different components of fitness.

Unit R043: The body's response to physical activity. Students will learn about the key components of the musculo-skeletal and cardio-respiratory systems, their functions and roles in physical activity and how to measure and record short-term and long-term effects of physical activity.

Unit R046: Technology in sport. In this unit students will consider ways technology is used to enhance sports performance and experience for both spectators and performers. Students will evaluate the impact of technology in sport, considering the downsides as well as its advantages.

What skills and abilities are helpful towards success on this course?

Students will need the ability to perform at a good standard in their communication skills, research skills and exam technique.

How will I be assessed?

The final grade is made up of a combined score of 4 units. One unit is externally assessed. Each unit contributes 25% to students overall grade.

How can this qualification help me beyond GCSE?

There are opportunities to continue to pursue your interest in sport in the Sixth Form through A Level PE or the OCR Cambridge Technical Diploma in Sport. It is advised OCR National students to continue through to the Level 3 pathway and to study OCR Cambridge Technicals. Many students from Charnwood College have progressed through top universities to careers in sport such as teaching, sports development, personal training, physiotherapy and sports coaching. Organisations also seek to employ young people with many of the qualities associated with physical education; good communication, organisation and leadership skills.