



**GATEWAYS**  
SCHOOL

# GCSE OPTIONS INFORMATION

---

# INTRODUCTION

---

In September 2024, pupils will begin a four-year programme of study by embarking on the initial two-year GCSE courses, which will form the foundation of the skills and knowledge they will need to move on to A Levels and other further education courses thereafter.

We offer a programme of up to 9 GCSEs. This allows us to give sufficient curriculum time on timetable to cover all subject content thoroughly. This provides pupils with more than sufficient qualifications for entry to sixth form and further education. The old saying 'quality not quantity' really does apply.

Subjects at GCSE fall into two categories:

**Core subjects** - which are taken by everyone. Core subjects are those which are generally accepted as being essential to a broad and balanced education in the Fifth Form.

**Optional Subjects** - which lead to a full GCSE qualification and should be chosen to complement personal talents, skills and aspirations for the future. This includes the compulsory choice of one modern foreign language. This does not apply for those pupils with a specific agreement to have learning support.

The table below illustrates the programme of study for the Fifth Form. Brief details of all the courses can be found on the following pages.

<b>Core GCSE Examination Subjects</b>		
English Language English Literature	Mathematics	Combined Science: Trilogy
+		
<b>One Modern Foreign Language</b>		
French	German	Spanish
+		
<b>Three Optional Subjects</b>		
Art and Design Art: Photography Art: Textiles Three-Dimensional Design Business Studies Classical Civilisation Computer Science Drama Food Preparation and Nutrition	Geography History Latin 2 <sup>nd</sup> Modern Foreign Language: French/German/Spanish Music Physical Education Religious Studies Triple Science	
+		
<b>Personal Development Course</b>		
Personal Social & Health Education covering: Careers Citizenship Health	Physical Education	

# MAKING CHOICES

---

This may be the first time your child has been asked to make a decision which will affect their future. Make sure it is **their decision** and that it is not influenced by what their best friend is taking or what other people say they should study.

Few students are good at everything, but everyone is good at something. Pupils should think about their own strengths and weaknesses when they are choosing their subjects. Be honest and when they are making their choices, ensure these play to their personal strengths.

When making decisions, examine what you know:

- strong subjects
- weak subjects
- enjoyment of a subject
- attitude to learning in that subject
- ideas about careers.

A broad choice of GCSEs keeps future doors open.

Your child's choice of subjects will be an individual one, but make sure it is balanced. You can ensure this by including a creative/practical option, which develops problem-solving skills, creativity and practical expertise, as well as a humanities subject which develops proficiency in constructing an argument and reading, researching and presenting information.

The subjects on offer may be new to them or more demanding than they are currently studying. Read the subject descriptions carefully and ask the subject staff about them. The subject staff are here to help and are only too willing to ensure that your child is studying a suitable course.

Independent research about the relevance of certain subjects for future careers is also advisable.

We do try our best to allow everyone to follow their preferred choices. The option blocks are designed to give the maximum number of pupils their first choice. However, very occasionally this is not possible because:

- too few pupils may wish to take a course, so it is not viable.
- the choice made may not demonstrate the necessary balance of subjects.
- it is not possible to schedule all choices within the option block structure to create viable teaching groups.

# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

---

The personal development programme aims to continue to promote spiritual, personal, moral and physical development, both at Gateways and in the wider society and to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

## Careers

Pupils will be assisted to compile curriculum vitae, me maps and personal action plans, as well as investigating current labour market information. Access to speakers and mentors from a wide range of professions and further and higher education providers is available, along with expert guidance in self-presentation and interview techniques. Upper 5 pupils will attend one-to-one guidance meetings with our school careers advisor who is available to support all pupils throughout their time at Gateways.

## Health Education

Topics covered include alcohol use and misuse, sex education and eating disorders using discussion groups, activities, videos and visiting speakers. This provides an opportunity to explore ideas, attitudes and approach to a healthy lifestyle.

## Personal and Social Development and Citizenship

This programme is designed to help make informed decisions, establish a sound knowledge of personal safety and build up a system of values based around respect for yourself, your family and others. Citizenship is also explored to develop an understanding of the law, parliament and human rights.

## Physical Education

Participation in Physical Education continues in the Fifth Form. The physical activities focus on competing or performing as well as developing physical fitness. Different roles are experienced, including performer, coach, choreographer, leader and official. Developing a level of skill and physical competence will increase confidence to become involved in exercise and activity out of school and in later life. A wide range of activities are offered.

# OPTIONS TIMELINE

Upper 4 Options Timeline	
November	U4 Report and GCSE Options Evening
December	Careers advice and guidance with Mrs Sharrock  You will also explore careers in PSHE lessons. Lessons will take you on a journey to discover your potential through a personalised experience based on your interests and aspirations.
January	Pupils will experience a <b>taster lesson</b> in all option subjects. This will also give pupils the opportunity to ask further questions about each qualification.
10 <sup>th</sup> January	<b>Upper 4 Parents Evening</b> There will be careers representation and an opportunity to ask for advice and guidance or any final questions regarding option subjects.
6 <sup>th</sup> February	<b>Option Choices Deadline</b>

# CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
MAKING CHOICES	3
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME	4
OPTIONS TIMELINE	5
CONTENTS	6
ENGLISH LANGUAGE	7
ENGLISH LITERATURE	8
MATHEMATICS	9
FURTHER MATHEMATICS	10
COMBINED SCIENCE: TRILOGY	11
MODERN LANGUAGES:	12
FRENCH, SPANISH, GERMAN	12
ART AND DESIGN	13
ART: TEXTILES	14
ART: PHOTOGRAPHY	15
BUSINESS STUDIES	16
CLASSICAL CIVILISATION	17
COMPUTER SCIENCE	18
DRAMA	19
FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION	20
GEOGRAPHY	21
HISTORY	22
LATIN	23
MUSIC	24
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	25
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	26
TRIPLE SCIENCE: GCSE	27
BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY & PHYSICS	27
THREE-DIMENSIONAL DESIGN	28

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Contact: Mrs Burns

Email: marae.burns@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Examination Board: AQA

Specification: 8700

## Aims of the course

- ✍ To develop your ability to read, understand, enjoy and respond to all types of writing. The emphasis is on giving you access to the breadth of our written English language covering the 19th, 20th and 21st century time periods. You will look at how writers use narrative and descriptive techniques to engage readers and how writers present viewpoints and perspectives on issues or themes to influence the reader. You will also develop your capacity to offer critical responses to texts.
- ✍ To develop your ability to convey meaning in written language correctly and clearly, using a range of vocabulary and sentences structures.
- ✍ To develop your understanding of the spoken word and your capacity to participate effectively in a variety of speaking and listening activities.



## Assessment

### 100% Examination

All texts in the examination will be unseen.

### Paper 1: Creative Reading and Writing (50% of GCSE)

**Section A: Reading:** one literature fiction text

**Section B: Writing:** descriptive or narrative writing

### Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives (50% of GCSE)

**Section A: Reading:** one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text

**Section B: Writing:** writing to present a viewpoint

**Non-examination Assessment: Spoken Language** (separate endorsement: 0% of GCSE)

**Assessed in class during the two years of the course.** Consists of presentations to class, responding to questions and feedback, debates, role plays, using Standard English.

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

Contact: Mrs Burns

Email: marae.burns@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Examination Board: AQA

Specification: 8702

## Aims of the course

The syllabus is designed to enable you to develop your ability to read, understand and respond to all types of literary texts. You will develop your ability to appreciate the various ways in which authors affect their audiences and readers and the means by which they achieve their effects.

You will be introduced specifically to the following six categories of literature:

- ✍ Pre-twentieth century prose
- ✍ Twentieth century prose
- ✍ Pre- twentieth century poetry
- ✍ Twentieth century poetry
- ✍ Pre- twentieth century drama
- ✍ Twentieth century drama.



## Assessment

### 100% Examination Assessment

All assessments are closed book: any stimulus materials required will be provided as part of the assessment.

### Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel (40% of GCSE)

**Section A: Shakespeare:** answer one question on the play studied in class. Write in detail about an extract from the play and then write about the play as a whole.

**Section B: The 19th-century novel:** answer one question on the novel studied in class. Write in detail about an extract from the novel and then write about the novel as a whole.

### Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry (60% of GCSE)

**Section A: Modern texts:** answer one essay question from a choice of two on a modern prose or drama text studied in class.

**Section B: Poetry:** answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from the anthology cluster studied in class.

**Section C: Unseen poetry:** answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.



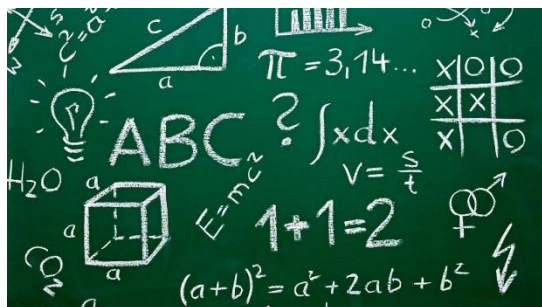
# MATHEMATICS

Contact: Mr Adegboro

Email: charles.adegboro@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Examination Board: Edexcel

Specification: 4MA1



## Aims of the course

The course will enable pupils to:

- develop their knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and techniques
- acquire a foundation of mathematical skills for further study in the subject or related areas
- enjoy using and applying mathematical techniques and concepts, and become confident in using mathematics to solve problems
- appreciate the importance of mathematics in society, employment and study.

The GCSE Mathematics qualification follows the Edexcel international GCSE (9 - 1) specification. The qualification is globally relevant, represents world-class best practice and maintains a consistent standard that is in line with the new reformed GCSE Mathematics in England. The qualification enables successful progression to A Level and beyond.

There are two tiers of entry – Higher and Foundation – that allow pupils to be entered for a level appropriate to them with questions in each tier that are accessible to pupils of all abilities within that tier.

Higher Grades            9   8   7   6   5   4

Foundation Grades    5   4   3   2   1

Grade 9 represents a new level of attainment for the very top performers and is higher than the old A\* grade. This means there is differentiation of the most able at the top end of the grading scale. There is also greater differentiation of middle performers, with three grades (4, 5 and 6) aligned to the current C and B grades. This means that the 9–1 grading scale rewards top grade C pupils with a new grade 5, and top B grade pupils with a new grade 6.

## Assessment

### 100% Examination

You will take two 2-hour papers at the end of Upper 5.

Each examination paper is equally weighted (100 marks) and calculators may be used in both papers. A formulae sheet is provided at each tier for both papers, with a small increase in problem-solving and mathematical reasoning in the assessment compared to the previous GCSE.

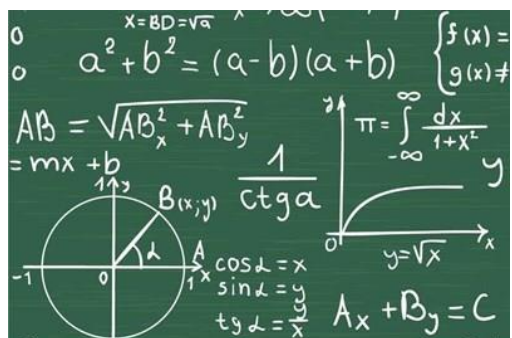
# FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Contact: Mr Adegboro

Email: charles.adegboro@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Examination Board: AQA

Specification: 8365



## Aims of the course

The course will enable pupils to:

- develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts beyond GCSE mathematics by assessing their higher order mathematical skills, particularly in algebraic reasoning, in greater depth
- acquire and use problem solving strategies including the use of algebra as a tool for solving problems
- select, apply and link mathematical techniques and methods to solve challenging and non-routine problems
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions
- interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context including rigorous use of algebraic argument and formal proof

## Content Summary

- Number
- Matrix Transformations
- Algebra and calculus
- Geometry and trigonometry

The AQA Certificate Level 2 Further Mathematics provides pupils who would like to study beyond the Higher Tier IGCSE syllabus in mathematics and who can work above this level. This qualification places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem-solving skills. The syllabus is designed to broaden the mathematical experience of high attaining pupils. It also allows a foundation to be laid for the further study of mathematics or any science subject at A-Level. High-achieving students are introduced to AS topics that will help them develop skills in algebra, geometry, calculus, matrices, trigonometry, functions and graphs. The qualification is globally relevant, represents world-class best practice and maintains a consistent standard that is in line with the new reformed GCSE in England. The qualification enables successful progression to A Level and beyond.

## Assessment

100% Examination

You will take two 1 hour 45 minutes papers at the end of Upper 5, available at Higher Tier only. Each examination paper is equally weighted, and calculators may be used in one of the papers. A formulae sheet is provided for both papers.



# MODERN LANGUAGES: FRENCH, SPANISH, GERMAN

Contact: Mrs Wilson  
Email: [fiona.wilson@gatewaysschool.co.uk](mailto:fiona.wilson@gatewaysschool.co.uk)

Examination Board: AQA  
Specification: French 8652  
German 8662 Spanish 8692

## Aims of the course

The course will allow pupils to build on the topics, grammar and skills they have already learnt in order to give their opinions using language which is more complex, interesting and accurate. They will learn how to speak more fluently and spontaneously and apply their language skills to real-life situations. They will also develop the skills to understand a wider variety of listening and reading sources as well as extend their knowledge of the culture and countries where the language is spoken.



Three topic areas are covered in the course:

- ✍ People and Lifestyle: Identity and relationships with others; Healthy living and lifestyle; Education and work
- ✍ Popular Culture: Free-time activities; Customs, festivals and celebrations; Celebrity culture
- ✍ Communication and the world around us: Travel and tourism, including places of interest; Media and technology; The environment and where people live

---

## Assessment

### 100% Examination

There are four attainment targets:

- ✍ **Listening (25%)** Written examination
- ✍ **Speaking (25%)** Examination conducted by the teacher
- ✍ **Reading (25%)** Written examination
- ✍ **Writing (25%)** Written examination

Pupils may do foundation or higher tier examinations. They must do all papers at either foundation or all papers at higher tier. Pupils will be given advice as to which tier would be more suitable to enter for the examinations in the second year of the GCSE, once there is evidence of each pupil's overall level of achievement.







# ART: PHOTOGRAPHY

---

Contact: Mrs Harrison

Examination Board: AQA

Email: della.harrison@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Specification: 8204

---

## Aims of the course

Photography is defined as the practice of producing images using light-sensitive materials such as photographic film, or digital methods of development and production to create static or moving images.

AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.



The aims of the course are to develop:

- ✍ self-expression and personal responses;
- ✍ creative and imaginative ideas;
- ✍ the use of a range of photography techniques ;
- ✍ strategies to gather and collect information;
- ✍ an understanding of photographers and their work;
- ✍ an understanding of how and in what ways photography represents ideas and cultures.

Students will learn how to:

- ✍ look and record through experimental photography
- ✍ understand how to use a DSLR on manual settings.
- ✍ research, analyse and gather information;
- ✍ Select, edit and compose contact sheets of images.
- ✍ explore lighting, viewpoint and depth of field.
- ✍ use the work of artists and other sources in order to further develop ideas;
- ✍ use Photoshop to develop images and ideas
- ✍ communicate personal responses in visual form and through other means.

---

## Assessment

### 60% Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Component one comprises of the portfolio unit and this will include a project from initial ideas to final intention. This component does not have a time limit and should include one sustained project with a selection of further work. Drawing and annotation should make up a large part of the final portfolio. This component is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade.

### 40% Exam

Component two is an externally set assignment from AQA. The extended creative response must explicitly evidence pupils' ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skill and/or understanding from initial engagement with their selected starting point, through to their realisation of intentions; Unlimited preparation time prior to the exam is allowed, but the final piece must be completed within 10 hours of supervised time.











# FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

Contact: Mrs Holmes

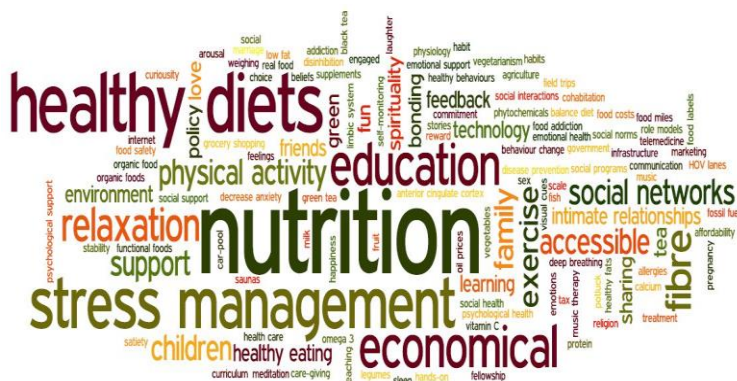
Email: sara.holmes@gatewayschool.co.uk

Examination Board: AQA

Specification: 8585

## Aims of the course

Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical skills to ensure pupils develop a thorough understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials.



## Course Content

Food preparation skills are integrated into five core topic areas:

- ✂ **Food, nutrition and health** – Macro & Micro nutrients, nutritional needs & health
- ✂ **Food science** – cooking of food & heat transfer, functional and chemical properties of food
- ✂ **Food Safety** – food spoilage & contamination, principles of food safety
- ✂ **Food Choice** – factors affecting food choice, British & international cuisines, sensory evaluation, food labelling & marketing
- ✂ **Food Provenance** – environmental impact & sustainability of food, food processing and production

## Assessment

### 50% Non-Exam Assessment (NEA)

- ✂ **Task 1:** Food Investigation (30 marks) – understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients.  
Written report (1500 – 2000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.
- ✂ **Task 2:** Food preparation assessment (70 marks) – knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task.  
Written portfolio including photographic evidence of the three final dishes.

### 50% Examination

- ✂ 1 hour 45-minute examination based on the theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition from the five core topic areas.
- ✂ Multiple choice questions (20 marks). Five questions each with a number of sub questions (80 marks).

# GEOGRAPHY

Contact: Mrs Hayward

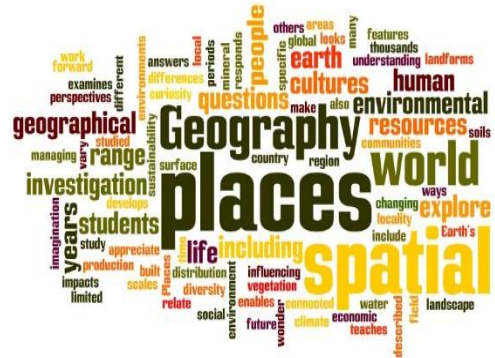
Examination Board: AQA

Email: [elizabeth.hayward@gatewaysschool.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth.hayward@gatewaysschool.co.uk)

Specification: 8035

## Aims of the Course

The course is designed to allow you to study the world from the classroom, exploring case studies in the United Kingdom, newly emerging economies and lower income countries. It adopts a people–environment approach and develops a sound understanding of geographical themes, issues and skills, encouraging you to understand your role in society by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.



## Course Content

### Paper 1: Living with the physical environment

- ✍ The challenge of natural hazards – earthquakes, volcanoes, tropical storms, flooding and climate change.
- ✍ Physical landscapes in the UK – coastal environments and river environments.
- ✍ The living world – ecosystems, the tropical rainforest and hot deserts.

### Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment

- ✍ Urban issues and challenges – the growth of cities around the world and the effects of this growth.
- ✍ The changing economic world – reasons for the growth of countries and how to reduce variations in development in different countries.
- ✍ The challenge of resource management – the global distribution of food, water and energy.

### Paper 3: Geographical applications

- ✍ Issue evaluation – using sources such as graphs or photographs to examine changes and reach conclusions. These sources will be available to you two months before your final examination and will be discussed in lessons so that you are familiar with them.
- ✍ Fieldwork
- ✍ Geographical skills

### Fieldwork

Two pieces of fieldwork will be undertaken during the two-year course with each trip examining physical and human geography elements. These will allow you to collect sufficient data to allow the study of a local area in preparation for your unit 3 examination.

## Assessment

**100% Examination** - Each examination will consist of a variety of questions including multiple choice, short answer, levels of response and extended prose.

- ✍ Paper 1 = 35% (1hr 30) Living with the physical environment
- ✍ Paper 2 = 35% (1hr 30) Challenges in the human environment
- ✍ Paper 3 = 30% (1hr 15) Geographical applications



# HISTORY

Contact: Mrs Watson

Examination Board: AQA

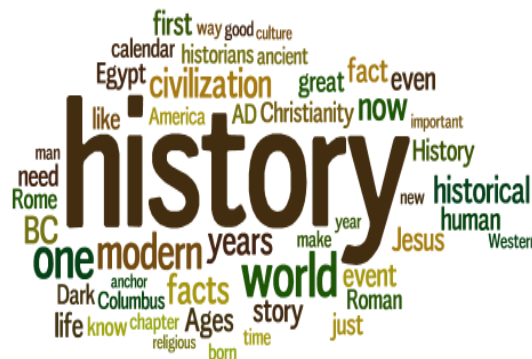
Email: joanna.watson@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Specification: 8145

## Aims of the Course

*The aim of the historian, like that of the artist, is to enlarge our picture of the world, to give us a new way of looking at things (James Joll).*

This course develops the history skills already learned, such as analysis of sources, note making, and writing an argument, and introduces pupils to a wider knowledge and understanding.



## Course Content

### Paper 1: Understanding the Modern World

- ✍ **America – Expansion and Consolidation, 1840-1895.** This half century was an exciting period of expansion westwards and then the consolidation of the United States as a nation. Pupils will study key events such as the Gold Rush, American Civil War and the migration west of the early pioneers and the homesteaders. They will also study how the lives of the Plains Indians were irrevocably changed through contact with the white man.
- ✍ **Conflict and Tension, 1918-1939.** The wider world depth study enables pupils to understand the complex and diverse interests of different individuals and states. It focuses on the causes of the Second World War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the issues which caused it.

### Paper 2: Shaping the Nation

- ✍ **Britain – Health and the People, c.1000-present day.** This will enable pupils to gain an understanding of how medicine and public health developed in Britain. We look at medicine from the Middle Ages to today, studying events such as the impact of the Black Death, Renaissance and WWI, and key figures such as Ibn Sina and Al-Razi, Vesalius, Jenner and Marie Curie.
- ✍ **Elizabethan England, c.1568-1603.** An in-depth study of the last 35 years of Elizabeth's I's reign. The study will focus on major events of Elizabeth's reign considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints. It includes the story of the Spanish Armada, the threat to Elizabeth from Mary, Queen of Scots and the study of a Tudor historic environment.

## Assessment

### 100% Examination

- ✍ Paper 1 - 'Understanding the Modern World' 50%
- ✍ Paper 2 - 'Shaping the Nation' 50%







# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

---

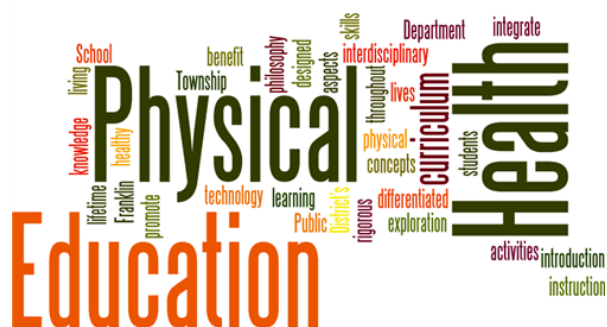
Contact: Mrs Braithwaite

Examination Board: AQA

Email: laura.braithwaite@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Specification: 8582

---



## Aims of the Course

This course is appropriate for pupils who enjoy:

- ✍ Applied anatomy and physiology
- ✍ Movement analysis
- ✍ Physical training
- ✍ Use of data
- ✍ Sports psychology
- ✍ Socio-cultural influences
- ✍ Health, fitness and well-being

## Course Content

**The course will:**

- ✍ Develop knowledge and practical skills in a range of activities
- ✍ Examine the effects of exercise and how training can improve performance
- ✍ Understand the demands of exercise on the energy systems and how our body reacts to these demands
- ✍ Identify ways to develop and maintain a healthy and active lifestyle through participation in physical activity and cultural and social factors
- ✍ Identify ways in which the media portrays different sports.

---

## Assessment

### 40% Non-Examination Assessment

Practical performance in three different physical activities in the role of player/performer (one in a team activity, one in an individual activity and a third in either a team or in an individual activity). Analysis and evaluation of performance to bring about improvement in one activity.

### 60% Examination

Externally assessed, through 2 written papers of 1 hour and 15minutes each worth 30% each.





# THREE-DIMENSIONAL DESIGN

---

Contact: Mrs Hazelden

Email: sarah.hazelden@gatewaysschool.co.uk

Examination Board: AQA

Specification: 8205

---

## Aims of the course

Three-dimensional design is defined as the design, prototyping and modelling or making of primarily functional and aesthetic products, objects, and environments, drawing upon intellectual, creative and practical skills. In Component 1 and Component 2 students are required to work in one **or more** area of architectural design:

- product design
- jewellery and body adornment
- exhibition design
- designs for theatre, film and television



The aims of the course are to develop:

- ✍ knowledge, understanding and skills relevant to their chosen title through integrated practical, critical and contextual study that encourages direct engagement with original works and practice.
- ✍ understanding of how sources inspire the development of ideas relevant to three-dimensional design
- ✍ the ways in which meanings, ideas and intentions relevant to three-dimensional design can be communicated.

Students will learn how to:

- ✍ use three-dimensional techniques and processes such as model making, constructing, surface treatment, assembling and modelling.
- ✍ use media and materials such as drawing materials, clay, wood, metal, plaster, plastic and found materials.
- ✍ communicate ideas and intentions effectively through a range of drawing techniques, prototyping and annotation.

---

## Assessment

### 100% Non-Examination Assessment.

Component one comprises of the portfolio unit and this will include projects from initial ideas to final intention. This component does not have a time limit and should include one sustained project with a selection of further work. Drawing and annotation should make up a large part of the final portfolio. This component is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade.

Component two is an externally set assignment from AQA. The extended creative response must explicitly evidence pupils' ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skill and/or understanding from initial engagement with their selected starting point, through to their realisation of intentions. This accounts for the remaining 40% and must be completed within 10 hours of supervised time.