



nishkamschool
West London

Faith-Inspired

Virtues-led

Aspiring for
Excellence



Year 9 Options Handbook 2025

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1. Message from Mr G Dineen, Headteacher

It is our pleasure to present you with the Nishkam School West London Key Stage 4 Options Handbook. The purpose of this publication is to assist you in the process of choosing the courses that are the most suitable for you to follow over the next two years. Your selection may include academic and / or vocational courses. What is important is that you choose subjects that you are confident you will enjoy learning more about, that are appropriate for the demands of future careers and higher education courses that you may be interested in pursuing and that reflect the strengths you have demonstrated in Years 7 to 9.

Four of the most common mistakes that students can make when choosing their options are:

- Choosing subjects because they like the teacher who has taught them at Key Stage 3
- Choosing subjects that they think will be easy
- Choosing subjects that don't really interest them, because their parents / carers tell them to
- Choosing subjects because their friends have chosen them

Whatever you choose will determine how you spend a considerable amount of your time over the next two years, the A level and other post-16 courses that you will be able to study in the Sixth Form and the careers for which you will be qualified in the longer-term future.

This is an important juncture in your educational journey so far. This may be the first opportunity that you have had to determine your next educational steps. It is important, therefore, that you make sure you research and consider your options carefully. Ask lots of questions and talk to as many well-informed people as possible, just as you would about any other important decision in your life.

Good luck with the process and remember, we are here to help and support you.

Mr G Dineen, Headteacher

2. Overview of the Key Stage 4 Curriculum

What are we trying to achieve?

Depth – Students are given a generous allocation of curriculum time to complete their courses, so they are as well prepared as they can be for the qualifications they are taking.

Breadth – Students have 3 option choices alongside 6 core qualifications, allowing them to continue to study a wide range of subjects. There is a balanced variety of subjects to choose from to suit all learners.

Skills and qualifications for life – All courses are recognised and valued by Sixth Forms, colleges, universities and employers and lead on to either further study or employment. Great importance is attached to the core, as these qualifications are central to students' progression in life.

Timetable allocation:

For the majority of subjects, Key Stage 4 will run over two years, with students completing courses at the end of Year 11.

Core Subjects

Core subjects account for a total of 21 lessons per week on the timetable.

Subject	Lessons per week	Qualifications
English	5	2 GCSEs – English Language and English Literature
Maths	4	1 GCSE
Science	6	2 GCSEs – Combined Science (unless pupils are entered for triple Science, they will receive 3 separate Science qualifications)
RE	2	1 GCSE (RE GCSE will be sat by all pupils at the end of Year 10)
Core PE	1	Statutory (Sports Studies is available as an option in addition to core PE)
Language	3	1 GCSE in either Spanish or Punjabi

Option Choices

Students have three option choices, therefore option subjects account for a total of 9 lessons per week on the timetable.

Option	Lessons per week	Qualifications
Option 1 Humanities- either Geography or History	3	1 GCSE
Option 2	3	1 GCSE or equivalent*
Option 3	3	1 GCSE or equivalent*

* Vocational courses offered are the equivalent value to GCSE courses

Subjects on offer

Once students have picked their humanities subject, they will then have the opportunity to pick two subjects from the choice below. You will make your choice by completing a Microsoft Form, the deadline for this is **Wednesday 19th of March 2025**

Art, Craft and Design	Film Studies	Music	Enterprise (vocational)
Computer Science*	Geography	Sociology	Hospitality and Catering (Vocational)
Drama	History	Business Studies*	Sports Studies (vocational)

Please note that conditions apply to the following 3 GCSE subjects-

If you pick either Business Studies or Computer Science as one of your option choices, but have not met the criteria listed below, we will look to give you your reserve choice.

1. Computer Science GCSE

To pick Computer Science as an option subject pupils must -

- a) Have achieved an 'Excellent' or 'Secure' in Computer Science **and** Maths at KAT 2
- b) Pass an entry exam, this will be an hour-long written paper and will take place after school

2. Business Studies GCSE

To pick Business Studies as an option subject pupils must -

- c) Have achieved an 'Excellent' or 'Secure' in English **and** Maths at KAT 2. Pupils who have not met this criteria, will be eligible to pick Enterprise as an option subject

3. Triple Science GCSE

The top 30 pupils will be offered the opportunity to study Triple Science at GCSE, this will be based on performance across KAT 1, 2 and 3 and teacher judgement. If any spaces become available, they will be offered to those next on the list. The Science team will provide pupils with more details on this over the next few weeks.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

All pupils will be studying the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), the EBacc is made up of the subjects which are considered essential to many degrees and open up lots of doors. Research shows that a pupil's socio-economic background impacts the subjects they choose at GCSE, and that this determines their opportunities beyond school. A study by the UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBacc provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying the EBacc can help improve a young person's performance in English and maths. The EBacc consists of English Language and Literature, Maths, Science, a language and Geography or History.

Pathways

Through their subject choices and the guidance provided to them, students will follow one of three possible pathways through the Key Stage 4 curriculum at Nishkam School West London:

- A purely academic pathway consisting solely of GCSE subjects
- Core GCSEs with a blend of academic and vocational subjects
- Core GCSEs with vocational subjects.

Please note that some of the opportunities we offer may change because of higher or lower student demand for certain subjects. Any changes will be discussed with you personally if they affect you.

What are Vocational Qualifications?

Vocational qualifications are practical qualifications that relate to a specific job or career sector. Unlike typical academic GCSE courses, they combine a mix of theory and practical learning.

Vocational qualifications are a good option if you have a clear idea of what type of career you would like to work in and can help you to build up the specific skills you need to get your first job.

The vocational courses we will be running at NSWL are:

- Enterprise
- Hospitality and Catering
- Sport Studies

Vocational courses have been developed in partnership with employers and professional and trade organisations, which means that you will be learning the skills that employers want. This is really good for your CV and your career.

If you choose a vocational option, you will develop real-life skills as well as learning theory, and there will be a more practical approach compared to traditional courses like GCSEs, which will help you to leave education ready for the world of work.

Vocational courses have equivalent value to GCSE courses, are highly respected by schools and colleges, and provide pathways for students to progress onto post-16 education. Students studying any of the three vocational options gain a Level 1 or Level 2 qualification. This is how the vocational course grading compares to the GCSE grades:

Vocational Grade	Level 2 Distinction*	Level 2 Distinction	Level 2 Merit	Level Pass
Equivalent GCSE Grade	9-8	7	6-5	4

Vocational Grade	Level 1 Distinction	Level 1 Merit	Level 1 Pass
Equivalent GCSE Grade	3	2	1

3. How do I use this booklet?

This booklet is designed to help you make the best choices for Years 10 and 11 (Key Stage 4). If you have not already done so, you now need to start thinking about what you hope to achieve in the future.

Read the booklet carefully, then use this information to decide which courses will be best for you in Years 10 and 11. Take into consideration what you enjoy the most, as well as your current strengths and areas for improvement across the subjects you currently study.

Remember, you don't have to make your decisions straight away. Take your time to ask questions, do more research using the links we have provided and re-read the subject information. These decisions will most likely have a big impact on the rest of your life, so don't rush them.

When you feel certain about your choices, you should then complete your online options form. The link will be shared with you via Teams.

Your Options form will need to be completed by **Wednesday 19th March 2025**

Who should help me make my choices?

- Subject teachers, who can tell you about the individual courses
- Your Form Tutor, who knows you and your strengths in school
- Your Head of Key Stage and the Senior Leadership Team, who can also give you information about jobs and future courses
- Your parents, who know you best as a person
- **YOU** – don't forget to trust yourself to make the right decisions

Additionally, there are also several people who can advise you about which subject options will be the best for you including:

- Mr Dineen, Headteacher
- Miss Cruickshank, Deputy Head Teacher
- Miss Atkin, Deputy Head Teacher
- Ms Gill, Assistant Head Teacher
- Ms Gaymer, Assistant Head Teacher
- Mr Kerrisk, Assistant Headteacher (Careers Lead)
- Mr Milligan, Assistant Head Teacher

4. Careers Guidance

The current careers market is changing, and it is important students are informed about careers and possible entry routes. Many students are unlikely to know which specific job or career they would like to pursue in the future, however, the options they choose now could potentially impact the opportunities available to them after A-Levels and University.

In choosing their programme of study, students should be thinking about their long-term ambitions. All students should be exploring careers ideas and developing an understanding of the careers which suit their interests and skills. If they already have a clear career plan, they should be investigating any necessary GCSE and A level requirements.

Unifrog is an excellent website which all students will have access to. Unifrog brings into one place information about all post-school opportunities, including every UK university course, apprenticeships including degree apprenticeships, and college courses in the UK, as well as other opportunities, such as School Leaver Programmes. This makes it easy for students to compare and choose the best opportunity for them.

As a starting point, all students should be using the Unifrog platform to complete the following tasks:

- Interests Quiz
- Skills Quiz
- Personality Profile
- Research careers in Careers Library
- Research subjects in the Subjects Library

There is also a range of useful websites which students can explore to further help them when choosing their options:

<p>https://www.unifrog.org/</p>	<p>All Students have their own personal log in to the Uniform platform, and activities around it, are delivered during tutor time. It is a one-stop-shop for students across Key stage 3,4,& 5 for information on all routes post-16, no matter their interests or academic ability.</p>
<p>https://website.u-explore.com/</p>	<p>U-Explore is an independent and impartial national careers platform. Learners and parents/carers can log on to UExplore 24/7, via an internet connection, to access over 2,000 written and video job profiles across 14 industry sectors, real work environments and 360-degree Virtual Tours.</p>
<p>www.Ucas.com</p>	<p>Information about higher education courses and entry requirements.</p>
<p>www.informedchoices.ac.uk</p>	<p>The Russell Group of Universities Guide to post 16 choices and university entry. Includes some GCSE requirements</p>
<p>https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-your-education-and-training-choices</p>	<p>A government careers website which allows you to assess your skills and match them to potential new careers, explore over 800 careers and find local learning and training opportunities.</p>
<p>https://amazingapprenticeships.com/</p>	<p>Connecting schools, colleges and training providers with a National Apprenticeship Service in their area.</p>
<p>https://careermap.co.uk/careerometer/</p>	<p>A tool which allows you to compare the working hours and average wages for job roles across the UK</p>

Pre-16 Qualifications and University Entrance

The following information is taken from a leaflet issued by the Russell Group, which provides guidance to students about how their GCSE subjects can affect their course choices at some universities:

- When applying to a university, and especially for a course at a competitive university, it is important that you consider all aspects of the entrance requirements, including the GCSE or other standard level requirements.
- Universities may ask for a specific number of GCSEs (or their equivalent). For example, a number of medical courses ask for five (sometimes more) top grades.
- GCSE English or another standard level equivalent is very often required at Grade 5 at least. At many universities this is a universal entry requirement for any course. Mathematics is only slightly less commonly asked for. Occasionally a university will require a foreign language for entry to any course, for example, University College London introduced such a requirement in 2012.
- For many courses a grade 5 at least in GCSE English is needed, with science and engineering courses in particular often specifying this. Equally, courses such as Business and Psychology, which may attract applicants who aren't necessarily strong mathematicians, commonly ask for a grade 5 in mathematics and, in some cases, sciences.
- The GCSE or other standard level entrance requirements for individual degree courses are quite varied. In some cases, a particular subject or grade is required at standard level if it isn't being offered at advanced level.

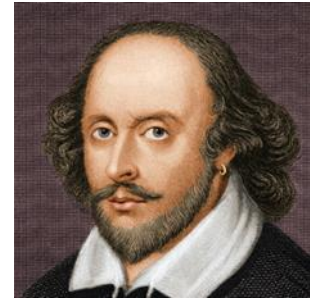
The summary below gives an idea of some of the GCSE requirements that you might come across for certain degree courses. Remember that these are only examples. It's important to check university websites detailed requirements before applying.

- To study many degrees at university you must have secured a grade 5 in both English and Maths GCSE.
- Applicants to study Medicine are required to have very good GCSE results in Maths, Science and English.
- Increasing numbers of universities require applicants to have a GCSE in a modern or classical language at grade 5 or above to be considered for any course.
- For a Business degree, a grade 5/6 in GCSE Maths is required.
- A grade 5 or 6 in Maths and Science is often required for a degree in Psychology.

Note for parents/carers: Please do not buy any form of textbook or learning aids for your child until confirmation of your child's course is given by the school.

5. Core Subjects

GCSE English Language



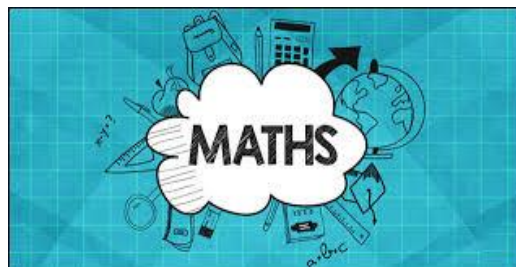
Subject	GCSE English Language			
Exam Board	AQA English Language (8700)			
Overview	English Language is a core GCSE, required for entry to A-Level study and higher education. The course develops students' ability to understand and interpret texts in different genres of fiction and non-fiction, as well as to express original and analytical ideas in a sophisticated way. Creative writing makes up 50% of the final mark.			
Course Structure	The course is linear with final examinations at the end of Year 11. All students will follow the pathways outlined below for Language. Papers are no longer tiered in English and so all students, regardless of ability, will complete the same examinations.			
Assessment	<p style="text-align: center;">English Language GCSE</p> <p>Paper 1 -- written exam Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing 1 hour 45 minutes 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 2 -- written exam Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives 1 hour 45 minutes 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Students complete the Spoken Language assessment in class; this does not count towards final GCSE grades.</p>			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Journalism	Teacher	Broadcaster	Lawyer
Unique Selling Point	English is central to all other subjects, in developing students' literacy and teaching them to process and interpret complex ideas.			
Further Information	Ms Sehijpal			

GCSE English Literature



Subject	GCSE English Literature			
Exam Board	English Literature (8702)			
Overview	English Literature offers students not only the chance to study important texts in depth, but also to develop their analytical ability and immerse themselves in the history of ideas. Students will study four literary texts: Macbeth, Jekyll and Hyde, An Inspector Calls and 'Power and Conflict' Poetry.			
Course Structure	The course is linear with final examinations at the end of Year 11. All students will follow the pathways outlined below Literature. Papers are no longer tiered in English and so all students, regardless of ability, will complete the same examinations.			
Assessment	English Literature GCSE			
	<p>Paper 1 -- written exam Shakespeare and the 19th-century Novel 1 hour 45 minutes 40% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 2 -- written exam Modern Texts and Poetry 2 hours 15 minutes 60% of GCSE</p>			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Journalism	Teacher	Broadcaster	Lawyer
Unique Selling Point	English is central to all other subjects, in developing students' literacy and teaching them to process and interpret complex ideas.			
Further Information	Ms Sehijpal			

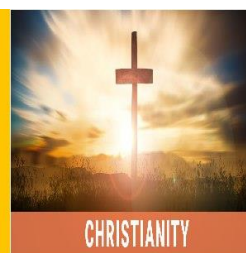
GCSE Mathematics



Subject	GCSE Mathematics																															
Exam Board	Edexcel GCSE Mathematics (1MA1)																															
Overview	<p>This course gives the students the confidence that the mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding they will have acquired during the course are as good as those of the highest performing jurisdictions in the world. Students will engage in a curriculum that should allow them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts • acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems • reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions • comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context. 																															
Course Structure	<p>The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9 to 1) in Mathematics is a tiered qualification. There are two tiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation Tier – grades 1 to 5 available • Higher Tier – grades 4 to 9 available (grade 3 allowed) <p>The assessment for each tier of entry consists of three externally-examined papers, all of which must be from the same tier of entry. Students must complete all three papers in the same assessment series.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Foundation</th> <th colspan="2">Higher</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Topic Area</th> <th>Weighting</th> <th>Topic Area</th> <th>Weighting</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number</td> <td>22 – 28%</td> <td>Number</td> <td>22 – 28%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Algebra</td> <td>17 – 23%</td> <td>Algebra</td> <td>17 – 23%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change</td> <td>22 – 28%</td> <td>Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change</td> <td>22 – 28%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geometry and Measures</td> <td>12 – 18%</td> <td>Geometry and Measures</td> <td>12 – 18%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Statistics & Probability</td> <td>12 – 18%</td> <td>Statistics & Probability</td> <td>12 – 18%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Foundation		Higher		Topic Area	Weighting	Topic Area	Weighting	Number	22 – 28%	Number	22 – 28%	Algebra	17 – 23%	Algebra	17 – 23%	Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change	22 – 28%	Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change	22 – 28%	Geometry and Measures	12 – 18%	Geometry and Measures	12 – 18%	Statistics & Probability	12 – 18%	Statistics & Probability	12 – 18%
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Assessment	<p>Paper 1 (33.3% of the GCSE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No calculator is allowed • 1 hour 30 minutes (both Foundation and Higher tier papers) • 80 marks available <p>Paper 2 (33.3% of the GCSE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculator allowed • 1 hour 30 minutes (both Foundation and Higher tier papers) • 80 marks available <p>Paper 3 (33.3% of the GCSE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculator allowed • 1 hour 30 minutes (both Foundation and Higher tier papers) • 80 marks available 																															

Career Opportunities and Further Education	Criminologist	Investment Analyst	Cyber Intelligence Officer	Air Traffic Controller
Unique Selling Point	Opportunities within school such as UKMT Challenge, Chess Club, Inter House Mathematics Challenge, Maths Trips and STEM projects will engage and inspire students in their Mathematics studies.			
Further Information	Ms Panesar			

GCSE Religious Studies



Subject	GCSE Religious Studies			
Exam Board	Edexcel			
Overview	The study of two traditional world religions is fused together with exploration into philosophical, ethical and contemporary issues. Pupils will develop knowledge and understanding of two religions, enabling them to understand and articulate their own and others' beliefs, values and commitments. They will be required to provide reasoning and evidence for beliefs and practices as well as the ethical and philosophical positions held by the religions studied.			
Course Structure	The students will focus on 2 Areas of Study and sit 2 exam papers worth 50% each. One paper will link to Sikhism and the other paper will link to Christianity.			
Assessment	<p>Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Religion and Ethics (through the Sikh faith) Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes - 50% of the qualification 102 marks</p> <p>Content overview Pupils must study all 4 content sections based upon their chosen religion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs • Marriage and the Family • Living the Religious Life • Matters of Life and Death 			
	<p>Paper 3: Area of Study 3 – Religion, Philosophy and Social Justice (through the Christian faith) Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes - 50% of the qualification 102 marks</p> <p>Content overview Pupils must study all 4 content sections based upon their chosen religion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs • Philosophy of Religion • Living the Religious Life • Equality 			
	<p>Assessment overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must answer all questions. • The assessment consists of four questions. • The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions. • The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and these will contribute a minimum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper 			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Medicine / Medical Research	Journalism / Broadcasting / Media	Teaching / Social Care	Politics / Law

Unique Selling Point	RE is a unique subject which helps you to develop a broader outlook in life and increase your skills in abstract thinking. It helps pupils to develop a greater understanding and appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies. Pupils will develop analytical and critical thinking skills to enable them to present a wide range of well-informed and reasonable arguments.
Further Information	Ms Sanderson

GCSE Spanish



Subject	GCSE Spanish
Exam Board	AQA Spanish (8698)
Overview	<p>Our objective is to enable students of all abilities to develop their French language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.</p> <p>The GCSE course covers three main themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and culture, • Local, national, international and global areas of interest • Current and future study and employment
Course Structure	<p>The course is linear with final examinations at the end of Year 11. GCSE Spanish has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.</p>
Assessment	<p>Listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier) • 40 marks (Foundation Tier), 50 marks (Higher Tier) • 25% of the GCSE <p>(Each exam includes 5 minutes' reading time of the question paper before the listening stimulus is played.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally • Section B – questions in Spanish, to be answered in Spanish or non-verbally <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-exam assessment • 7–9 minutes (Foundation Tier) + preparation time • 10–12 minutes (Higher Tier) + preparation time • 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier) • 25% of the GCSE • Role-play – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 2 minutes at Higher Tier) • Photo card – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 3 minutes at Higher Tier) • General conversation – 30 marks (3–5 minutes at Foundation Tier; 5–7 minutes at Higher Tier) <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour (Higher Tier) • 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier) • 25% of the GCSE • Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally • Section B – questions in Spanish, to be answered in Spanish or non-verbally • Section C – translation from Spanish into English (a minimum of 35 words for Foundation Tier and 50 words for Higher Tier)

	Writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 1 hour (Foundation Tier), 1 hour 15 minutes (Higher Tier) • 50 marks at Foundation Tier and 60 marks at Higher Tier • 25% of the GCSE 			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Interpreter / Translator	Teacher	International business	International law
Unique Selling Point	<p>NSWL offers a variety of experiences for our language learners. Students will be able to take part in a Spanish theatre production. They will be offered the opportunity to participate in school trips to Spain and to engage in a pen pal exchange with students in a Spanish high school.</p> <p>NSWL also celebrates European Day of Languages every year.</p>			
Further Information	Ms Johnson			

GCSE Punjabi



Subject	GCSE Punjabi
Exam Board	AQA Punjabi (8683)
Overview	<p>Our objective is to enable students of all abilities to develop their French language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.</p> <p>The GCSE course covers three main themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and culture, • Local, national, international and global areas of interest • Current and future study and employment
Course Structure	<p>The course is linear with final examinations at the end of Year 11. GCSE Punjabi has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.</p>
Assessment	<p>Listening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 35 minutes (Foundation Tier), 45 minutes (Higher Tier) • 40 marks (Foundation Tier), 50 marks (Higher Tier) • 25% of the GCSE <p>(Each exam includes 5 minutes' reading time of the question paper before the listening stimulus is played.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally • Section B – questions in Panjabi, to be answered in Panjabi or non-verbally <p>Speaking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-exam assessment • 7–9 minutes (Foundation Tier) + preparation time • 10–12 minutes (Higher Tier) + preparation time • 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier) • 25% of the GCSE • Role-play – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 2 minutes at Higher Tier) • Photo card – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 3 minutes at Higher Tier) • General conversation – 30 marks (3–5 minutes at Foundation Tier; 5–7 minutes at Higher Tier) <p>Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written exam: 45 minutes (Foundation Tier), 1 hour (Higher Tier) • 60 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher Tier) • 25% of the GCSE • Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally • Section B – questions in Panjabi, to be answered in Panjabi or non-verbally • Section C – translation from Panjabi into English (a minimum of 35 words for Foundation Tier and 50 words for Higher Tier)

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Career Opportunities and Further Education	Interpreter / Translator	Teacher	International business	International law
Unique Selling Point	Students at Nishkam will be able to play an important role in setting up links with a school in a Punjabi-speaking area abroad and support it through charitable works. They will also be able to take part in a pen pal project with a school in a Panjabi-speaking region.			
Further Information	Ms Johal			

7. Subject Pages (Options)

GCSE Geography



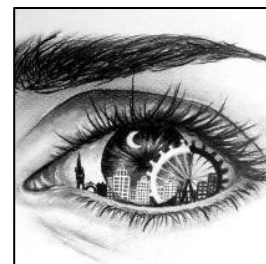
Subject	GCSE Geography			
Exam Board	Edexcel B (1GB0)			
Overview	<p>Geography allows students to explore the world from their classroom. Students have the opportunity to develop and explore their understanding of places, processes and interactions between people and the environment. Geography enables young people to become globally and environmentally informed and thoughtful citizens, whilst creating enquiring minds equipped with a range of transferable skills. These skills allow students to respond with confidence to the demands of undergraduate study and the world of work. They include creativity, decision making, critical thinking, analysis, conflict resolution, negotiation, intercultural sensitivity, cartographic skills, data collection and statistical skills.</p>			
Course Structure	The course is linear, students will complete 3 examinations at the end of Year 11.			
Assessment	<p><u>Competent 1</u>- Global Geographical Issues <u>Topic 1</u>- Hazardous Earth <u>Topic 2</u>- Development dynamics – Case Study- India <u>Topic 3</u>- Challenges of an urbanising world – Case Study- Mumbai Written examination - 1 hour 30 minutes 37.5% of the GCSE</p> <p><u>Component 2</u>- UK Geographical Issues <u>Topic 4</u>- The UK's evolving physical landscape- Coastal change and conflict and River processes and pressures <u>Topic 5</u>- The UK's evolving human landscape- Case Study- London <u>Topic 6</u>- Geographical Investigations- One physical fieldwork investigation (coastal conflict) and one human fieldwork investigation (a dynamic urban area) Written examination - 1 hour 30 minutes 37.5% of the GCSE</p> <p><u>Component 3</u>- People and Environment Issues- Making Geographical Decisions <u>Topic 7</u>- People and the biosphere <u>Topic 8</u> – Forests under threat <u>Topic 9</u>- Consuming energy resources Written examination - 1 hour 30 minutes 25% of the GCSE</p>			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Engineer	Lawyer	Archaeologist	Pilot
Unique Selling Point	As part of the Geography curriculum students will have the opportunity to expand and develop the knowledge and skills gained in the classroom by participating in 2 fieldtrips. One to a coastal location, where they will study coastal change and conflict in action and the other a comparison of 2 dynamic urban areas.			
Further Information	Ms Tekin			

GCSE History



Subject	GCSE History			
Exam Board	Edexcel			
Overview	GCSE History is an opportunity for students to discover the past through both breadth and depth studies. The GCSE course looks at British and International History and allows students to broaden their understanding of the past and how it has influenced the world in which we live today. GCSE History builds on skills that have been embedded at Key Stage 3 and offers students the exciting opportunity to examine change across time. GCSE History offers an excellent foundation for study at A level and beyond.			
Course Structure	Students will sit three papers at the end of Year 11. Each paper is a written examination and will focus on different historical skills. Source work, analysis, narrative accounts and evaluation are key skills which will be examined.			
Assessment	<p>Paper 1 Thematic study and historic environment: Migrants in Britain, c800–present and Notting Hill c1948–c1970 Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes 30% of the GCSE</p>	<p>Paper 2 Period study and British depth study Early Elizabethan England, 1558–88 Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91 Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes 40% of the GCSE</p>	<p>Paper 3 Modern depth study Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39 Written examination: 1 hour and 20 minutes Written examination: 1 hour 20 minutes 30%* of the GCSE</p>	
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Economics	Law	International Relations	Museums and Galleries
Unique Selling Point	History offers the opportunity to develop a wide range of transferable skills. The ability to communicate effectively, to sustain an argument, to analyse, research and to problem solve are all skills that will help pupils in all future endeavours. Understanding the past is crucial to understating both the present and the future. Studying History will give you a more balanced outlook on the world and will provide you with skills that will be drawn upon in a wide range of careers. There will be opportunities for talks and lectures, links with Universities, workshops to develop study skills and educational visits throughout Years 10 and 11.			
Further Information	Ms Banks			

GCSE Art, Craft & Design



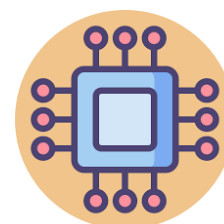
Subject	GCSE Art, Craft & Design			
Exam Board	AQA Art and Design (Art, craft and design) 8201			
Overview	<p>Vibrant and dynamic, this course will give you the freedom to explore GCSE Art and Design in ways that inspire and bring out the best in you, whilst equipping you with the skills to continue the subject with confidence at AS, A Level and beyond.</p> <p>This title promotes learning across a variety of experiences and through various processes, tools, techniques, materials and resources to generate different kinds of evidence of working and outcomes. Emphasis is on an increased breadth of approach commensurate in demand with the other titles.</p> <p>Students must explore and create work associated with areas of study from at least two titles listed: Fine art, Graphic communication, Textile design, Three-dimensional design, Photography.</p>			
Course Structure	This course is completed over two years, all sketchbook and preparatory work will be created during this time contributing to your final grade. There is one exam at the end of the course.			
Assessment	<p>Component 1 (Coursework Unit): 60%</p> <p>What is assessed? A portfolio that in total shows explicit coverage of the four assessment objectives. It must include a sustained project evidencing the journey from initial engagement to the realisation of intentions and a selection of further work undertaken during the student's course of study.</p> <p>How is it assessed? No time limit 96 marks 60% of the GCSE</p>		<p>Component 2 (Exam Unit): 40%</p> <p>What is assessed? Students respond to their chosen starting point from an externally set assignment paper relating to their subject title, evidencing coverage of all four assessment objectives.</p> <p>How is it assessed? Preparatory period followed by 10 hours of supervised time 96 marks 40% of the GCSE</p>	
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Artist	Architect	Games and App designer	Web designer
Unique Selling Point	GCSE Art, Craft and Design students will be visiting galleries, meeting artists and choosing their own projects and focus according to their interests.			
Further Information	Ms Khalsa			

GCSE Business Studies



Subject	GCSE Business Studies			
Exam Board	Edexcel			
Overview	Business is an exciting course, in which you will be academically challenged and encouraged to develop entrepreneurial skill. You will learn about how businesses operate within the business environment, and about their strategies for success. You will explore all elements of business, from finance and human resources, to marketing and production. You will apply your knowledge to different businesses throughout the course to develop an excellent understanding of businesses we engage with every day.			
Course Structure	The course is linear, students will complete 3 examinations at the end of Year 11.			
Assessment	Theme 1- Investigating a small business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Written examination - 1 hour 45 minutes. 50% of the GCSE</p>		Theme 2- Building a business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>Written examination - 1 hour 45 minutes. 50% of the GCSE</p>	
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Accounting	Real estate	Human Resources	Marketing
Unique Selling Point	This course will give you an insight into how to run and own your own business, alongside meeting some of the best minds in Business for example Peter Jones from Dragon's Den.			
Further Information	Mr Kerrisk			

GCSE Computer Science



Subject	GCSE Computer Science		
Exam Board	Eduqas		
Overview	<p>Computer Science is engaging and practical, encouraging creativity and problem solving. It encourages students to develop their understanding and application of the core concepts in Computer Science. Students also analyse problems in computational terms and devise creative solutions by designing, writing, testing and evaluating programs.</p>		
Course Structure	<p>This linear qualification is assessed in Year 11. The assessment is structured as a written examination for Unit 1 Understanding Computer Science, and an on-screen examination for Unit 2 Computational Thinking.</p>		
Assessment	<p><u>Unit 1: Understanding Computer Science</u></p> <p>1 hour 45 minutes written examination for 50% of the qualification.</p> <p>This unit investigates hardware, logical operations, communication, data representation and data types, operating systems, principles of programming, software engineering, program construction, security and data management and the impacts of digital technology on wider society.</p>	<p><u>Unit 2: Computational Thinking and Programming</u></p> <p>2 hour on-screen examination for 50% of the qualification.</p> <p>This unit investigates problem solving, algorithms and programming constructs, programming languages, data structures and data types and security and authentication.</p>	
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Software Engineer	Cybersecurity Analyst	Systems Manager
Unique Selling Point	<p>Computer Science students will compete in the international Brebas Computational Thinking Challenge. Students will have opportunities to visit Bletchley Park; the World War 2 home of code breaking. On our doorstep the Sky Academy Studios allows a hands-on experience in collaborating to create innovative multimedia content.</p>		
Further Information	Mr Parnell		

GCSE Drama



Subject	Drama GCSE
Exam Board	AQA
Overview	Students learn to collaborate with others, think analytically and evaluate effectively. They gain the confidence to pursue their own ideas, reflect and refine their efforts. Whatever the future holds, students of GCSE Drama emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills, applicable both in further studies and in the workplace.
Course Structure	<p>Our GCSE Drama course offers students the opportunity to explore Drama as a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention. Students will create, perform and respond to Drama informed by their theoretical knowledge of Drama and Theatre. The subject content details the knowledge, understanding and skills that students are expected to develop throughout the course of study.</p> <p>The subject content for GCSE Drama is divided into three components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding drama 2. Devising drama 3. Texts in practice <p>This specification ensures continuity for students progressing from GCSE Drama to AS and A-level Drama and Theatre. Students who go on to AS or A-level are already familiar with studying a whole set text for the written paper. They have built solid foundations in reviewing a live theatre production and in interpreting key extracts.</p>
Assessment	<p>Component 1: Understanding drama – This component is a written exam in which students are assessed on their knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed (AO3), including in connection to a set play and on their ability to analyse and evaluate the live theatre work of others (AO4).</p> <p>The paper constitutes 40% of the GCSE. Students have 1 hour 45 minutes to answer the paper. The paper is divided into three compulsory sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A: Theatre roles and terminology • Section B: Study of set text • Section C: Live theatre production. <p>In the exam, students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject content.</p>

	<p>Component 2: Devising drama – This is a practical component in which students are assessed on their ability to create and develop ideas to communicate meaning for theatrical performance (AO1), apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance (AO2) and analyse and evaluate their own work (AO4). Component 2 constitutes 40% of the GCSE. It is marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.</p> <p>For this component students are required to complete the following two assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce an individual ‘devising log’ documenting the devising process • contribute to a final devised duologue or group performance. <p>The devising log is marked out of 60. Each student's contribution to the final devised performance is marked out of 20.</p>			
	<p>Component 3: Texts in practice – This component is a practical component in which students are assessed on their ability to apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance (AO2). Component 3 constitutes 20% of the GCSE. It is marked by AQA.</p> <p>For this component students must complete two assessment tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • study and present a key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance) • study and present a second key extract (monologue, duologue or group performance) from the same play. <p>Each student's contribution to each key extract performance is marked out of 20.</p>			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Actor	Director/playwright	TV/Radio Presenter	Teacher
Unique Selling Point	Nishkam GCSE Drama students will have the opportunity to watch two live theatre productions and meet a guest speaker from within the industry, who will run a question-and-answer session with them.			
Further Information	Ms Stafford			

GCSE Film Studies



Subject	GCSE Film Studies
Exam Board	WJEC
Overview	Film is an important part of many people's lives. Those who choose to study it characteristically bring with them a huge enthusiasm and excitement for film which constantly motivates them in their studies. They experience a powerful medium which inspires a range of responses from the emotional to the reflective as they are drawn into characters, their narratives and the issues films raise. Film is an exciting and vibrant area of study that uniquely combines the skills of analysis with the skills of creativity and idea-generation. Film is culture, history, the arts and literature all in one course.
Course Structure	Learners will develop their knowledge of US mainstream film by studying one film from the 1950s and one film from the later 70s and 80s, thus looking at two stages in Hollywood's development. In addition, they will be studying more recent films – a US independent film as well as films from Europe, including the UK, South Africa and Australia. They will also develop skills of screenwriting as part of a coursework unit.
Assessment	<p>Component 1: Key Developments in US Film Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 35% of qualification Assessment consists of four questions on one pair of US mainstream films and one US independent film: Section A: US film comparative study Section B: Key developments in film and film technology</p> <p>Component 2: Global Film: Narrative, Representation and Film Style Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 35% of qualification This component assesses knowledge and understanding of three global films produced outside the US chosen from a range of options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A: Global English language film • Section B: Global non-English language film • Section C: Contemporary UK film. <p>Component 3: Production Non-exam assessment 30% of qualification Learners produce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one genre-based film extract (either from a film or from a screenplay) • one evaluative analysis of the production <p>Assessment overview Learners must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of elements of film • Apply knowledge and understanding of elements of film. • Apply knowledge and understanding of elements of film to the production of a screenplay.

Career Opportunities and Further Education	Film Production Roles	Journalism / Broadcasting / Media	Teaching	Other Creative Industries
Further Information	Ms Sehijpal			

GCSE Music



Subject	GCSE Music			
Exam Board	Eduqas			
Overview	<p>Do you enjoy performing music? Would you like to create and compose your own musical ideas? Are you keen to improve your theory skills in music? Are you interested in music across different styles and time periods?</p> <p>GCSE Music is based on the three skills of performing, (playing and instrument/singing), composing (writing your own music) and listening and appraising (demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of how music works).</p> <p>The course will enable you to develop knowledge and understanding of music through four areas of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Musical Forms and Devices • Music for Ensemble • Film Music • Popular Music 			
Course Structure	This is a linear qualification, consisting of three units. All assessments must be taken at the end of the course.			
Assessment	<p>Performing (30%) Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes This will demonstrate your ability to play independently (solo), as well as with others (ensemble).</p> <p>Composing (30%) Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes You will submit two compositions: one set by the exam board and one being a "free choice".</p> <p>Appraising written examination (40%) 1 hour 15 minutes You will demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical contexts (when, why and how music is written) and musical language.</p> <p>This also includes questions on two set works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badinerie by J.S.Bach for Flute and String Orchestra with Harpsichord (Final movement, Orchestral Suite No.2 in B minor, BWV 1067) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ufehp7gULA • Africa: Toto (released 1982) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kb7IAMjFuA0 			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Musician	Teacher	Composer	Sound engineer

Unique Selling Point	Students will have the opportunity to attend two live performances: one classical (at the Royal Albert Hall) and one linked with musical theatre (in the West End)
Further Information	Mr McCarthy

GCSE Sociology



Subject	GCSE Sociology			
Exam Board	AQA			
Overview	GCSE Sociology gives pupils the unique ability to understand the complex societies in which we live today. Pupils will develop a broad understanding of social theory and will be able to apply it to the topics we study. Pupils will study the sociology of families, education, crime and deviance and social stratification. Pupils will also study a range of sociological research methods and understand how sociologists produce their findings.			
Course Structure	Students will sit two papers at the end of Year 11. Each paper is a written examination and consists of a mixture of short and extended answers. Each paper is worth 50% of the final grade.			
Assessment	Paper 1 The sociology of families and education -The sociology of families -The sociology of education -Relevant areas of social theory and methodology Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes 100 marks 50% of GCSE		Paper 2 The sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification -The sociology of crime and deviance -The sociology of social stratification -Relevant areas of social theory and methodology Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes 100 marks 50% of GCSE	
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Criminology	Law	Social Work	Market Research
Unique Selling Point	Studying GCSE Sociology gives pupils a unique awareness of how our society works. Pupils will develop a deep understanding of the social, political and economic issues that shape society and will be able to make judgments on whether or not we live in a fair and just society. Sociology will help pupils to broaden their minds and see the world in a new and interesting way. Pupils will be challenged to understand different perspectives and to formulate their own convincing opinions on the state of society.			
Further Information	Miss Banks			

Cambridge National Sports Studies



Subject	Cambridge National Sport Studies	
Exam Board	OCR (J813)	
Overview	Sport Studies encompasses some core sport/physical education themes. Students have the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge about different types of sport and physical activity, skill development and sports leadership to their own practical performance. They will learn about contemporary issues in sport such as funding, participation, ethics and role models, and sport and the media. Students will develop an appreciation of the importance of sport locally and nationally, different ways of being involved in sport and of how this shapes the sports industry.	
Course Structure	The Cambridge National provides an excellent start for vocational study and enables progression to Level 3 qualifications or A Levels. The qualification is equivalent to a GCSE in both time and rigour.	
Assessment	<p>Students must complete two mandatory units.</p> <p>R184: In this unit, students will learn about a range of topical and contemporary issues in sport, relating to; participation levels and barriers, promotion of values and ethical behaviour, the role of high-profile sporting events, the role of national governing bodies and how technology is used within sport. This unit is externally assessed through OCR set tasks and a marked 1 hour 15 minutes exam (60 marks) worth 25% of the course.</p> <p>R185: In this unit, students will learn how to develop their skills as both a performer, in two different sporting activities, and as a leader in one activity. As a leader they will have the opportunity to plan, deliver and review safe and effective sporting activity sessions. They also have the opportunity to develop a range of transferable skills. (70 marks)</p> <p>Students will work both independently and as part of a team, including communicating with team mates as well as being in front of an audience when they perform. They will perform under pressure, both as a participant and as a leader, and will use their initiative to</p>	<p>Students select one optional unit (each 40 marks).</p> <p>R186: Sport and the media students will learn to explore media sources and apply real life examples to demonstrate the nature of the relationship between media and sport. They will develop their ability to evaluate and interpret the different ways in which sport is represented by the media.</p> <p>R187: students will learn how to find out information about what opportunities there are in their local area, as well as nationally in the UK, for all different types of activities. They will learn how you can benefit from and enjoy activities safely by finding out what equipment, clothing, facilities and technology you need, as well as completing planning to help keep them safe.</p>

	solve problems and make decisions. They will also deal with rapidly changing conditions and situations. (80 marks)			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Sports Media	Teacher	Sports Marketing	Sports Coach
Unique Selling Point	Sport is a high-profile and expanding industry and there is a growing need for qualified professionals. Sports Studies offers Students the solid foundation required for further study or progression into industry. Students develop a wide range of transferable skills i.e. communication, problem solving and team working.			
Further Information	Ms Kelly			

Hospitality & Catering



Subject	WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering (Technical Award)			
Exam Board	WJEC 5409			
Overview	This course offers an exciting insight into the hospitality and catering industry where you can unveil your creativity through the art of food. It is a perfect opportunity for those who love to cook and bake wonderful dishes. This course is split between an exam, coursework and practical work. You will be able to take pictures of the food you cook to show your family and to use in college interviews should you wish to continue your studies in the subject area.			
Course Structure	Through the two units, students will gain an overview of the hospitality and catering industry and the type of job that may be available to assist them in making choices about progression. Successful completion could support entry to qualifications that develop specific skills for work in hospitality and catering.			
Assessment	<p>Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry Exam - 1 hour 20 minutes 40% of the overall grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how food can cause ill health • Understand the importance of nutrition when planning meals • Understand menu planning • Understand the environment in which hospitality and catering providers operate • Understand how hospitality and catering provision meets health and safety requirements <p>Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action Written coursework (with 20% practical work)-12 hours 60% of the overall grade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of commodities • Produce dishes to be served on a range of different menus • Plan, trial, prepare, cook and serve a three-course meal or range of dishes for a target group, or target catering outlet • Portfolio of evidence to back up the choice of dishes made with reference to the specific nutritional needs of the target group 			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Chef	Nutritionist	Dietician	Food Scientist / Technologist
Unique Selling Point	Students will have the exciting opportunity to visit a hotel, restaurant, and a local event linked to the hospitality and catering sector. Nishkam Food and Nutrition supports a local charity 'Nisham SWAT', so all students will cook a meal for the homeless. A guest 'Chef' will be invited for a talk and live demonstration showing culinary skills.			
Further Information	Mrs Johal			

BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise



Subject	BTEC Enterprise			
Exam Board	Edexcel			
Overview	Students will develop knowledge and understanding of real businesses by applying their learning and skills to a work-related context. Students can explore what it means to set up and run a Business Enterprise, as well as develop key skills and gain an insight into industry sectors. This course is a practical introduction to life and work as an entrepreneur and students will develop an aptitude in planning and carrying out an enterprise activity, develop the knowledge that underpins the effective use of skills that can affect the performance of an enterprise and develop a sound business plan.			
Course Structure	Students will study a broad range of essential aspects of business including finance, product development, advertising, and customer service. Skills such as budgeting, calculating costs and financial management will help students when running a business but they are also transferrable, practical skills useful to students in everyday life.			
Assessment	<p>Component 1 – Exploring Enterprise (Internally assessed) Students will examine different enterprises to develop knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of enterprises and the skills needed by entrepreneurs. You will explore how market research helps enterprises to meet customer needs, understand competitor behaviour and investigate the factors that contribute to the success of an enterprise. Internally assessed – 30% of the course</p> <p>Component 2 - Planning for and Running an Enterprise (Internally assessed) In this unit, you will select an enterprise idea to plan, pitch for and run. You will explore ideas for a micro enterprise activity, plan for a micro enterprise activity, and pitch for a micro enterprise activity and eventually operate a micro enterprise activity as a part of a practical assessment. Internally assessed – 30% of the course</p> <p>Component 3 – Promotion and Finance for Enterprise (Externally assessed) You will be provided with a case study of a small to medium enterprise and then complete a series of activities. You will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of elements of promotion and financial records, interpret and use promotional and financial information in relation to a given enterprise and make connections between different factors. Externally assessed examination – 40% of the course</p>			
Career Opportunities and Further Education	Marketing	Accountancy	Business Management	Business Owner
Unique Selling Point	This course will give you an insight into how to run and own your own business, alongside meeting some of the best minds in Business for example Peter Jones from Dragon's Den.			
Further Information	Mr Seraphin			

8. Frequently Asked Questions

Why do I have to make choices?

As you have progressed through Key Stage 3, you have studied all the available subjects, but now you will reduce the number of subjects you studying and we will offer you a selection of subjects you haven't previously studied. The reason is that we want you to concentrate on subjects that are (i) vital to your future – this is why you all continue to study English, Maths, Science and RE, and (ii) interesting and relevant to you personally; you have the chance to 'specialise' more than in Key Stage 3.

What is the core curriculum that all students follow in Years 10 and 11?

All students continue to study English, Mathematics, Science and RE through timetabled lessons. Students continue to take part in timetabled PE lessons, although these do not lead to a qualification. PSHCE and work-related learning also form part of the curriculum through cross-curricular links and other experiences (such as work experience).

How many option choices do I have?

Students must make 3 choices plus 2 reserve choices. The vast majority of students will study at least one language and either History or Geography (although students may study both if they wish).

Is PE in the core, or an option?

Both. All students have core PE. It is also possible to opt for a qualification in PE – Sport Studies, run by the Cambridge board.

How do I know what subjects to take?

There is lots of guidance available and you will have a specific guidance interview to discuss your option choices. Read the options brochure and talk to your teachers and parents.

What is the difference between GCSEs and vocational courses (Level 1 & 2 courses with longer names)?

GCSEs are 'level 2' qualifications where the grades 9 to 1 are achievable. Vocational courses are also level 2 courses and are equivalent to GCSEs but have other titles such as Certificate, Award or Diploma. Grades awarded for vocational courses are typically Distinction*, Distinction, Merit and Pass. All vocational courses have strong links to careers in specific areas.

Will I definitely get my option choices?

We will do our best to accommodate all your option choices. You may have to take one of your 'reserve' courses, however, if any of the following factors apply:

- Not enough students choose to study a particular course, so it cannot run
- We advise strongly against you taking a course because, based on our knowledge of you from Key Stage 3, we may feel the course is unsuitable for you.