



KEY STAGE 4 SUBJECT CHOICES 2024



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WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL



I am delighted to introduce you to the 2024 Key Stage 4 Subject Choice Information Booklet. This booklet, as well as other relevant information provided by our Careers Department, will help guide you through the process of selecting your pathways for the next academic year at Victoria College.

The subject choices you make on entry to Year 11 are an important decision that will require careful thought and consideration. Perhaps more significantly, however, they are an exciting opportunity for you to consider the impact you can make in the next two years at Victoria.

I wish you all the best in selecting your Subject Choices for 2024/2025.

Mrs K Quinn Principal

WELCOME FROM THE HEAD OF CAREERS



It has been very interesting and enjoyable working with you all in Careers lessons and discussing your future pathways in our Careers interviews. You have been exploring options including those in Further Education, Apprenticeships and Higher Education. In particular, you have been encouraged to

explore the subjects and grades required at Level 2 in order to progress to Level 3, and the entry requirements for Further and Higher Education. Of course, the choices you make now will have an impact in the longer term. Success at Level 2 (GCSE) is necessary in order to facilitate progression on to Level 3 qualifications (A level or BTEC L3). Therefore, we have encouraged you to choose strategically in order to keep your future options as open as possible.

In most cases you now know which subjects are required for particular career pathways. Once these Option subjects have been added to the compulsory subjects, you are usually left with only one or two Option subjects to decide upon. This booklet is an essential tool in helping you to arrive at that decision. I look forward to continuing to work with all of you over the coming months as you prepare to transition to Key Stage 4. Good luck with your subject selection!

Mr RA O'Brien Head of Careers

SUBJECT CHOICE AT KS4

The College aims to ensure that each pupil follows a broad and balanced curriculum keeping open as many future pathways as possible. We encourage pupils to study those subjects which they enjoy and have a clear aptitude for and we endeavour to offer flexibility and choice in order to meet pupils' needs. Pupils will be advised to follow the most appropriate range and number of courses to prepare them for sixth form study and their future career pathway.

In Northern Ireland there is a requirement for all pupils to follow a course in English, Mathematics, Religious Studies, Physical Education and Learning for Life and Work.

All pupils study:

- GCSE Mathematics, GCSE English Language;
- GCSE Religious Studies;
- Learning for Life & Work (non-certificated – no examination);
- Physical Education (non-certificated), except those who opt for it as a full GCSE.

At Victoria College the majority of pupils will also study English Literature. In addition, a number of pupils will have the opportunity to study Further Mathematics and this will be offered to those students in May of Year 10.

Pupils now have a choice of 5 subjects from the lists below, studied in 6 periods over two weeks. We strongly recommend that all pupils pursue at least one Science and a Modern Language.

OPTIONAL

Art and Design
Business Studies
Digital Technology
Drama
Food and Nutrition
Geography
Health and Social Care
History
Music
Physical Education
Technology and Design
Travel and Tourism

LANGUAGE

French
Spanish

SCIENCE

Biology
Chemistry
Physics
Science (Single Award)

Your choices will give you a total of **9 subjects, 10 if you study Further Mathematics**. We will always try to facilitate a pupil's choice of subjects, but it will not be possible for us to provide every subject combination. If you choose such a combination, you will be advised of this and asked to make an alternative choice. The final decision with regard to the curriculum offer for each pupil rests with the College, taking into account class size, availability of staff and appropriateness of the course for each pupil. Evidence of commitment and aptitude based on performance in school examinations will be considered.

What Happens if the Subject I want to Study is Undersubscribed?

There should be a minimum of 18 students in a GCSE class to ensure that it will be delivered. Where the uptake for a subject falls below, students may be asked to choose another subject.

What Happens if the Subject I Want to Study is Oversubscribed?

Where there are more than 30 pupils (or in the case of a practical subject more than 24 pupils) criteria as set by the Head of Subject will be applied in order to select pupils.

Such criteria may include:

- Academic profile including performance in school examinations
- Attitude to learning
- Behaviour record
- Attendance
- Chosen career pathway

HOW DO I CHOOSE MY KS4 SUBJECTS?

At KS4 you will study for Level 2 qualifications – GCSE, or in the case of Travel & Tourism, a BTEC First Award.

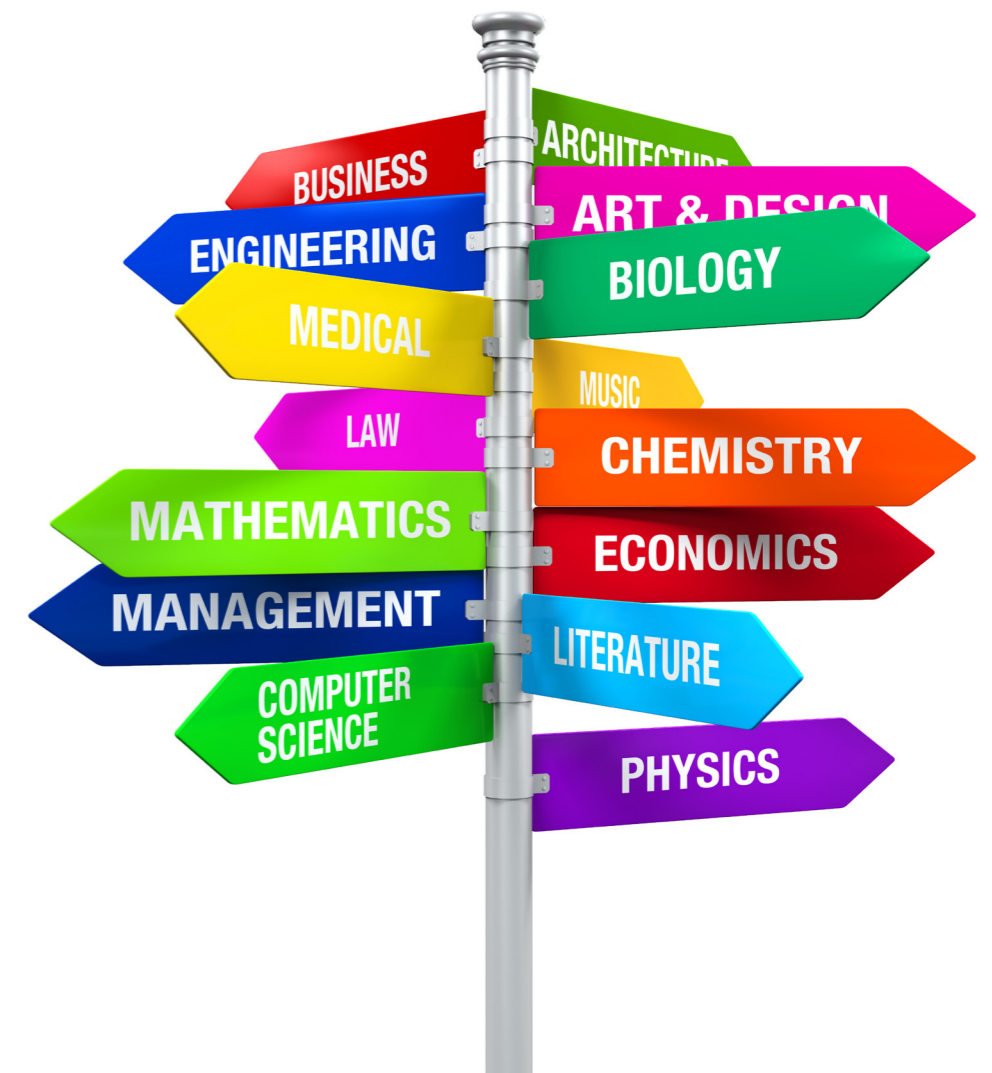
- GCSEs (General Certificate of Secondary Education) are important Level 2 qualifications required for progression to A levels, Further and Higher Education, apprenticeships and employment.
- GCSE English and Mathematics at grade C or better are required for entry to university. Universities in the Republic of Ireland require a GCSE MFL qualification for many courses.
- A high grade at GCSE is required in a particular (or equivalent) subject in order to study that subject at A Level. Specific subjects are required at A level in some cases in order to apply for specific degree courses.

Making Choices

You will spend a long time studying each of your subjects, so it is well worth taking time to find out all you can about them, before you make your choices. You should:

- Consult Careers staff, teachers, family and friends.
- Consult teaching staff, including Heads of Department.
- Research your options carefully before you make choices.
- Consult the NI Careers Service.

Think of KS4 qualifications as keys which will open some doors. The difficulty is that you are not yet sure which doors you will want to open. Therefore, you don't know which keys to choose. Obviously the bigger the bunch, the more doors you will be able to open.



Factors Influencing Subject Choice

- Firstly, choose subjects that you need in order to apply for your preferred FE/HE course e.g. Art and Design for Architecture and for Art Degrees and Foundation Diplomas.
- Choose subjects that you like and are good at. Evidence will come from recent assessments, tracking and feedback from your teachers.

Modern Languages

Many universities and employers recognise the importance of having a qualification in a modern language. At the end of Year 11, some pupils who are finding it difficult to make progress in their GCSE Modern Language course will be encouraged to prepare for an alternative qualification (OCNNI). This allows pupils to focus on other subjects that are more suited to their talents. However, OCNNI does not prepare pupils adequately for A-levels in languages and pupils who pursue this path will not be allowed to continue their study of any language subject to A level. Applicants for competitive courses at top universities may be disadvantaged if they do not have a qualification in a modern language to at least GCSE level. In our global economy the ability to communicate with others is increasingly important and the skills and competencies developed through learning a language are very advantageous.

Universities in the Republic of Ireland often require applicants to have a GCSE in a modern language.

Science

We strongly recommend that each pupil in Victoria College study some form of Science at GCSE/Level 2 level. Some pupils in Year 10 realise that their strengths do not lie in the Sciences and Single Award Science provides a more accessible course. This allows pupils to focus on other subjects that are more suited to their talents. However, Single Award Science does not prepare pupils adequately for A-levels in Science and pupils who select this option will not be allowed to continue their study of any Science subject to A level. Any pupil who is considering a STEM career should opt to study separate Sciences at GCSE level.

Pupils not selecting Single Award Science may select one, two or three of the separate Sciences: Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The way in which the KS4 subjects are grouped, together with the compulsory subjects, has the strong advantage of ensuring that your own personal timetable is balanced – i.e. it ensures that you will study a wide range of subjects. This means that, later on, you will have a good choice of post-16 options including BTECS, A levels, university and college courses and careers.

For admission to many university courses, good A-level grades in any subjects are suitable. However, many university courses require particular subjects at A Level or BTEC L3 and in many cases you will need to have studied those subjects at KS4 (GCSE/BTEC L2) to be able to go on to study them at A Level/BTEC L3. Therefore, it is really important that you do your own research.

Reference Books at School:

- Degree Course Guide (Brian Heap)
- Choosing Your Degree Course and University (Brian Heap)
- University Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries (Brian Heap)
- The Times Good University Guide
- The Guardian Good University Guide
- The Ultimate University Ranking Guide
- CRAC Degree Course Guides
- Trotman 'Getting Into' Guides

Useful Career Websites:

www.careersserviceni.com – a Northern Ireland based careers website to help you and your parents make informed choices about your future career path.

www.ucas.com – a comprehensive guide to all the degree-courses and diplomas offered by UK universities and colleges.

www.ccea.org.uk – for information about qualifications offered at GCSE and A-level.

www.qualifax.ie – information about Further and Higher Education, training and career paths in the Republic of Ireland.

www.cao.ie – information about applying to universities and other Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Ireland.

www.careersportal.ie – information on career planning, work and employment.

<http://bestcourse4me.com>

<http://russellgroup.ac.uk>

www.nidirect.gov.uk/careers

www.careersbox.co.uk/

<http://ccskills.org.uk/careers>

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/

<http://careersthatmove.co.uk/>

<http://hospitalityguild.co.uk/uksp>

<http://investigatecareers.com> (password: amazon)

• <https://youtube.com/ucasonline>

• <https://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>

• <http://www.ukcoursefinder.com/>

• <http://www.delni.gov.uk/studentfinance>

• <http://www.prospects.ac.uk/>

You can find UCAS on Instagram, X, YouTube, LinkedIn, Facebook and Pinterest



ART AND DESIGN (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>During the course pupils will use a broad range of materials, media and processes which may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drawing (pencil, pastels, inks) • Painting • Various forms of printing (lino, screen, mono) • Photography • Ceramics • Textiles (embroidery, batik and felting) • Modelling (wire, paper maché, card, plaster) • Computer design • 3D design <p>Artists, designers and craft people visit the classroom and every opportunity will be taken to involve the pupils in the contemporary world of Art and Design. It helps if you have a lively imagination, good technical skills, a willingness to experiment and a great deal of enthusiasm.</p>	<p>Coursework Unit 1 Part A Exploratory Portfolio Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of formal visual elements through practical skills. They explore media, techniques and processes in a range of disciplines.</p> <p>Coursework Unit 1 Part B Core Skills Students become increasingly skilled at developing ideas, applying understanding of relevant practices, refining their ideas, recording as they go and using visual language critically.</p> <p>Unit 2: Externally Set Assignment Students respond to a stimulus paper that is released in early January of the examination year.</p> <p>Assessment: Coursework – 60% External Set Assignment – 40%</p>



Transferable skills	Communication, problem-solving, time-management, technical & manipulative skills, inventiveness, initiative and creative skills.
Career Link	For those pupils who wish to progress to study Art and Design at Higher Education level it will be essential to study Art at A-level. For Architecture, it will be necessary to produce an art portfolio and this can be accomplished through the GCSE course. A qualification in Art is useful for computer-aided design, marketing and the media and communications sector.

Mrs H Clarke Head of Art & Design

BIOLOGY (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The GCSE Biology course covers many different topics grouped into three units:</p> <p>Unit 1: Cells, Living Processes and Biodiversity Unit 2: Body Systems, Genetics, Microorganisms and Health Unit 3: Practical Skills</p>	<p>Practical work is an integral part of GCSE Biology. Students carry out practical tasks, as well as nine prescribed practicals, over the two-year course, giving them opportunities to develop their observational, practical, enquiry and problem-solving skills. They also learn to evaluate claims based on science, both qualitatively and quantitatively, by critically analysing the methodology, evidence and conclusions.</p> <p>Assessment: Unit 1 – external written examination worth 35% Unit 2 – external written examination worth 40% Unit 3 – includes an externally marked practical skills assessment (Booklet A) worth 7.5% and a practical theory external written examination (Booklet B) worth 17.5%.</p> <p>Note: Booklet A, students carry out two practical tasks in the laboratory. Booklet B is a written examination, with questions based on any of the nine prescribed practical tasks and any other practical tasks from the specification.</p>

Transferable skills	This subject allows the development of: Communication, application of number, use of information technology, working with others, problem solving, analysis, evaluation and independent learning.
Career Link	There are certain degree courses for which it is essential to have an A-level in Biology including most Healthcare degrees. There are many other areas of work where a qualification in Biology is useful such as laboratory work, environmental work and many careers in industry. It is important to check out the exact science requirements for any job you are considering.



Mrs C Smyth Head of Biology

BUSINESS STUDIES (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>Studying Business Studies will help students gain knowledge and understanding of businesses, how they operate and the roles of the various stakeholders. Students will learn how businesses start up, what is required to keep them going and the challenges they face.</p> <p>Unit 1 Starting a Business Unit 2 Developing a Business Unit 3 Planning a Business</p> <p>It cultivates an understanding of ethical, social and cultural issues by developing students' awareness of the way businesses are managed and use their resources. It will provide an insight into the wider environment in which businesses operate.</p>	<p>Internally Assessed One assignment, internally assessed and externally moderated. Percentage assessment weighting - 20%</p> <p>Assessment: Two written papers - 80% Controlled Assessment - 20%</p>
Transferable skills	Communication, application of number, information technology, working with others, time management and problem solving.
Career Link	Studying Business Studies is useful if you are interested in any career in business, whether in finance, marketing or retailing. There are a wide range of business-related courses after Year 12 and at degree level. However, although a GCSE in Business Studies provides a sound base for progression to AS and A-level, it is not necessary to have previously studied the subject.

Mr E Thompson Head of Business Studies

CHEMISTRY (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>GCSE Chemistry is offered as a unitised course.</p> <p>Unit 1 (Foundation/Higher)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structures Trends Chemical Reactions Quantitative Chemistry Analysis <p>Unit 2 (Foundation/Higher)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further Chemical Reactions Rates and Equilibrium Calculations Organic Chemistry <p>Chemistry is a practical subject and we endeavour to carry out as wide a range of experimental work as possible throughout the GCSE course.</p>	<p>Practical skills are assessed in the laboratory and as an external written examination. Both are externally marked.</p> <p>In the laboratory students carry out two pre-release practical experiments, between 1 December and 1 May in the final year of study - this lasts for a maximum of 2 hours.</p> <p>In the written examination students answer a range of questions that require short responses, extended writing and calculations, all set in a practical context.</p> <p>Assessment: Unit 1 (35%) and 2 (40%) written papers are worth a total of 75%. One paper must be taken in the summer of Year 12. One paper may be taken in the summer of Year 11 or in the summer of Year 12. The Practical Skills unit is worth 25% (7.5% for laboratory work and 17.5% for the written examination).</p> <p>Controlled Assessment - 25%</p>
Transferable skills	This subject allows the development of: Communication, application of number, use of information technology, working with others, problem solving, analysis, evaluation and independent learning.
Career Link	There are certain degree courses for which Chemistry is essential, such as dentistry, veterinary medicine and pharmacy. There are many other areas of work where a qualification in Chemistry is useful such as forensics, laboratory work, environmental work and dietetics. It is important to research the science requirements for any degree.



Mrs M Stewart Head of Chemistry

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The GCSE Digital Technology course offers two routes through the subject. The first focuses on Multimedia and the second on Programming. All students will study a compulsory core unit on Digital Technology, followed by two further units depending on the route they follow.</p> <p>Route A: Multimedia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1: Digital Technology – External Examination Unit 2: Digital Authoring Concepts – External Examination Unit 3: Digital Authoring Practice – Controlled Assessment <p>Route B: Programming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit 1: Digital Technology – External Examination Unit 4: Digital Development Concepts – External Examination Unit 5: Digital Development Practice – Controlled Assessment 	<p>Route A: Multimedia</p> <p>Unit 3: Digital Authoring Practice will involve students designing, developing and testing digital multimedia systems, including a website and a database.</p> <p>Route B: Programming</p> <p>Unit 5: Digital Development Practice will involve students designing, developing and testing coded solutions when creating digital systems using the programming language C#</p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p>Two written papers – 70% Controlled Assessment – 30%</p>



Transferable skills	Communication, time-management, application of number, use of applications packages, high order problem solving skills
Career Link	At Post-16 students can study BTEC ICT, which will allow them access to many careers in the field of ICT including, but not limited to, multimedia development and system administration.

Mr N Kavanagh Head of ICT

DRAMA (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The GCSE Drama qualification offers a varied and engaging specification to all pupils with an interest in drama and theatre and those seeking to pursue careers requiring skills in public speaking and/or collaboration with others.</p> <p>Pupils will study the text 'Philadelphia, Here I Come!' by Brian Friel and will have opportunity to see live theatre and participate in workshops by professional practitioners. A written exam will be undertaken in Year 12 exploring pupils' ideas for directing, staging, performing and costuming a production of the Friel play.</p> <p>A Devised Performance will be completed in groups based on a choice of titles released by CCEA in November of Year 11. Pupils must work together to write and rehearse their performance pieces which are recorded before a live audience and sent to CCEA for assessment. Written Controlled Assessment outlining how ideas for performance were formed and developed also serves as part of this unit.</p> <p>The final component of the course is a Scripted Performance which is assessed by a visiting moderator and involves pupils performing their chosen extracts from published plays in their groups.</p>	<p>Coursework consists of the recorded practical performances and the corresponding written Controlled Assessment which analyses the process and outcomes of the devising process.</p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p>Written Exam – 40% Scripted Performance – 35% Devised Performance – 25%</p>

Transferable skills	Team building, decision making, presentation skills, confidence, analysis, discussion skills, leadership, project management, scheduling, working towards deadlines, directing, script writing
Career Link	Drama as a GCSE subject is not necessary to become an actor or a stage technician, but the skills you will gain as detailed above are what employers are looking for in a wide range of careers. These include jobs where meeting people face to face is particularly important, for example, teaching, retail, travel and tourism, sales and marketing, politics, journalism.



Mrs K Martyn Head of Drama

ENGLISH LANGUAGE (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
Unit 1 English Language Examination: Writing for Purpose and Audience and Reading to Access Non-Fiction and Media Texts External written examination 1 hour 45 mins 30%	Unit 2 Speaking and Listening Controlled Assessment Individual Presentation Discussion Role Play 3 tasks 20%
Unit 4 English Language Personal or Creative Writing and Reading Literary and Non-Fiction Texts External written examination 1 hour 45 min 30%	Unit 3 Studying Spoken and Written Language Controlled assessment 2 tasks 20%

Transferable skills	Communication skills including: writing for a range of purposes and audiences; reading for pleasure and understanding; working with others; problem solving; setting long and short term goals; researching; drafting, planning and reviewing; the application of logical analysis; the framing of coherent argument; creative and original thinking.
Career Link	GCSE English grades at A* to C are essential for entry to most Higher Education courses to study at degree/diploma level and for most courses offered by F.E. colleges. A qualification in English is useful and desirable in all careers that recognise skills in verbal and written communication. Careers in which English students have an advantage include Law, Journalism, Marketing, Public Relations, Broadcasting etc.

Mr D McCracken Head of English

ENGLISH LITERATURE (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
Unit 1 – 30% The Study of Prose Examination 1 hour 45 mins Section A: Closed Book. Choice of 2 questions 1 hour – 20% Section B: Analysis of Unseen Prose. 1 set question 45 mins – 10%	Unit 3 – 20% The Study of Shakespeare Controlled Assessment 2 hours A Shakespeare Play One essay on the theme of either Love or Conflict in one Shakespeare play.
Unit 2 – 50% The Study of Drama and Poetry Examination 2 hours Section A: Drama Open Book choice of 2 questions 1 hour – 25% Section B: Poetry Open Book choice of 2 questions 1 hour – 25%	

Transferable skills	Communication skills including: writing for a range of purposes and audiences; reading for pleasure and understanding; working with others; problem solving; setting long and short term goals; researching; drafting, planning and reviewing; the application of logical analysis; the framing of coherent argument; creative and original thinking.
Career Link	GCSE English Literature grades at A* to C are desirable for entry to most Higher Education courses to study at degree/diploma level and for most courses offered by F.E. colleges. A qualification in English and English Literature is useful and desirable in all careers that recognise skills in verbal and written communication. Careers in which English students have an advantage include Law, Journalism, Marketing, Public Relations, Broadcasting etc.

Mr D McCracken Head of English

FOOD AND NUTRITION (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>GCSE Food and Nutrition replaces traditional GCSE Home Economics. Pupils learn about food production, the science behind food, the nutritional content of foods, current nutritional guidelines and dietary needs in our society. Students may choose to progress to A Level Nutrition and Food Science which provides an excellent foundation for a career in food-related industries and health promotion.</p> <p>In the controlled assessment element (worth 50% of the overall GCSE) pupils can demonstrate the practical food skills they acquire during the course.</p>	<p>Students complete one task that involves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part A: Researching an issue and collecting viewpoints Part B: Justification of choice Part C: Planning Part D: Practical activity (preparing, cooking and presenting three dishes and accompaniments in a single session of no more than 3 hours) Part E: Evaluation. <p>Students present a written report on the task. Teachers mark the task and CCEA moderate the results.</p> <p>Assessment: Written examination One external examination completed at the end of Year 12 Worth 50% of GCSE</p> <p>Controlled Assessment: One piece of controlled assessment Worth 50% of GCSE Marked by teachers and externally moderated by CCEA</p>



Transferable skills	Time management, organisation, critical analysis, planning, working with others, prioritising tasks, problem-solving, self-management, creativity, decision making, self-evaluation.
Career Link	There are many career opportunities due to the expansion of the food industry including Dietician, Nutritionist/Sports Nutritionist, Teacher, Lawyer, Food Microbiologist, Food Technologist, Food Product Developer, Brand Manager, Product Buyer, Packaging Designer, Health Promotion Officer, Environmental Health Officer, Marketing Associate, in the Catering, Hospitality and Tourism industries, Research careers in Food Science and Technology/ Nutrition and Health/ Food Quality and Safety/ Product Development etc.

Mrs R Pollock Head of Nutrition & Food Science

GEOGRAPHY (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>There are three units:</p> <p>Unit 1: Understanding Our Natural World This includes rivers and coasts, weather and earthquakes and volcanoes.</p> <p>Unit 2: Living in Our World This includes people and where they live, contrasts in world development and managing our resources.</p> <p>Unit 3: Fieldwork and Skills This relates to data collected by pupils based on a study of Crawfordsburn River.</p>	<p>There are three external examinations, Unit One and Two are both 1 hour 30 minutes each and each worth 40%. Unit Three however will be 60 minutes long and worth 20%. These examinations may be taken in Summer, with the option of sitting one examination at the end of Year 11. There is only one entry level.</p>
Transferable skills	Analytical skills, data handling techniques, decision-making processes, presentation techniques, data collection procedures and ICT.
Career Link	Geography can be very scientific at one end of the spectrum and very society-based at the other and so it is relevant to many careers. Architecture, landscape architecture, the travel industry, marketing, cartography, town planning, environmental studies, geology, meteorology, surveying and environmental work are all examples of career areas where geographical skills and knowledge are useful.



Mrs C Oliver Head of Geography

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>Unit 1: Personal Development, Health and Well-being (Y11) The Stages and patterns of human growth and development and the different factors that affect these, the development of self-concept and the support systems available for major life changes. The examination is taken at the end of Y11.</p> <p>Y11 Placement You will attend a nursery setting for one period a fortnight. You will attend one of the following; Victoria Pre-School, Inchmarlo nursery, Stranmillis nursery, Over the Rainbow and others. All of these settings are within walking distance to school. Attendance allows you to gain first-hand experience of how to develop relationships with small children and an insight into the workings of early years settings.</p> <p>Unit 2: Working in Health, Social Care and Early Years Sectors (Y12) You will produce a portfolio of three tasks. You will investigate how different settings meets the needs of different groups such as vulnerable adults and how settings provide a quality service. The work is completed independently under controlled assessment.</p>	<p>Unit 2: Internally assessed (portfolio), is worth 50% of the total marks.</p> <p>Assessment: Unit 1 is an external examination at the end of Year 11, worth 50% of the total mark. The second unit is internally assessed portfolio and worth 50% of the total marks.</p>



Transferable skills	<p>Students will gain practical experience in care settings and learn effective skills in communication through which we trust the pupils will grow in confidence dealing with adults and younger children. As well as gaining experience in early years, we endeavour to provide both an intergenerational experience and opportunities for volunteering with children and adults with disabilities.</p> <p>Students need to research areas of study using a wide variety of sources and students should have competent ICT skills and be able to present work in a variety of formats.</p>
Career Link	<p>Studying this course will be excellent preparation for the following careers: nursing, midwifery, children's nursing, health promotion, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, podiatry, art therapy, nutrition, speech therapy, teaching, classroom assistant, early years/playgroup assistant, working with people who have physical and learning disabilities and youth and community work.</p>

Mrs Á Loane Head of Health & Social Care

HISTORY (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>GCSE History is a stimulating and challenging subject which cultivates knowledge and understanding by exploring the significance of historical events, people, changes and issues. This is completed through a detailed study of selected periods and aspects of history. Our 3 studies are:</p> <p>In Depth Study – Life in Nazi Germany 1933 - 1945</p> <p>Local Study – Changing Relations: Northern Ireland and its Neighbours 1920 - 1949 or 1965 - 1998</p> <p>Outline Study – International Relations 1945 - 2003</p> <p>Students must be prepared to:</p> <p>Work more independently – reviewing their work from class, completing their own notes on topics.</p> <p>Work with evidence/sources – investigating the past by analysing, interpreting, explaining, questioning a range of evidence/sources in their historical context.</p> <p>Take an active part in their learning, contributing to class discussions, asking questions and taking an interest in what they are learning.</p>	<p>Two written papers:</p> <p>Paper 1: Nazi Germany and Northern Ireland studies 60%</p> <p>Paper 2: International Relations 40%</p>

Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication, organisational skills and working with others • Problem solving and research and planning skills • Management and leadership skills
Career Link	<p>History allows students to develop skills that are transferable and highly valued by employers. It also prepares them for the further study of history at A level, or vocational training. Many History students go on to have interesting and challenging careers, for example in the media, politics, law, architecture, journalism or information work, writing or editorial work, teaching, lecturing, business or civil service.</p> <p>An interest in history may direct you to perhaps a more specialist career as an archaeologist, archivist working in a records office, historical researcher, museum curator or genealogist.</p>

Mrs N McMurray Head of History

MATHEMATICS (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The GCSE Mathematics course covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and Algebra • Geometry and Measures • Handling Data • Using and Applying Mathematics • Functional Mathematics <p>In GCSE Mathematics there are two tiers of entry available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher (grades D – A*) • Foundation (grades G – C*) <p>Pupils will be entered for one of the following options depending on their previous performance in Mathematics:</p> <p>Foundation Tier (unit test M1 and completion test M5)</p> <p>Foundation Tier (unit test M2 and completion test M6)</p> <p>Higher Tier (unit test M3 and completion test M7)</p> <p>Higher Tier (unit test M4 and completion test M7)</p> <p>Higher Tier (unit test M4 and completion test M8)</p> <p>At Foundation tier, pupils can achieve a Level 1 or Level 2 Certificate in Functional Mathematics as well as a grade in GCSE Mathematics.</p>	<p>There is no coursework for GCSE Mathematics.</p> <p>Assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One unit test – 45% • One Completion test – 55% <p>The unit test is a calculator paper. The completion test is made up of a non-calculator paper and a calculator paper.</p>



Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Mathematics, problem solving and logical thinking • Use of ICT, communication and managing information
Career Link	<p>Mathematics at grades A* – C is essential for entry university and for some courses at Further Education colleges.</p> <p>It is also likely to be asked for if you want to work in financial services, such as insurance or banking, in administration, or in the ICT industry.</p>

Miss L Scott Head of Mathematics

FURTHER MATHEMATICS (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The GCSE Further Mathematics course covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 1 (Mandatory) – Pure Mathematics • Unit 2 (Optional) – Mechanics • Unit 3 (Optional) – Statistics • Unit 4 (Optional) – Discrete and Decision Mathematics <p>GCSE Further Mathematics is aimed at the more able mathematicians and it will be offered to those pupils who perform well in their Year 10 examinations.</p> <p>GCSE Further Mathematics is taken as well as GCSE Mathematics.</p> <p>The final decision regarding places on the GCSE Further Mathematics course will be taken by the Mathematics Department.</p>	<p>Pupils must complete the mandatory unit (Unit 1) and two of the three optional units (Units 2, 3 and 4).</p> <p>At VCB we will complete Units 2 and 3. All units are assessed by an external written examination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 1 – Pure Mathematics – 50% • Unit 2 – Mechanics – 25% • Unit 3 – Statistics – 25% • Unit 4 – Discrete and Decision Mathematics – 25%

Transferable skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Mathematics, problem solving and logical thinking • Use of ICT, communication and managing information
Career Link	<p>GCSE Further Mathematics provides a sound basis for progression on to A-level Mathematics and A-level Further Mathematics.</p> <p>A qualification in Mathematics would be essential for some jobs such as actuarial work, economic and statistical work, science research and development and to teach Mathematics in a post-primary school.</p> <p>Mathematics could be useful in a number of other jobs such as accountancy, insurance and pensions, the ICT industry, banking and management services.</p>

Miss L Scott Head of Mathematics

MODERN LANGUAGES (French & Spanish CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The study of Modern Languages at GCSE enables learners to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of a modern language in a variety of contexts Develop the ability to communicate effectively in another language Develop awareness and understanding of countries and communities where that language is spoken Develop language learning skills <p>The study of Modern Languages at GCSE allows learners to develop their enthusiasm for the language, while increasing their confidence in the four key skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The linguistic knowledge and skills acquired helps learners to take their place in a multilingual, global society and provides them with a sound basis to make informed decisions about further opportunities and career choices.</p>	<p>All assessment is completed at the end of Year 12. Each skill has a Foundation Tier and a Higher Tier. Students must take all four question papers at the same tier. Each skill area is worth 25% of the overall qualification.</p> <p>Listening: understanding and responding to different types of spoken language.</p> <p>Speaking: communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes.</p> <p>Reading: understanding and responding to different types of written language.</p> <p>Writing: communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purpose.</p>



Transferable skills	<p>Language learners are able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work independently and communicate effectively with others. Apply knowledge to improve their learning and solve problems. Show respect and curiosity towards other cultures and appreciate their diversity. Deploy excellent ICT skills by researching, organising and presenting relevant and structured information.
Career Link	<p>In today's multicultural society, being able to speak one or more languages provides students with a wealth of career opportunities. Qualifications in a foreign language are useful in teaching, travel and tourism, hospitality, journalism, humanitarian organisations, law and the arts, industry and the Civil Service.</p>

At the end of Year 11, pupils who are finding it difficult to make progress in their GCSE Modern Language will be encouraged to prepare for an alternative qualification (OCCNI). This qualification, which is equivalent to a grade B at GCSE, allows pupils to focus on other subject pathways more suited to their talents.

Mrs C O'Sullivan Head of Modern Languages

MUSIC (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>GCSE students will continue to develop their Performing, Composing and Listening skills through a range of activities.</p>	<p>Performing: Pupils will perform a solo piece and a group/ensemble piece – 35%</p> <p>Composing: Pupils will submit two pieces of coursework. One piece is based on a given stimuli and the other is free choice – 30%</p> <p>Listening/Written: Pupils will sit one examination lasting 1 hour 30 minutes. They will answer questions on familiar and unfamiliar repertoire.</p> <p>Throughout the course pupils will study set works under the following headings: Western Classical Music Film Music Musical Traditions of Ireland and Popular Music 1980 - present day – 30%</p>



Transferable skills	<p>Communication, critical and creative thinking, self management, aesthetic sensitivity and emotional and cultural development.</p>
Career Link	<p>A GCSE at grade A* - C in music can provide the basis for studying music at AS and A level, which you will need if you intend to go on to study music at university. Apart from performing, there are many other careers where your knowledge of music will be useful – such as arts administration, music librarianship, sound recording, broadcasting, journalism and music publishing.</p>

Mrs A Harrison Head of Music

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (CCEA)

Pupils studying GCSE PE must participate regularly on school and/or club teams in their chosen sports.

Content	Assessment
GCSE Physical Education full course.	
Component 1 Factors Underpinning Health & Performance	Component 1: External Written Examination – 25% 1 hour 15 minutes Students answer short response questions and questions that require extended writing (100 marks)
Component 2 Developing Performance	Component 2: External Written Examination – 25% 1 hour 15 minutes Students answer short response questions and questions that require extended writing (100 marks)
Component 3 Individual Performances in Physical Activities and Sports	Controlled Assessment Component 3 (a) Students are assessed on the consistent quality, efficiency and effectiveness of their performances in physical activities and sports. Students perform THREE physical activities or sports from the list that is supplied by CCEA. For one physical activity or sport, the assessment may be based on the consistent quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the student's performance as an event manager. 3 x 50 marks (150 marks) and; (b) Students are assessed on the quality of their analysis and evaluation of their own and others' performances. (50 marks)

Transferable skills	Communication, application of number, observation and analysis, problem-solving and leadership skills.
Career Link	Physical Education can be useful for entry to Further and Higher Education. Pupils wishing to enter employment in Sports Science or Sports Studies, the leisure industry or certain medical based courses may benefit from studying Physical Education.



Mrs H Willis Head of Physical Education

PHYSICS (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
The GCSE Physics course provides a broad, coherent and practical curriculum that develops confidence in physics and offers students a positive view of science. It encourages students to appreciate the value of physics in their lives and in the wider world around them. This specification aims to encourage students to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop their knowledge and understanding of physics; • Develop their understanding of the effects of physics on society; • Develop and apply their knowledge and understanding of the nature of physics and of the scientific process; • Develop their skills in communication, mathematics and the use of technology in scientific contexts. During the course pupils will investigate various topics including Forces, Energy, Radioactivity, Nuclear Fission and Fusion, Electricity and Magnetism, Waves and Astronomy.	The controlled assessment is divided into two parts: Booklet A and Booklet B. In Booklet A, under the supervision of a teacher, students are assessed on their ability to plan and carry out two of these prescribed practical tasks. Booklet B is a written, externally assessed exam, taken at the end of the final year of study on their knowledge and understanding of practical physics. It consists of questions about planning and carrying out any of the prescribed practical activities, together with more general questions about any practical situation that arises from within the specification. Assessment: Two written papers worth a total of 75%.



Transferable skills	This subject allows the development of: Communication, application of number, use of information technology, working with others, problem solving, analysis, evaluation and independent learning.
Career Link	Physics is essential for careers in engineering, medical physics, meteorology, the space industry, optometry and architecture. In order to study Medicine or Dentistry GCSE Physics is often an essential entrance requirement and topics studied in GCSE Physics are tested in entrance examinations for medical courses. GCSE Physics is also essential for some Radiotherapy courses. It is useful for many other careers such as medically-related work which includes veterinary medicine, pharmacy and the computer games industry as many employers there will value the problem solving and numerical skills developed through the study of Physics. It is important to check out the exact science requirements for any job you are considering.

Mr M Donaghy Head of Physics

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>(CCEA Paper 9)</p> <p>Paper 1: An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Existence of God The Nature of God The problem of evil and suffering Experiencing God Life after death <p>Candidates will be exploring these issues from a variety of religious and non-religious perspectives.</p> <p>(CCEA Paper 8)</p> <p>Paper 2: An Introduction to Christian Ethics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal and family issues – sexual relationships, marriage, divorce and family life Matters of life and death – abortion, euthanasia, forgiveness and justice Developments in Bioethics – human infertility, the status of the embryo, surrogacy, other reproductive technologies Contemporary Issues in Christianity – social justice, racism, discrimination, poverty, relief organisations. Modern Warfare – Just War, nuclear deterrence, pacifism, the cost of war. 	<p>Two written papers – 100%. One at the end of Year 11.</p> <p>The second paper at the end of Year 12 (long course).</p>
<p>Transferable skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recall, select, organise and deploy knowledge Describe, analyse and explain relevance and application Establishing reasoned arguments using evidence Expressing and evaluating personal responses Appreciating differing viewpoints Develop understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues
<p>Career Link</p>	<p>Religious Studies is highly recognised by the Russell Group of Universities and provides skills which can be utilised on many career pathways such as: law, media, business management, medicine, teaching, social work and the civil service. It is obviously relevant if you are thinking of progressing into any kind of religious training.</p>

Mrs R. Elwood Head of Religious Studies

SINGLE AWARD SCIENCE (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The Single Award Science course covers topics from the three sciences and includes a practical skills component.</p> <p>Unit 1: Biology Section A: Staying Alive Section B: Human Activity and Health</p> <p>Unit 2: Chemistry Section A: Chemical Patterns and Our Environment Section B: Materials and their Management</p> <p>Unit 3: Physics Section A: Electricity, Waves and Communication Section B: Fossil Fuels, Road Transport and Safety, Radioactivity, and Earth and Space</p> <p>Unit 4: Practical Skills</p>	<p>Practical work is an integral part of Single Award Science. Through experimentation students gain the opportunity to enhance their practical skills as well as learn new ideas in a structured yet independent manner. Practical skills assessment includes two parts. For Booklet A, students carry out two practical tasks in the laboratory under exam conditions. Booklet B is a written practical theory examination, with questions based on any of the prescribed practical tasks from the specification.</p> <p>Assessment: One written paper for the Biology, Chemistry and Physics units worth 25% each. There is an opportunity to complete the assessments on a modular basis, pupils can sit external examinations in February, November and June but at least 40% of the assessment must be taken at the end of the course as a terminal assessment. The practical skills unit is assessed in Year 12 through a laboratory assessment and an external written examination (see above) and is worth 25%.</p>
<p>Transferable skills</p>	<p>This subject allows development of: Communication, application of number, use of information technology, working with others, problem solving, analysis, evaluation and independent learning.</p>
<p>Career Link</p>	<p>Students completing GCSE Single Award Science would not be eligible to study any A-Level Science. However, the transferable skills that are developed throughout the course could be beneficial to many other areas of work and it is accepted as a GCSE Science qualification for many Nursing and Healthcare courses. Single Award Science is a full GCSE course that allows students to potentially reach an A* grade if entered for higher tier.</p>

TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN (CCEA)

Content	Assessment
<p>The GCSE Technology and Design specification encourages students to be innovative and be prepared to take design risks. They explore the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries, as well as the importance of high quality design and technology.</p> <p>The Technology and Design qualification provides all students with a core of knowledge in the following key areas before they choose to specialise in one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic and microelectronic control systems • Mechanical and pneumatic control systems • Product design. 	<p>In this specification Unit 3: Design and Manufacturing Project is a controlled assessment unit. It includes producing a design portfolio and an associated manufacturing task. It is worth 50% of the overall qualification.</p> <p>Assessment:</p> <p>There are two written exams, each worth 25% of the final mark, and a design and manufacturing project worth 50%. The design project is internally assessed and then moderated by CCEA.</p>
Transferable skills	Problem solving, improving own learning performance, creative expression, communication, application of number, analytical thinking, working with others and time-management.
Career Link	This course will encourage pupils to be inspired, moved and challenged by following a broad coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. It will allow them to gain an insight into related sectors such as manufacturing and engineering. It will also prepare them to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices such as Architecture, Product Design, Engineering and ICT.

Mrs K DeMellion Head of Technology and Design



TRAVEL AND TOURISM (Pearson's BTEC First Award)

Content	Assessment
<p>Unit 1: The UK Travel and Tourism Sector – this unit covers the main types of tourism in the UK, the contribution that travel and tourism makes to the UK economy and the different component industries that make up the UK travel and tourism sector.</p> <p>Unit 2: UK Travel and Tourism Destinations – this unit covers what the different types of UK destinations have to offer, as well as locating tourist UK destinations and routes.</p> <p>Unit 5: Factors Affecting Worldwide Travel and Tourism – covers the influential factors on tourism and why events such as natural disasters can have a significant impact on the sector.</p> <p>Unit 6: The Travel and Tourism Customer Experience – which looks at the needs and expectations of different types of customer in the travel and tourism sector and how organisations address these.</p>	<p>There is one 60-minute external examination. This can be completed at the end of Year 11 or Year 12. This will assess pupil's knowledge and understanding on the Travel and Tourism Sector within the UK (Unit 1).</p> <p>The remaining three units (Units 2, 5 and 6) are internally assessed and are completed as coursework.</p>

Transferable skills	<p>BTECs are vocationally related qualifications, where learners develop knowledge and understanding by applying their learning and skills in a work-related context.</p> <p>Transferable skills include: team working; working to deadlines; presenting information effectively; and accurately completing administrative tasks and processes.</p>
Career Link	<p>The travel and tourism sector comprises many different industries and sub-industries. Students interested in careers in hotel management, tour operators, flight attendants, food service management, business marketing and human resources etc.</p> <p>The leisure industry accounts for the employment of around 2.5 million people in the UK, 10% of the working population. Therefore, the skills developed whilst studying Travel and Tourism can be applicable and transferable to a wide range of careers linked to this ever growing industry.</p>

Mrs C Oliver Teacher in charge of Travel and Tourism



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