



VERULAM  
SCHOOL

# Year 9 Options Booklet

[verulamschool.co.uk](http://verulamschool.co.uk)



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# Welcome

**The next few weeks represent an exciting time in your child's education. It is the first opportunity for them to start making choices about the subjects they will study at Key Stage Four.**

This booklet provides you with further information about each subject that your son will study at GCSE and some of the optional subjects that they choose to study.

Our aim is to provide all the information to help you and your child to make an informed choice enabling them to achieve the best possible outcomes and to access their future study and career aspirations.

There are also links to the exam boards that we study here at Verulam where you can find out more information about each GCSE or BTEC course. These links will provide you with the most current information about each course.

We will be hosting a Parent Information Evening on Tuesday 7th February 2023, 7 - 8:30pm.

From Tuesday 7th February you will also have access to a Google Form which will allow you to submit your son's option choices.

This form is only accessible using your son's @verulamschool.co.uk login and you should sit and complete this with them.

The deadline for completing the options choices form is Monday 27th February 2023.

**Mr Thomas Hobbs**  
Head of Year 9

# Key Stage 4 Overview

All students at Verulam School study a broad and balanced curriculum. This includes the following compulsory examination subjects for all students:

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- GCSE Science (Double or Triple Award)

In addition to these subjects, students also undertake compulsory study in the following subjects, but are not examined in them:

- Physical Education
- Personal, Social, Health and Education (PSHE)

Students must select 4 options from the list below, in addition to 2 reserve choices. Choices must be ranked in order of preference.

Subjects to choose from	
GCSE Architecture	GCSE History
GCSE Art & Design	GCSE Languages
GCSE Business	GCSE Media Studies
GCSE Computer Science	GCSE Music
GCSE Design & Technology	GCSE Physical Education
GCSE Drama	GCSE Religious Studies
GCSE Economics	GCSE Spanish
GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition	BTEC Enterprise
GCSE French	BTEC Sport
GCSE Geography	



# GCSE English

**At Verulam, all students study GCSE English Language and English Literature following the specification from the AQA Exam board.**

Our students study a broad range of texts from around the world as well as British literature; developing confidence in oracy, presentations and group work. Students are given opportunities to be creative and explore their identity as a writer, reader and speaker.

## English Literature GCSE

Year 10 students will sit their GCSE English Language and English Literature examinations at the end of Year 11.

In Year 10 they will study a mix of elements from both the English Language and the English Literature

GCSE courses. There are no tiers in English examinations as all students sit the same terminal examination papers.

## English Language GCSE

### Year 11

The AQA English Language GCSE consists of two papers: Paper 1 is fiction based and Paper 2 is non-fiction based. In both cases, the paper has two sections: Section A assesses reading for meaning skills and Section B requires students to produce a piece of original writing of their own.

It is important to note that 20% of the GCSE marks are awarded for accuracy of written communication.

The AQA English Literature GCSE consists of two papers: Paper 1 covers 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens and 'Romeo and Juliet' by William Shakespeare. Paper two

covers 'An Inspector Calls' by J. B. Priestley, the 'Power and Conflict' AQA poetry anthology and unseen poetry analysis.

**For further information about GCSE English qualifications please visit:**

**[aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse](https://aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse)**



# GCSE Mathematics

**At Verulam, all students study GCSE Mathematics following the specification from the Pearson Edexcel Exam board.**

Our ethos as a department is to foster a love of mathematics, encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving skills. All students sit GCSE mathematics at the end of Year 11.

Two tiers are available; Foundation or Higher. The qualification consists of three equally-weighted written examination papers. A calculator can be used in two of the papers but is not allowed to be used in the first of the three papers.

Our students are set to enable them to follow a scheme of work to prepare them for the most appropriate tier. The decision as to the tier a student will take is not finalised until part way through

Year 11. In addition to sitting GCSE maths, all students are invited to sit an Edexcel Award in Algebra or Number and Measure in January of Year 11.

## Edexcel Award in Algebra

The Edexcel Award in Algebra is a Level 3 or Level 2 certificate. Our rationale for this is for students to secure a strong foundation in their algebra skills before sitting their GCSE, as much of the Grade 8/9 content relies on excellent algebraic knowledge. All students are prepared for the Level 3 exam, with a decision on which level to enter for being made near the start of Year 11. There is no grade awarded for either paper, simply a pass/fail result.

## Edexcel Award in Number and Measure

The Edexcel Award in Number and Measure is a Level 2 certificate. Our

rationale for this is to help students to develop a thorough knowledge and understanding of concepts in number and measure and a strong foundation of mathematical techniques to support their preparation for the GCSE.

We expect the majority of students in sets 1 and 2 to sit the Algebra awards and in sets 3 and 4 to sit the Number and Measure Award.

**For further information about GCSE Mathematics please visit:**

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/mathematics-2015.html>

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-awards-in-mathematics.html>

# GCSE Science

**At Verulam, all students study GCSE Science following the AQA GCSE Combined Science: Trilogy specification and selected students will study AQA GCSE Biology / Chemistry / Physics courses for Triple Science.**

In Combined Science: Trilogy Science students study units across Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. These are equally weighted and students are awarded a 'double award' which is worth two GCSEs. For example, a 7-7 is equivalent to two GCSEs at Grade 7.

In Triple Science, students study units across Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. They are examined on all three individually and will receive GCSEs in each. Students study all of the content of Combined Science with additional content covering advanced concepts and required practicals.

Students are streamlined during January in Year 10 from 'Pathway' Exams which identifies who will continue onto Triple Science and who will continue onto Combined Science.

## Assessment

You will be routinely assessed on course content through the GCSE, and as the course progresses the assessments become more synoptic, mirroring the exam papers you will sit for your GCSEs.

In addition to the end of unit tests, you will also take End of Year 9 exams, Year 10 'Pathway' exams, End of Year 10 exams, and several mock GCSE exams in Year 11.

## Examinations

You will take six GCSE papers: two biology, two chemistry, and two physics. For Combined Science students, each exam lasts 1 hour 15

minutes. For Triple Science students, each exam lasts 1 hour 45 minutes.

## Triple or Combined Science and Tier of Entry

In Year 10 the 'Pathway' exams will determine which course you study. These exams are normally taken early in January.

**For further information about GCSE Science please visit:**

**[aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464](https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/combined-science-trilogy-8464)**

# GCSE Architecture

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Art and Design (Three-Dimensional Design) follow the specification from the AQA exam board. Three-dimensional design is defined as the design, prototyping and modelling or making of primarily functional and aesthetic products, objects, and environments, drawing upon intellectual, creative and practical skills.

## Subject Content

Students develop their knowledge and understanding during the course through a variety of learning experiences and approaches, including engagement with sources. This will allow them to develop the skills to explore, create and communicate their own ideas. Students will demonstrate these

skills through the development, refinement, recording, realisation and presentation of their ideas through a portfolio and by responding to an externally set assignment.

## Assessments

### Component 1: Portfolio

#### What's assessed?

A portfolio that covers all 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 done over the two years.

#### Assessment structure

No time limit  
96 marks  
60% of GCSE

### Component 2: Externally set assignment

#### What's assessed?

Students are set an externally set assignment from which they generate a starting point. All four assessment objectives must be covered.

#### Assessment structure

Preparatory period followed by ten hours of supervised time  
96 marks  
40% of GCSE

**For further information  
please visit:**

[www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/  
art-and-design/gcse/art-and-  
design-8201-8206/introduction](http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206/introduction)

# GCSE Art and Design

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Art and Design follow the specification from the Pearson Edexcel exam board.

## Assessment

The course is assessed via:

### 60% Coursework

### 40% Exam and preparation work (2 day exam)

As a school we ask students to take three assessments each year. At the beginning of Year 11 a predicted grade is given based on the Year 10 coursework.

## Subject Content

The course consists of four key objectives:

- Developing ideas
- Exploring use of different media & techniques,
- Reviewing & refining.
- Recording ideas, observations

Presenting a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions.

**Unit 1** – Natural Forms (Year 10)

**Unit 2** – Journeys (Year 10)

**Unit 3** – Portraits (Year 11)

The final exam work is worth 40% of the final mark and is comprised of preparation work and the final piece of work in a medium of the students choice.



**For further information about GCSE Art and Design please visit:**

[qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/art-and-design-2016.html](https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/art-and-design-2016.html)

# GCSE Business

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Business follow the specification from the OCR exam board.

## Assessment

### Business 1 Exam:

Business Activity, Marketing and People (a 1 hour 30 minute exam worth 50% of the course).

### Business 2 Exam:

Operations, Finance and Influences on Business (a 1 hour 30 minute exam worth 50% of the course).

## Content overview

### Business 1 - Business activity, marketing and people:

Students are introduced to business concepts and issues concerning the activities of a business.

They explore the purpose and role of a business from spotting an opportunity through to the growth of an established business.

They also look at the role of marketing and human resources.

### Business 2 - Operations, finance and influences on business:

Students take a closer look at the role of operations and finance in business activity. Operations includes production processes, quality of goods and services, customer service and working with suppliers.

Finance covers its role within a business, its sources, costs, profit and loss, cash and cash flow. They also explore how business responds to external influences such as ethical and environmental considerations, the economic climate, globalisation and the interdependent nature of business.



**For further information about GCSE Business please visit:**

**[ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/business-j204-from-2017/](https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/business-j204-from-2017/)**

# GCSE Computer Science

**At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Computer Science follow the specification from the OCR exam board.**

## Assessment overview

Computer systems (01)  
1 hour 30 mins exam worth 50% of course. Calculators not allowed

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02)  
1 hour 30 mins exam worth 50% of course. Calculators not allowed

## Component 01: Computer systems

Introduces students to the central processing unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, data representation, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It also looks at ethical,

legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with computer science.

## Component 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming

Students apply knowledge and understanding gained in component 01. They develop skills and understanding in computational thinking: algorithms, programming techniques, producing robust programs, computational logic and translators.

## Practical programming

Students are to be given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s) during their course of study which allows them to develop their skills to design, write, test and refine programs using a high-level programming language. Students will be assessed on these

skills during the written examinations, in particular component 02 (section B).



**For further information about GCSE Computer Science please visit:**

**[ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/](https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/computer-science-j277-from-2020/)**

# GCSE Design Technology

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Design and Technology follow the specification from the AQA exam board. They then opt to work in either Systems or Resistant Materials specialism.

## Subject Content

Our GCSE Design Technology specification sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills required to undertake the interactive process of exploring, creating and evaluating. It is broken down into these sections:

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

## Assessments

### Written Paper – Design Technology What's assessed

Theoretical knowledge of Design and Technology from sections 1-3.

### Assessment structure

Written exam: 2 hours

100 marks

50% of GCSE

### Questions

#### Section A – Core technical principles (20 marks)

A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

#### Section B – Specialist technical principles (30 marks)

Several short answer questions (2–5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in-depth knowledge of technical principles.

#### Section C – Designing and making principles (50 marks)

A mixture of short answer and extended response questions.

## Non Exam Assessment (NEA)

### Practical application of:

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

### Assessment structure

Non-exam assessment (NEA):

30–35 hours

100 marks

50% of GCSE

### Task

A substantial design and make task. Contextual challenge is released by the exam board on the 1st June in the year prior to submission.

### Assessment Criteria:

Identifying and investigating design possibilities  
Producing a design brief and specification  
Generating design ideas  
Developing design ideas  
Realising design ideas  
Analysing & evaluating

For further information about GCSE Design Technology please visit:  
[www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse/design-and-technology-8552](http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse/design-and-technology-8552)



# GCSE Drama

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Drama follow the specification from the OCR exam board.

## Key Features in GCSE Drama

Students are given the option of a performer or designer role, this gives them the opportunity to explore and develop skills in a more in depth manner.

Units are explored in a practical way so as to gain a better understanding of key content, terminology, and intention.

The drama GCSE qualification practically approaches and actively develops many skills, including the following skills which make up half of the top 10 desirable skills for jobs in 2025:

- Critical thinking and Analysis
- Creativity, originality, and initiative
- Leadership and Social influence
- Technology design and programming
- Resilience, stress tolerance, and flexibility

## Assessment Overview

### Unit 1

#### Component 1 and 2 Devising Drama

Performance from a stimulus with an accompanying portfolio This is a Non-Examined unit that is internally marked and externally moderated.

30% of the qualification 60 Marks

### Unit 2

#### Component 3 Presenting and Performing Texts

Perform two extracts from a published play for a visiting

examiner accompanied by a written proforma. This is a Non-Examined unit that is Externally marked and moderated.

30% of the qualification 60 Marks

### Component 4

#### Drama - Performance and Response

Written exam broken down into two sections:

**Section A:** Exploration of a script from the view of the actor, director, and designer

**Section B:** Analysis and evaluation of a live performance

40% of the qualification

80 Marks

**For further information about GCSE Drama please visit:**

[ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/drama-j316-from-2016/](https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/drama-j316-from-2016/)



# GCSE Economics

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Economics follow the specification from the OCR exam board.

## Assessment

**Unit 1 Exam:** Introduction to Economics (a 1 hour 30 minute exam worth 50% of the course).

**Unit 2 Exam:** National and International Economics (a 1 hour 30 minute exam worth 50% of the course).

## Content overview

### Unit 1: Introduction to Economics

Students are introduced to fundamental economic terms and concepts and apply them to explain how markets work in contemporary and historical economic contexts. They study the roles of the main economic agents and how they interact and the importance of financial markets. Students are encouraged to evaluate the moral, ethical and sustainability issues that arise from economic activity from a microeconomic perspective.

### Unit 2: National and International Economics

Students develop their understanding of how governments aim to achieve national economic objectives and the effects of economic policies on markets and the wider economy as well as the importance and impact of international trade and globalisation. Students are encouraged to evaluate the moral, ethical and sustainability

issues that arise from economic activity from a macroeconomic perspective.



**For further information about GCSE Economics please visit:**

**[ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/economics-j205-from-2017/](https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/economics-j205-from-2017/)**

# GCSE Food and Nutrition

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition follow the specification from the AQA exam board.

## Subject content

Food preparation skills – these are intended to be integrated into the five sections:

1. Food, nutrition and health
2. Food science
3. Food safety
4. Food choice
5. Food provenance

## Assessments

### Paper 1 – Food Preparation and Nutrition

#### What's assessed

Theoretical knowledge of food preparation and nutrition from Sections 1 to 5.

#### Assessment structure

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes  
 - 100 marks  
 - 50% of GCSE

#### Questions

Multiple choice questions (20 marks)  
 Five questions each with a number of sub questions (80 marks)

#### NEA (Non- Exam Assessment)

##### What's assessed

##### Task 1: Food investigation (30 marks)

Students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients.

**Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this NEA task.**

**Task 2:** Food preparation assessment (70 marks) Students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task.

#### Assessment structure

**Task 1:** Written or electronic report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.

**Task 2:** Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included.

**For further information about GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition please visit:**

[aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse](https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/food/gcse)

# GCSE French

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE French follow the specification from the AQA Exam board.

## Subject Content

The Language contexts are organised into 3 themes:

- Identity and culture
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- Current and future study and employment

## Subject Structure

Students follow a 2 Year GCSE course, where we cover the 12 topics in the three themes in the following way:

- Year 10 Groundwork and Foundation
- Year 11 Higher / Exam Preparation & Practice

Students will learn to make independent, creative and more complex use of the language, as appropriate, to note down key points, express and justify individual thoughts and points of view, in order to interest, inform or convince.

## Assessment

At Verulam School, students are given the opportunity to sit three full Mock Speaking Exams over Years 10 & 11, giving them the confidence and experience to excel in their final GCSE Speaking exam.

Students sit four equally weighted exams at the end of the course: speaking, listening, reading and writing.



**For further information about GCSE French please visit:**

**[aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/french-8658](https://aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/french-8658)**

# GCSE Geography

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Geography follow the specification from the AQA exam board.

The course is split into three units, two of which are assessed via exams each of 1hr 30mins duration and content as below:

## Unit One – Living with the Physical environment 35%

**The challenge of natural hazards** – tectonic hazards, tropical storms, extreme weather in the UK, climate change (30 marks +3 SPAG)

**Physical landscapes in the United Kingdom** – two from coastal landscapes, river landscapes, glacial landscapes (30 marks)

**The living world** – ecosystems, tropical rainforests, one from hot deserts and cold environments (25 marks)

## Unit Two – Challenges to the Human environment 35%

**Urban issues and challenges** (30 marks + 3 SPAG)

**The changing economic world** (30 marks)

**The challenge of resource management** – general overview, one from food, water and energy (25 marks)

For each exam and in each section there are a range of question types including: multiple choice, short structured questions, cloze exercises, photo interpretation / description, interpretation of maps on different scales, data response, longer extended writing responses. The third unit is also assessed via exam but is 1 hour in duration.

## Unit Three – Geographical Applications 30%

### Section A – Issue Evaluation

Compulsory structured questions on a theme – leading up to an extended writing task based on a pre-release Sources Booklet – to be issued to students in advance. The theme will arise from the subject content of Units 1 or 2 but may extend beyond it through the use of the resources. The theme could combine human and physical aspects. (34 marks +3 SPAG)

### Section B – Fieldwork

Compulsory questions based on candidates' enquiry work and the use of fieldwork materials in an unfamiliar context. (36 marks +3 SPAG)

**For further information about GCSE Geography please visit:**

[aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035](https://aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035)

# GCSE History

**At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE History follow the specification from the Pearson Edexcel exam board.**

The qualification aims to engage students with a broad and diverse study of the history of Britain – and the wider world – and give students skills that will support progression to further study of history and a wide range of other subjects.

## **The programme of study includes:**

**Paper 1:** Warfare through time (30%). This unit explores the experience and nature of warfare across four time periods between 1250-modern day. Students focus on themes such as changing tactics, weaponry and recruitment with a particular focus on key battles. There is also a case study focusing on London during the Blitz in World War Two.

**Paper 2:** Anglo-Saxon and Normans & Super Power Relations and the Cold War (40%). This paper includes two topics. The first is a study of Anglo-Saxon society and the impact of the Norman invasion in 1066 such as the feudal system and the resultant rebellions. The second investigates the changing relationship between the USA and USSR from 1943-91 focusing on key events such as the Hungarian Uprising, Cuban Missile Crisis and Prague Spring.

**Paper 3:** 30% Modern Depth Study Russia and the Soviet Union, 1917-41 Topics include: Tsarist Russia and the revolutions of 1917, the Bolsheviks in power 1917-24, Stalin's rise to power and dictatorship 1924-41, Economic and social change 1924-41.

## **Assessment**

All three papers will be sat at the end of the two year course. There are regular class assessments of subject knowledge and skills through the completion of exam style questions. An exam will be completed at the end of Year 10 assessing the units studied in these years. There will be two mock exams in Year 11, one in the autumn term and one in the spring term.

**For further information about GCSE History please visit:**

**[qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/history-2016.html](https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/history-2016.html)**

# GCSE Media Studies

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Media Studies follow the specification from the OCR exam board.

## Assessment

The course content is assessed via two exams and a non-examined assessment as detailed below:

### Television and promoting media (01)

1 hour 45 mins

35% of the course (Duration includes 30 minutes' viewing time)

### Music and news (02)

1 hour 15 mins

35% of the course

### Creating media (03 or 04)

Non-exam assessment

30% of the course

## Subject Content

### Year 10

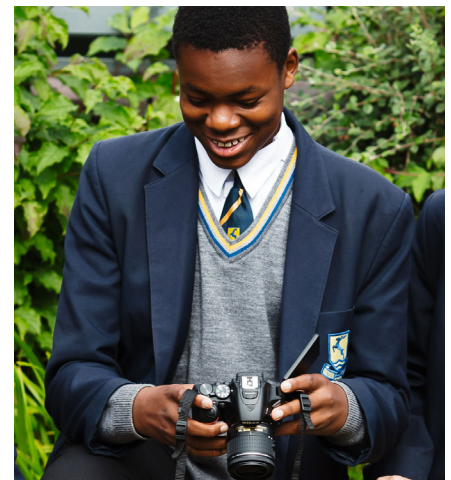
Students will focus on Paper 1: 'Television and promoting Media' and the NEA (non-examined unit or coursework) The Year 10 internal exam mark will be based on their completed coursework grade.

### Year 11

By Year 11 boys will have completed their coursework and will focus on the knowledge required for Paper 2: 'Music and News' and consolidating their learning from Year 10 in preparation for their exams in the summer of Year 11.

**For further information about GCSE Media Studies please visit:**

**[ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/media-studies-j200-from-2017](https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/gcse/media-studies-j200-from-2017)**





# GCSE Music

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Music follow the specification from the Eduqas exam board.

## Course Content

### Unit 1: Performance - 30% of final grade

- One solo performance of approximately Grade 1 standard minimum and Grade 4 standard maximum.
- One ensemble performance. Performances are recorded as coursework and can be re-recorded at any point during Year 11. It is not like a grade exam where there is only one chance!
- Performance time (solo and ensemble combined) must total between 4 and 6 minutes.

### Unit 2: Composition – 30% of final grade

- Two compositions (coursework) of approximately 1.5 minutes each

- Composition time (both pieces combined) must total between 3 and 6 minutes.

### Unit 3: Listening and Appraising – 40% of final grade

Listening & appraising examination based on listening extracts from four areas of study:

- Musical Forms and Devices: includes Classical Music and its' eras, and the building blocks of music. This unit includes the set work 'Badinerie' by J.S. Bach.
- Ensemble Music: includes Jazz and Blues, Musical Theatre and Chamber Music
- Film Music: Covers the range of genres and the musical techniques used to create appropriate scores for the film.
- Popular Music: Covers a range of different styles within popular music. This unit includes the Set Work 'Africa' by Toto.

### Learning Methods

- Listening to and performing various styles of music

- Teacher-led analysis
- Performance on one or more instruments
- Performance in an ensemble
- Composition (one in response to a brief set by the board, and one free choice) using music technology or notation software such as Sibelius.

### Assessment:

Coursework is marked both on an interim and then, at the end of the course, a final basis. Students will complete analysis questions and homeworks throughout the year to check their understanding of the genres and musical terminology.

There is a final "Listening" examination at the end of the course based on listening extracts.

For further information about GCSE Music please visit:  
[eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/music-gcse/#tab\\_overview](https://eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/music-gcse/#tab_overview)

# GCSE Physical Education

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Physical Education follow the specification from the Pearson Edexcel exam board.

The GCSE PE course is a mixture of theory and practical units, assessed via exams and non-examined assessments as explained below:

**Units 1 and 2:** Examination 60%

**Unit 3:** Controlled Assessment. Practical Performance. 30%

**Unit 4:** Coursework. Personal Exercise Programme. 10%

GCSE in Physical Education consists of two externally-examined papers:

## Component 1: Fitness and Body Systems

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes 36% of the qualification

## Component 2: Health and Performance

Written examination: 1 hour and 15 minutes 24% of the qualification

### Content overview

The assessment consists of multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended writing questions. Students must answer all questions. Calculators can be used in the examination.

**Component 3 is worth 30% and is practical sports performance in 3 sports.** This can be one team and two individual sports or two team and one individual sport. If your son plays a sport outside of school they can be assessed in that.

**For Component 4** pupils will write a personal exercise programme which is worth 10% of their overall mark.



For further information about GCSE Physical Education please visit:

[qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/physical-education-2016.html](https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcse/physical-education-2016.html)



# GCSE Religious Studies

**At Verulam, we follow the AQA A route for Religious Studies.**

The course is taught in mixed ability groups and builds upon skills developed throughout the KS3 curriculum such as; recognising bias, being able to explain your own point of view, exploring issues in society.

## Subject Content

We study the following themes from the GCSE (where any faith response can be used):

### **Religion and Life:**

The origins and value of the universe  
The origins and value of human life

### **The existence of God and revelation:**

Philosophical arguments for and against the existence of God

The nature of the divine and revelation

### **Religion, peace and conflict:**

Religion, violence, terrorism and war  
Religion and belief in 21st century conflict

### **Religion, crime and punishment:**

Human rights  
Wealth and poverty

### **Year 10**

Religions 2 - Christian beliefs

### **Year 10**

Theme 2 - Religion, crime and punishment

### **Year 10**

Religions 3 - Islamic beliefs

### **Year 10**

Theme 3 - Religion and life

### **Year 10**

Religions 1 – Islamic practices  
Theme 2 – Religion, crime and punishment

Religions 2 – Christian beliefs  
Theme 3 – Religion and Life

### **Year 11**

Religions 3 – Islamic beliefs  
Theme 4 – The existence of God and revelation  
Religions 4 – Christian practices

## Assessment

There will be 3 main assessed pieces of work completed in both Year 10 and 11. These will be in the style of examination questions. These may take the form of a trial or end of year exam.

**For further information about GCSE Religious Studies please visit:**

[aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse](https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse)

# GCSE Spanish

At Verulam, students who opt to study GCSE Spanish follow the specification from the AQA Exam board.

## Subject Content

The Language contexts are organised into 3 themes:

- Identity and culture
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- Current and future study and employment

## Subject Structure

Students follow a 2 Year GCSE course, where we cover the 12 topics in the three themes in the following way:

- Year 10 Groundwork and Foundation
- Year 11 Higher / Exam Preparation & Practice

Students will learn to make independent, creative and more complex use of the language, as appropriate, to note down key points, express and justify individual thoughts and points of view, in order to interest, inform or convince.

## Assessment

At Verulam School, students are given the opportunity to sit three full Mock Speaking Exams over Years 10 & 11, giving them the confidence and experience to excel in their final GCSE Speaking exam.

Students sit four equally weighted exams at the end of the course: speaking, listening, reading and writing.



**For further information about GCSE Spanish**

[aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/spanish-8698](https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/gcse/spanish-8698)

# BTEC Enterprise

At Verulam, students who opt to study BTEC Enterprise follow the specification from the Pearson Edexcel exam board.

## Assessment

### Component 1:

Exploring Enterprises (Internal Assessment completed in Year 10 worth 30% of the course).

### Component 2:

Planning and Presenting a Micro Enterprise Idea (Internal Assessment completed in Year 11 worth 30% of the course).

### Component 3:

Marketing and Finance for Enterprise (an exam taken in Year 11 worth 40% of the course).

## Content overview

### Component 1:

Exploring Enterprises; learners will explore different enterprises to develop their knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of enterprises and the skills needed by entrepreneurs to be successful. Learners will explore how enterprises use market research to find out about their customer needs and competitor behaviour and how internal and external factors may affect enterprises.

### Component 2:

Planning and Presenting a Micro-Enterprise Idea; learners will generate two realistic ideas for a micro-enterprise and choose one of these to plan within budget. They will individually present their business plan for their idea and review the production and delivery of their presentation to make recommendations for improvements.

### Component 3:

Marketing and Finance for Enterprise; learners will explore how marketing is used by enterprises and the factors that influence how enterprises identify and target their market. Learners will complete financial documents and statements and explore how to use them to monitor and improve the performance of an enterprise in order to make decisions and recommend strategies for success.

**For further information about the BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise please visit:**

**[qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/enterprise-2022.html](https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/enterprise-2022.html)**

# BTEC Sport

At Verulam, students who opt to study BTEC Sport follow the specification from the Pearson Edexcel exam board.

The course is split into three components, one exam and two of which are coursework based.

**Component 1 & 2:** Coursework Based (60%): Preparing participants to take part in Sport and Physical Activity & Taking part and Improving other participants sporting performance

**Component 3:** Exam (40%): Developing Fitness to Improve other participants performance in sport and physical activity

## What does the qualification cover?

This course provides an engaging and relevant introduction to the

world of sport. It incorporates important aspects of the industry, such as fitness testing and training for sport and exercise, the psychology of sport, practical sports performance and sport leadership. It enables you to develop and apply your knowledge, while also developing a range of relevant practical, communication and technical skills.

The qualification is the same size and level as a GCSE, it is aimed at everyone who wants to find out more about the sport industry. You will study three components, covering the underpinning knowledge and skills required for the sports sector:

1. Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity
2. Taking part and Improving other participants sporting performance
3. Developing Fitness to Improve other participant's performance in sport and physical activity

## How will I be assessed?

**Component 1:** Non-Examined internal assessment / coursework assignment set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson. (30% of final grade)

**Component 2:** Non-Examined internal assessment / coursework assignment set by Pearson, marked by the centre and moderated by Pearson. (30% of final grade)

**Component 3:** External assessment / exam set and marked by Pearson (1.5 hours exam | 40% of final grade)

For further information about the BTEC Sport please visit:

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/sport-2022.html>





## Further Guidance

**When you are deciding on your options subjects it is important to consider the following points:**

### **How much do you enjoy the subject?**

You will be studying this subject for at least 6 hours per fortnight over the next two years.

### **How well do you normally do in exams?**

Some subjects have more exams than others and some have a more coursework based assessment.

### **What are your future career aspirations?**

Which subjects best suit your future career or future study plans.

### **What is your current academic ability in that subject?**

You may really enjoy a subject but not get the best grades, this could impact on your overall attainment

and average point score for Sixth Form or other career plans.

### **What combination of subjects work well?**

Some subjects are very similar so it is good to get a balance of different courses, some complement each other really well. It is important to not narrow all your options too soon.

There is no one size fits all approach to making options choices, it is about what is right for you as an individual. Once you have made your choices, we will do what we can to place you on the courses you have chosen, working within the limits of our timetable, staffing and other constraints.

During the options evening, students and parents will have the opportunity to discuss their subject choices in more detail.

The evening will be a chance to find out more information about the options process and how to make the subject choices for your son.

If you need any further information about a subject please contact the relevant subject teacher.

If you have a more general options query, please contact Mr Hobbs, Head of Year 9 via email

**[Thomas.Hobbs@Verulam.herts.sch.uk](mailto:Thomas.Hobbs@Verulam.herts.sch.uk)**





# VERULAM

## SCHOOL

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