



A guide to KS4 courses at Islwyn High School



April 2023

Please note that the options/ qualifications on offer within this booklet are subject to the number of pupils opting to follow these courses and the availability of staff to teach specific subjects; we reserve the right to amend our offer based on this information.

Dear parents / carers,

I hope that you find this booklet helpful in providing information about the choices available to your child in year 9, and how to set about making such choices with them. The Key Stage 4 (school years 10 and 11) curriculum introduces possible new courses and high expectations for your child.

In this booklet you will find information regarding the courses available for each option subject. It includes details such as assessment, including examinations and coursework, and an outline of topics and concepts taught. Hopefully, this will enable you and your child to make informed decisions about which subjects they would like to study over the next two years.

Due to timetabling constraints, it is not always possible for students to take their first choice subject in every instance, but we will make every effort to ensure that the Key Stage 4 pathway followed by your child is purposeful and allows them to progress once they leave Islwyn High.

If you require any more information regarding the options process, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Best wishes,

Mr N. Cotter - Year 9 Progress Manager

Mr G. Clarke - Year 9 Deputy Progress Manager





The Learning Pathway

The curriculum is divided into core subjects i.e. subjects that ALL students must study; and options, giving students a chance to choose some of their subjects.

Core Subjects (qualifications)	English, Mathematics, Science, Equality and Diversity, Welsh, Skills Challenge Certificate
Core Subjects (not examined) (Health and Wellbeing)	PSE, Physical Education
Options	<p>GCSE: Art, Computer Science, Geography, Health and Social Care & Childcare, History, Music, PE, Product Design, Sociology*, Spanish, Science: Triple Award</p> <p>Vocational GCSE: Construction, Hospitality and Catering, Performing Arts</p>

* WJEC Eduqas graded 9 - 1

When choosing your options, consider the following points:

	
Choose subjects you enjoy	Choose a subject because your friend is taking it
Choose subjects that you are good at	Reject a subject because you think it's 'for girls' or 'for boys'
Find out which subjects you need if you have a chosen career in mind	Choose or reject a subject because you either like or dislike the teacher
Keep your options open by making a <i>balanced</i> choice	Choose a subject only because you think it will be easy
Talk to your careers advisor and your teachers	Choose a new subject without finding out more about it
Talk to your parents and family	Decide at the last minute

TYPES OF QUALIFICATIONS

GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education)

Many of the subjects available are taught as GCSE courses. These courses are suitable for the many students within the year group. All GCSE qualifications include at least one external written exam and some also have controlled assessments (coursework tasks completed in supervised environments within a given time period). The examinations and controlled assessments are scheduled during *years 10 and 11*. Within some subjects there is a choice of tier which will give learners the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learnt at the most appropriate level.

GCSE results are graded from A* to G (apart from Electronics and Sociology which are graded 9 to 1). Each of these grades represents a pass at GCSE level. A 'U' grade, 'Unclassified', signifies that a student has failed to gain the qualification.

If a student gains a grade D to G it is classified as a Level 1 qualification. Grades C to A* are categorized as Level 2 qualifications. The level of qualification will support their direction of progression after completing year 11.

Vocational Courses

We recommend that a number of students choose vocational courses as at least one of their options. These courses are designed to enable students to achieve a qualification with a more practical, modular approach yet still maintaining an element of rigour with an external examination as part of the core learning. They are an alternative but equivalent pathway through education and suit the learning styles of many students over the traditional system of examinations. Each unit is assessed as the course progresses and students will be awarded an overall grade of Level 1 or 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction at the end of the two year course. These courses have an equivalent GCSE grade weighting to support progression at the end of year 11.

The Process

Friday 28 th April	Information booklet shared with parents/carers and students
	Option column information distributed
Tuesday 2 nd May onwards	Subject videos available online
Thursday 4 th May	Year 9 Parents' Evening
Friday 12 th May 2023	Final deadline for options to be made

* Pupils' option choices will not be accepted prior to parents' evening in May.

After this process, students' options will be reviewed and, in some cases, interviews will be scheduled with staff to ensure their choices are appropriate and they have chosen the best courses to pursue successfully given their strengths and needs.

However please note the following:

- Each student is asked to make two choices in each column. They should think carefully about the second subject as it is not always possible to meet everyone's first choice. For example, the numbers opting for a course could be so low that it is not viable to run it. Equally, it may be that a course attracts more students than can be accommodated; in such an event we will take into account previous commitment to the subject and the individual's ability to benefit from the course.

Support for Students

We recommend that each student discusses their choices with as many people as possible as they can offer impartial and objective advice and support them in this process:

Students already studying the subject in years 10 and 11

Parents and family

Subject teachers

Form teacher

Year Team: Mr Cotter ncotter@islwynhigh.org

Mr Clarke gclarke@islwynhigh.org

Careers advisor: Sara Llewellyn sara.llewellyn@careerswales.gov.wales

Remember, each course lasts for *two years*, and to be successful students will need to work hard, meet deadlines and complete all assessments.

If they have a particular career in mind, check if any particular subjects are required. Also have a look at careers that are available within chosen subject areas.



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

Job matching Quiz: [Job Matching Quiz | Careers Wales \(gov.wales\)](#)

Job Information: [Job Information \(gov.wales\)](#)

Additional advice and guidance about career paths, apprenticeships and job ideas are available at www.careerswales.com.

Pupil Voice

Here are some comments from the current year 11 pupils

What factors did you consider when choosing your options?

- Future courses at college
- Future career
- Subjects I enjoyed
- Subjects I was likely to do well in
- I chose subjects that I wanted to do, not what my friends wanted to do
- As I don't know what I want to do in the future I chose a range of subjects to keep my options open.

What have you done to maximise your success in the courses you have studied?

- Attend revision classes
- Revise more at home
- Ask for help from my teachers when I need it
- Attempt past paper questions to improve the types of questions I will be asked
- Revisit my classwork for 10 minutes each evening
- Completed the coursework to the best of my ability.

What advice would you give younger students starting Key Stage 4?

- "Choose subjects you enjoy and think about what you want to do in the future"
- "Work hard in both lessons and at home to understand all the work covered"
- "Be organised; this helps as you get a lot of work and need to be more independent"
- "Don't choose subjects you don't like"
- "Work hard from the start until the end because everything you do will affect your results"
- "Work to deadlines"
- "Teachers will always help you if you ask"
- "Work hard in all your subjects to make sure your future is full of opportunities especially if you do not know what you want to do yet".

Belong... Believe... Achieve...

Core Examination Subjects



English Language

COURSE OUTLINE

All pupils at Key Stage Four study GCSE English Language, following the Welsh Joint Education Committee specification.

Over the course of their English Language studies, pupils will develop their ability to use English as active and informed citizens and be able to speak, listen, read and write fluently, appropriately, effectively and critically – for a wide range of personal, functional and social purposes.

Pupils will be taught to respond to a wide range of written texts, including challenging and dynamic texts. They will develop the knowledge and skills required to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

GCSE English Language is untiered.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

- The patterns, conventions and structures of verbal and written modes of communication
- Editing and proofreading skills
- A range of reading strategies to enable critical engagement with texts.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

English Language at GCSE is required for a wide variety of careers, with many asking for at least a B or C grade. A high grade at GCSE provides good preparation for AS/A2 English Language along with humanities, social sciences and literacy based courses. Many Universities require a good GCSE grade in English Language to access their courses.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Unit One: Non Examined Assessment (20%)

- Individual Researched Presentation
- Group Discussion

Unit Two - Examination (40%)

- Reading and Writing: Narrative, Description, Exposition

Unit Three - Examination (40%)

- Reading and Writing: Argumentation, Persuasion, Instructional.



English Literature

COURSE OUTLINE

All pupils follow the WJEC GCSE English Literature specification at Key Stage Four.

This course enables learners to:

- understand that texts from English, Welsh or Irish literary heritage have been influential and significant over time and explore their meaning today
- explore how texts from different cultures and traditions may reflect or influence values, assumptions and a sense of identity
- connect ideas, themes and issues, drawing on a range of texts
- become critical readers of fiction and non-fiction prose, poetry and drama
- experience different times, cultures, viewpoints and situations as found in literary texts
- foster an appreciation of Wales' cultural heritage through the study of Welsh writing in English.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Studying English literature, be it at GCSE or beyond, opens you to a world of creativity and ideas. It is an opportunity to discover how we as humans make sense of the world through the written form. The ability to read, interpret and understand literature on a deeper level is incredibly powerful, not least of all because it will enhance your own ability to write and persuade.

Studying English Literature can lead to a number of rewarding careers including teaching, lecturing and a number of professional writing roles including:

- ❖ Digital copywriter
- ❖ Editorial assistant
- ❖ Lexicographer
- ❖ Magazine journalist
- ❖ Newspaper journalist
- ❖ Publishing copy-editor/proof-reader.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Unit One: Examination (35%)

- Prose (Different Cultures)
- Poetry (Unseen poetry comparison)

Unit Two: Examination (40%)

- Literary Heritage Drama
- Contemporary Prose

Unit Three: Non Examined Assessment (25%)

- Shakespeare
- Welsh Writing in English (Poetry).

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

- *Of Mice and Men* John Steinbeck
- *An Inspector Calls* JB Priestley
- *Heroes* Robert Cormier
- *Macbeth / Romeo and Juliet* Shakespeare
- *Poetry 1900-2000: One Hundred Poets from Wales.*

Mathematics

COURSE OUTLINE

There are two GCSE courses delivered by the Mathematics Department - GCSE Mathematics and GCSE Mathematics-Numeracy.

Most learners complete both GCSEs.

GCSE Mathematics will contain aspects of mathematics needed for progression to scientific, technical or further mathematical study.

GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy will build on the levels of numeracy expected at Key Stage 3 and will assess the mathematics that pupils will need in their everyday lives, in the world of work, and in other general curriculum areas.

There will be three tiers of entry for both GCSEs: Grades available:

Higher Tier: A*, A, B, C

Intermediate Tier: B, C, D, E

Foundation Tier: D, E, F, G

Pupils will follow the courses of the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC).

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There will be two final exam papers in each GCSE. A calculator is allowed in one of the GCSE Mathematics exam papers and one of the GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy papers.

For some pupils there is an opportunity to study Additional Mathematics in Year 11 which is excellent preparation for further Mathematical study post 16.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Over the two year course you will study:

- Number
- Algebra
- Shape, space and measures
- Handling data
- Probability.

Pupils will also develop skills including written communication, problem solving, working with others and improving their own learning.



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Mathematics at GCSE is required for a wide variety of careers, with many asking for at least a B or C grade. A high grade at GCSE provides good preparation for AS/A2 Mathematics along with science, finance and computing based courses. Many Universities require a good GCSE grade in Mathematics to access their courses.

Science: Double Award

At Islwyn High School there are three qualifications offered to pupils: **WJEC SEPARATE Science: Triple Award** (3GCSEs); **WJEC GCSE Double Award Science (2 GCSEs)**; WJEC GCSE Single Award Applied Science (1 GCSE).

The majority of pupils will study either Double Award or Single Award Science. However, pupils will have the option to choose to study Triple Award Science as one of their options. Depending on progress, personal interest, aspirations and the advice of teaching staff, students will study Science in one of the three courses.

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC GCSE Science (Double Award) specification provides a **broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study**. It encourages learners to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, Science and to recognise its importance in their own lives and to society. Studying GCSE Science (Double Award) provides the foundations for understanding the material world.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There are two tiers of entry: Higher Tier (Grades A*-D) and Foundation Tier (Grades C – G). **All students are awarded TWO GCSE Grades.**

The Double Award qualification consists of:

Qualification Unit	Weighting
Unit 1: BIOLOGY 1 – Yr. 10	15%
Unit 2: CHEMISTRY 1 – Yr. 10	15%
Unit 3: PHYSICS 1 – Yr. 10	15%
Unit 4: BIOLOGY 2 – Yr. 11	15%
Unit 5: CHEMISTRY 2 – Yr. 11	15%
Unit 6: PHYSICS 2 – Yr. 11	15%
Units 1 - 6 all consist of: Written examination: 1hr 15 minutes. A mix of short answer, structured, extended writing and data response questions with some set in a practical context.	
UNIT 7: PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT Practical Assessments are carried out in centres but are externally marked by the WJEC. These take place in the spring term (Jan-Feb) of Year 11.	10%

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Students cover a large range of topics across the three disciplines including: Cells, The Human Body and its Functions, Plants and Photosynthesis, Ecosystems, Classification, Disease, Atomic Structure and Bonding, Chemical reactions, Metals, The Periodic Table, Acids, Bases and Salts, Electricity, Waves, Energy, Motion, Radiation, Stars and Planets.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Scientific understanding changes our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity. High grades at Science (Double Award) provides a good foundation for not only the continuation of all Science courses but also in a variety of non-science based careers and qualifications.

Science: Single Award

At Islwyn High School there are three qualifications offered to pupils: WJEC Triple Science (3GCSEs); WJEC GCSE Double Award Science (2 GCSEs); **WJEC GCSE Single Award Applied Science (1 GCSE)**.

The majority of pupils will study either Double Award or Single Award Science. However, pupils will have the option to choose to study Triple Award Science as one of their options. Depending on progress, personal interest, aspirations and the advice of teaching staff, students will study Science in one of the three courses.

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC GCSE Applied Science (Single Award) specification utilises a context led approach to science learning and assessment. It provides learners with a broad, coherent, practical, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. Studying the GCSE Applied Science (Single Award) provides insight into, and experience of how Science works, whilst stimulating learners' curiosity and encouraging them to develop an understanding of Science, its applications and its relationship to the individual and society. This GCSE is not designed to enable progression to level 3 qualifications in Science.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There are two tiers of entry: Higher Tier (Grades A*-D) and Foundation Tier (Grades C – G). **All students are awarded ONE GCSE Grade.**

This qualification consists of:

Qualification Unit	Weighting
Unit 1: SCIENCE IN THE MODERN WORLD – Yr. 10 Written examination: 1hr 30 minutes. A mix of short answer, structured, extended writing and data response questions with some set in a practical context.	40 %
Unit 2: SCIENCE TO SUPPORT OUR LIFESTYLES – Yr. 11 Written examination: 1hr 30 minutes. A mix of short answer, structured, extended writing and data response questions with some set in a practical context.	30%
Unit 3: TASK BASED ASSESSMENT – Yr. 11 A task based assessment which is externally assessed by WJEC. It will take place in the second half of the autumn term (November – December) of Year 11.	20%
Unit 4: PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT Practical Assessments that are carried out in centres but are externally marked by WJEC. These take place in the spring term (Jan-Feb) of Year 11.	10%

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Students cover a large range of topics including: Modern Living and Energy, Obtaining Resources from our Planet, Our Planet, Protecting our Environment, Health, Fitness and Sport, Controlling Processes.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

This GCSE is designed to nurture scientific interest and is not designed to enable progression to Level 3 qualifications in Science. However the ideas, principles and skills learnt throughout the course will enable students to make better sense of the everyday world around them.

Equality and Diversity

COURSE OUTLINE

Equality and Diversity is a Level 2 qualification awarded by the exam board NCFE and is delivered to all KS4 students.

It is a preparation for life and work course that is specifically designed to give students an understanding of a range of relevant issues while helping to ensure they are prepared for life after school.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The Equality and Diversity course is split into three units:

- Equality and Diversity in Society
- Equality and Diversity in the Community
- Equality and Diversity in the Workplace.

Over the course of these three units, students look at topics such as discrimination, stereotyping, identity and tolerance. They must show an understanding of the community they live in and the differences that exist within it. Students also look at case studies of people and events that have been affected by issues relating to inequality and prejudice.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

As all employers in the UK are expected to show a commitment to equality and diversity when employing staff. This course shows colleges and workplaces that learners have a good understanding of the issues related to this.

More specifically, relevant careers include:

- ✚ Youth work
- ✚ Community Development work
- ✚ Health & Social Care
- ✚ Customer service
- ✚ Early years care
- ✚ Education.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There is no external exam in Equality and Diversity. Students are assessed purely on the work they produce in class. Everyone will have an online booklet that they must complete over the course in years 10 and 11. Once completed, their work will be assessed and a pass grade will be awarded if students have demonstrated a good level of understanding and knowledge in all areas of the course.

The NCFE Equality and Diversity qualification is a Level 2 course and is equivalent to **two B grades** when achieved.

Section	Weighting	Skills
Individual Project	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning and organisation ▪ Critical thinking and problem solving ▪ Digital literacy
Enterprise & Employability Challenge	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creativity and innovation ▪ Personal effectiveness ▪ Digital literacy
Global Citizenship Challenge	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Critical thinking and problem solving ▪ Creativity and innovation
Community Challenge	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Planning and organisation ▪ Personal effectiveness

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Global Citizenship Challenge

Pupils will study a current Global Issue and form their own opinions as to what needs be done to solve it. They must conduct research into the Global Issue then design a raising awareness method to raise awareness with Year 7 pupils. Past Global issues have been extremism and plastic pollution.



Enterprise and Employability Challenge

Pupils will study the fundamentals of business and use their knowledge to create their own company and produce a product to sell at our Christmas Fair. Can they utilise their skills and make a profit?

Community Challenge

Pupils will learn what it means to be an active member of the community as well as setting themselves targets and deadlines. They will utilise these skills to plan and execute a series of coaching sessions in an area of their choice for Year 7 pupils.



Individual Project

Pupils will set themselves a research question in a topic area of their choice and complete a research essay, which addresses their question.

The pupils can choose any topic that grabs their interest.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The emphasis in the SCC is on applied learning i.e. acquiring and applying a range of **transferable skills**. Learners will develop skills in the context of **purposeful tasks** and appropriate knowledge and understanding. Learners will be encouraged to **value skills development as a key aspect of education and life-long learning**. **These skills are highly valued by employers and colleges alike.**

Welsh

COURSE OUTLINE

The new GCSE specification provides experiences that give all candidates the opportunity to reach their full potential in Welsh in line with their needs and abilities. The aim of the course is to ensure that candidates are aware of the use of Welsh in modern Wales by nurturing a positive attitude towards the Welsh language and culture. Candidates' skills are developed to make use of the language for effective and appropriate communication in their everyday lives and/or in occupational situations.



WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The course offers students the opportunity to further develop their Welsh language skills, whilst expanding to explore new topics such as Wales and Welsh culture, social media and technology and Welsh in the workplace. Throughout the course, students will study sub-topics within the wider themes of Youth, Employment and Wales and the World.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

During the course, pupils will complete 4 units: 1 in Year 10 and the other 3 in Year 11. Two of the four units include prescribed speaking and listening tasks and two include an external reading and writing exam. All examinations are single tier, which will allow all pupils to access all the grades from A* to G.

Exam	Assessment	When?	Weighting
Unit 1	Oracy response to visual stimulus	Year 10	25%
Unit 2	Communicating with other people	Year 11	25%
Unit 3	Narrative, specific and instructional	Year 11	25%
Unit 4	Descriptive, creative and imaginative	Year 11	25%

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Welsh language skills are currently in demand in the Welsh workplace, with many employers regarding the qualification as desirable. This qualification will afford you the basic language skills needed for the workplace, as well as opportunities to further develop your fluency through further education.

Core Subjects





Health and Well-Being



Core Physical Education

COURSE OUTLINE

The school provides Physical Education lessons and activities for all students throughout Key Stage 4 with an emphasis on the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle. It aims to ensure that all pupils:

-  develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities
-  are physically active for sustained periods of time
-  engage in competitive sports and activities
-  lead healthy, active lives.

It is essential that pupils have opportunities to participate in regular and frequent physical activities and that they are encouraged to make informed and responsible choices about the role of physical activity in their lives both in and out of school

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The programme of activities helps students to develop personally and socially as they work individually and in groups or teams. It helps them to reflect on and evaluate their own and others' performances and find ways of improvement.

Activities include badminton, basketball, volleyball, Welsh baseball and tennis.

Core PSE

COURSE OUTLINE

PSE (Personal and Social Education) prepares learners to be personally and socially effective by providing learning experiences in which they can develop and apply skills, explore personal attitudes and values, and acquire appropriate knowledge and understanding.

PSE enables our students to develop a sense of self-worth and interact effectively with others. Learners are equipped to be more informed, confident and skilled in order to take an active and responsible part in society and enhance learning, motivation and achievement.

PSE at Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, learners build on the skills, attitudes and values, and knowledge and understanding they have acquired and developed at Key Stage 3.

PSE reflects the fact that learners are moving towards an independent role in adult life, taking on greater responsibility for themselves and others. Learners are equipped with the skills to manage changing situations with increased confidence and to become financially capable. PSE enables learners to develop a critical awareness of local and global contemporary issues and to participate within their communities as active citizens in the twenty-first century.



WHAT WILL I STUDY?

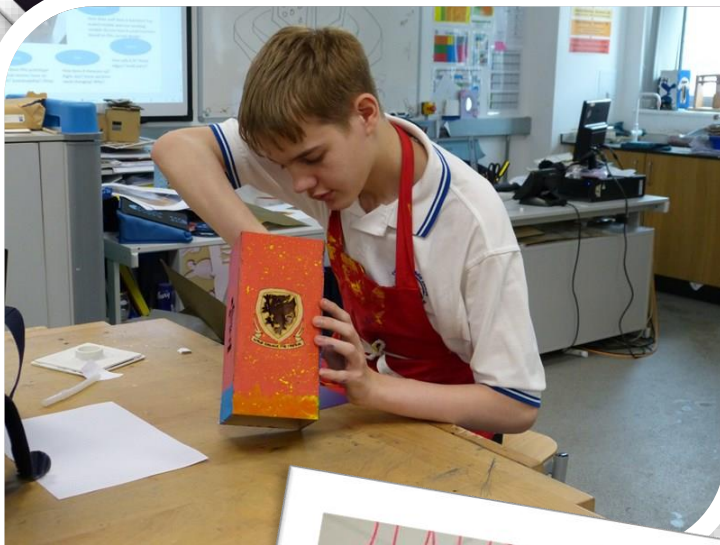
	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 10	Drugs and Alcohol Safety	Respecting the Community	Mental Health Awareness
Year 11	Preparing for Life After Islwyn High	Money Management	Sex and Relationships

Option Courses



Subjects

- + Art
- + Computer Science
- + Construction in the Built Environment
- + Geography
- + Health and Social Care, and Childcare
- + History
- + Hospitality and Catering
- + Music
- + Performing Arts
- + Physical Education
- + Product Design
- + Separate Science: **Triple Award**
- + Sociology
- + Spanish



Art

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC Art and Design GCSE course is split into two elements:

Portfolio – 60%

Externally Assessed Task – 40%.

GCSE candidates will work on their Portfolio studies throughout Year 10 and the first term of Year 11.

Portfolio work will be split into two distinct projects, each with a different theme as a starting point.

A wide range of art techniques, processes and materials will be studied and experimented with at the start of the course to build confidence and understanding. This will allow candidates to move their projects forward in an individual way, and enable them to pursue artwork that interests and inspires them. In addition, candidates will study the work of artists and make connections to the development of their own studies.

Candidates will receive their exam paper at the start of the Spring Term in Year 11. There will be a period of approximately eight weeks in which candidates will need to prepare. At the end of the preparation time they will sit a 10 hour practical exam, in which they will make the piece of artwork that they have planned.



HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Both the Portfolio and Externally Assessed Task are assessed in four areas, these are called Assessment Objectives.

AO1 – Critical understanding

AO2 – Refining, exploring and experimenting

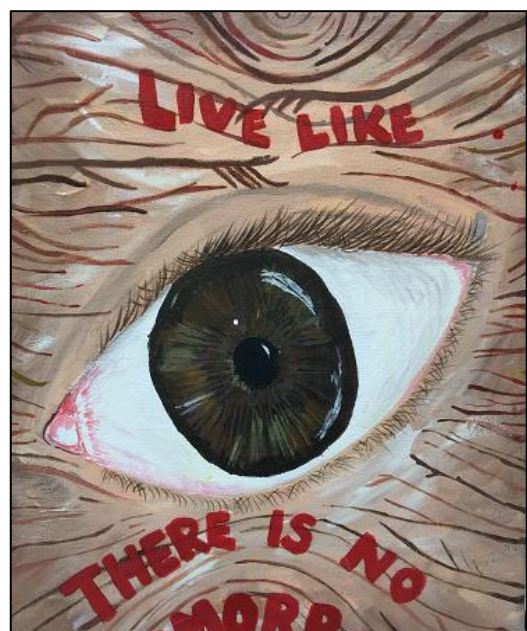
AO3 – Recording ideas

AO4 – Presenting a personal response.

The Portfolio element is studied over a lengthy period of time. Candidates will receive regular feedback on individual pieces of work throughout that time.

During the preparation time for the Externally Assessed Task, candidates will receive constant guidance and feedback. The exam element will be conducted under exam conditions.

Both the Portfolio and Externally Assessed Task are marked against the Assessment Objectives at the end of the course.



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Art and Design courses offered by colleges provide direct and valuable access to the world of industry and commerce.

There are currently over seventy Art and Design related courses on offer in many colleges. These courses offer many opportunities and access to a wide variety of careers. Any career that requires visual literacy will value a qualification in Art.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

- Research and analysis tasks looking at a variety of artists and designers.
- Sketching and recording through hand drawn images and photography.
- Development of ideas through the use of a range of materials, techniques and processes.
- Self-evaluation using annotation to explain ideas, techniques and materials.



Computer Science

COURSE OUTLINE



With a growing requirement for Computer Science skills in society, this rigorous and highly academic course provides learners with a stimulating and motivating study of Computer Science fit for the 21st century.

WJEC's GCSE Computer Science specification is designed to encourage learners to apply and understand the fundamental principles that underpin computer science. Learners analyse computational problems, understand components that make up digital and communication systems, and consider ethical, legal and environmental issues on individuals and wider society.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The course offers students the opportunity to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, data representation and cyber security, whilst also designing, writing and debugging computer programs. Learners will also develop computer programs in Greenfoot and Python and web pages using HTML.



HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Assessment is 80% examination and 20% controlled assessment and is divided into three units:

Unit 1 - Understanding Computer Science (50%)	Weighting
1 hour 45 minutes examination to assess understanding of the theory content of the specification.	50%
Unit 2 - Computational Thinking and Programming (30%)	
2 hour on-screen examination to assess understanding of algorithm design, programming languages: HTML & Greenfoot, and assembly language.	30%
Unit 3 - Software Development (20%)	
Internally assessed and externally moderated 20 hour controlled assessment to develop a piece of work using programming software following a task brief issued by WJEC.	20%
Pupils will learn how to program in Python to complete the task.	

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

The depth of coverage means that this course will provide a solid foundation for either the study of A Level Computer Science or ICT and employment.



Level 1/2 Construction in the Built Environment

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC GCSE in Built Environment offers a learning experience for 14 – 16 year olds which focuses on gaining and applying knowledge, skills and understanding through contextualised tasks and study.

It provides an ideal introduction to the built environment.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The course is made up of three units:

Safety and security in construction – an external exam based on 30 hours of theory lessons.

Practical construction skills – an internally assessed unit made up of 60 hours of practical experiences, supported with written evidence of understanding.

Planning construction projects – an internally assessed unit based on a case study project over 30 hours.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

By studying for the GCSE in 'Built Environment: Constructing the Built Environment' pathway, you will develop two practical skills. Those available are wood, tiling and electrical.

In addition to these practical skills, you will gain other Built Environment skills including interpreting technical sources of information, costing and planning.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit 1: Safety and Security in Construction.

In this examined unit you will develop knowledge, skills and understanding in the ideas and concepts related to the Built Environment. This will include the Built Environment life cycle, structures, materials, sustainability, careers and health & safety.

Unit 2: Creating the Built Environment

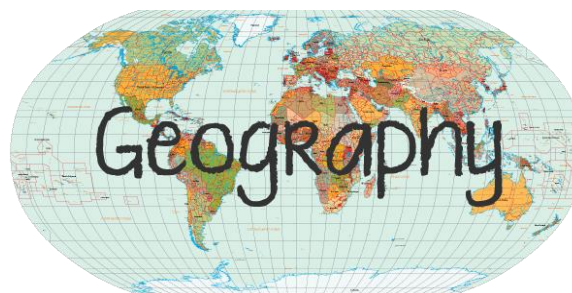
In this non-examined assessment unit (NEA), focus is on the development of 2 practical skills. You are required to select just one pathway. The tasks assesses your knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to identifying, interpreting and calculating information; writing success criteria; carrying out a range of techniques appropriate to the pathway and evaluating tasks.

Unit 3: Planning Construction Projects.

In this unit you will learn, and demonstrate, project management skills. These skills will be used to plan projects, calculate materials, cost jobs and understand who is required to complete tasks.



Geography



COURSE OUTLINE

This is a two-year course in which pupils have the opportunity to develop their geographical skills, knowledge and understanding through investigating and learning about places, environments and issues at a range of scales. This GCSE is an un-tiered qualification which means there is no higher or foundation tier. Students will be required to go on 2 fieldwork trips in the local area to collect data as a part of their Unit 3 NEA assessment. There may also be the opportunity for an overseas trip to help students cement their understanding of geographical concepts. Previously we have visited Iceland, Italy and America.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

All units will be sat in year 11. Unit 1 and Unit 2 will be sat during the summer examination series. Unit 3 will be sat in the autumn series.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit	What is studied
Unit 1 (40% of GCSE mark) 1hr 30	River landscapes, flooding, coastal landscapes, retailing, urban change, tectonics (volcanoes and earthquakes).
Unit 2 (40% of GCSE mark) 1hr 30	Weather, climate, ecosystems, development, environmental challenges.
Unit 3 (20% of GCSE mark) 2hr 30	Non examination assessment on 2 pieces of fieldwork. Students will be required to collect data on a human and physical environment. This will involve two fieldtrips.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Studying Geography at GCSE will provide students with a solid foundation for studying A Levels including Geography and Geology.

Job options relating to studying geography at GCSE and A Level include:

- Town planner
- Teacher
- Geographical information systems officer
- Tourism officer
- Transport planner
- Meteorologist.

Health and Social Care, and Childcare

COURSE OUTLINE

This qualification will equip learners with knowledge and understanding of the development and care of individuals from conception to old age.

Learners will gain an understanding of how service provision in the Health and Social Care and Childcare sectors in Wales support the development and well-being of individuals.

Learners will also be introduced to a broad range of roles within the Health and Social Care and Childcare sectors that will help them to develop an understanding of the career pathways available to them.



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Learners completing the GCSE in Health and Social Care, and Childcare, could then go on to study other qualifications such as:

- Level 3 Children's Care, Play, Learning and Development
- Level 3 Advanced GCE in Health and Social Care, and Childcare.

They may also be interested in progressing to further study and/or training in related areas including Sociology, Psychology and Medical Science.



WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The GCSE in Health and Social Care, and Childcare will cover key topics such as:

- human growth, development and well-being
- promoting and maintaining health and well-being
- health, social care and childcare in the 21st Century
- promoting and supporting health and well-being.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The Single Award GCSE in Health and Social Care, and Childcare is made up of two mandatory units:

Unit 1: Human Growth, Development and Well-Being.

External examination: 1 hour 30 minutes.
40% of qualification.

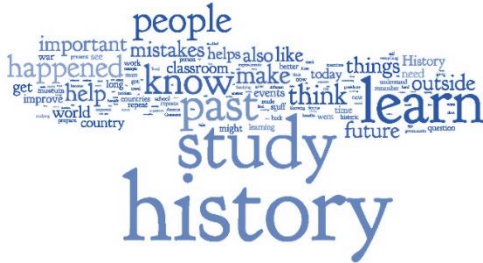
Unit 2: Promoting and Maintaining health and well-being.

Non-Exam Assessment: 60% of qualification.

History

COURSE OUTLINE

History is an exciting and diverse option choice at GCSE where you will study a subject that has real relevance to the world in which we live. History is highly regarded by employers and universities and opens paths to a multitude of careers. With a historical perspective you will be better equipped to appreciate and understand the present day and make informed decisions as to the future.



HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The course is assessed by 3 examinations, two of 60 minutes (50% of the GCSE), and 1 exam of 75 minutes (30% of the GCSE). In addition, there are two pieces of internally marked controlled assessment (accounting for 20% of the GCSE).

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Depth Study

USA 1919-1929

Pupils will study the problems and challenges facing the USA such as restrictions on immigration, racism towards black Americans, Prohibition and the rise of the gangsters, and the threat of Communism in the 1920s. Pupils will also study culture and society in the USA while learning about Charlie Chaplin and the cinema, Louis Armstrong and the jazz music, as well as sport stars such as Babe Ruth. The rise of the American economy will also be studied, including the rise of the motorcar and the stock market, as well as the end of the boom period with the Wall Street Crash of 1929.



Depression, War and Recovery 1930-1951

Pupils will study the problems facing Britain during the Depression, the years during and after WW2 and how this affected the people of Britain. The course will examine the causes of World War Two and how people coped during the War years. The course will also focus on how the Depression, War and Recovery impacted on the people of Wales. The course is focused on social, political and economic changes in Britain 1930-51.

Medicine through time

Students learn about changes in Health and Medicine 1340 to the present day. Students will learn about the causes, treatment and prevention of illness and disease, advances in medical knowledge, developments in patient care and advances in public health and welfare over time. Students will learn about the discovery of bacteria and the creation of antibiotics, plastic surgery and organ transplants. Students will also find out how surgeons moved away from sawing patients legs off whilst they were awake to allowing them to be anaesthetised without feeling pain.



Coursework/Controlled Assessment

There will be two essay questions worth 20%. The topic of the controlled assessment will be on life in the Trenches during World War One and punishments during World War One. When feasible, we run a trip to Belgium/France to visit the battlefields of World War One.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Studying History builds a number of skills that are highly valued by employers, including; critical thinking and analytical skills, problem solving, creativity, intellectual rigour, independence, research, constructing reasoned arguments, communication, time management and thinking objectively.

As History is such a highly reputed subject, it leads to a multitude of different careers, including but not restricted to, a range of managerial roles, secondary school teacher, journalist, civil service administrator, solicitor, archivist, curator, heritage manager, academic librarian, archaeologist, political analyst, business consultant.



Hospitality and Catering

COURSE OUTLINE

By studying Hospitality and Catering, you will be able to:

- Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking a variety of food commodities whilst using different cooking techniques and equipment
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health
- Understand the economic, environmental, ethical and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, diet and health choices
- Understand and explore the Hospitality and Catering Industry, the job roles and different types of equipment used to support the industry.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Further study would provide you with the opportunity to develop a range of specialist and general skills that would support your progression to employment.

Employment in Hospitality and Catering can range from waiting staff, receptionists and catering assistants to chefs, hotel and bar managers and food technologists in food manufacturing.



WHAT WILL I STUDY?

- The environment in which hospitality and catering providers operate
- Principles of nutrition
- How Hospitality and Catering provisions operate
- How provision meets health and safety requirements
- Cooking and food preparation
- How food can cause ill health
- The Hospitality and Catering provision to meet specific requirements.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Unit 1: Written examination:

40% of the qualification.

Length of exam: 1 hour 20 minutes.

Unit 2: Non-Examination assessment

60% of qualification.

Total time allowed: 12 hours.

- You will safely plan, prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes.
- You will propose four nutritional dishes for a menu and then plan for the production of two dishes that could be included on the menu.
- You will then prepare, cook and present the two dishes.

Music

COURSE OUTLINE

Primarily, Music is a practical based subject with emphasis on performing and composing. The GCSE is a two year course, which prepares learners for careers in the Performing Arts, Music or Entertainment Industry whilst developing skills required for any profession, such as confidence, organisation, time keeping and ICT.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?



Performing 30% (solo and ensemble)

Composing 30% (2 pieces)

Appraising 30% (Externally marked listening exam)

2 x short written musical analysis essays 10%.

A combined total of 70% of the qualification is assessed through coursework.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Broad topics covered are:

Western Classical Traditions and the orchestra, Musical Theatre, Jazz & Blues, Welsh Music, Chamber Music, Film Music, Rock & Pop Including Heavy Metal, EDM and Music Technology.

You must be:

- willing to perform (instrument or voice)
- organised
- able to work to deadlines (like in the music industry!)
- able to work as a team.

The following skills are required:

- the ability to play an instrument or sing confidently with a sense of control
- the ability to read **basic** music notation
- basic piano skills
- general ICT skills.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

This course provides good progression to BTEC Nationals or AS/A2 levels which prepare students for careers in Music and the arts including both classically trained performers and pop musicians, sound engineers, publishers or event organisers.

WJEC Level 2 Vocational Award in Performing Arts (Drama or Dance)

COURSE OUTLINE

Performing Arts is a powerful and expressive subject which encourages students to develop creativity, teamwork, confidence, critical thinking, self-discipline and the ability to work collaboratively.

The WJEC Level 2 Performing Arts qualification enables candidates to develop skills, knowledge and understanding of **drama or dance** as a performer and creator. Additionally, it provides opportunities to attend live theatre performances, work with professional companies and perform to live audiences. You need to be enthusiastic about drama or dance and have a willingness to learn and develop your ideas. You need to have a positive attitude towards the subject and be committed to doing practical activities most lessons. The qualification is the equivalent to **one GCSE**.

The qualification is made up of 3 units: Unit 1: Performing, Unit 2: Creating and Unit 3: Performing Arts in Practice. The units are all projects/coursework, there are **no written exams**.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Unit 1: Performing	Weighting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will learn the skills and techniques needed to produce a successful performance of an existing work. This unit can be completed through either drama or dance. You will be assessed through project work (not exams) in response to a brief. You will produce documentation which outlines your research, a rehearsal plan, a reflective journal which records the rehearsal process, and finally an evaluation of the performance. Your final performance will need to be between 3 to 6 minutes long. 	30% Internal
Unit 2: Creating	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You will gain, develop, and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques needed to create and refine your own original piece of work. Your performance piece will be between 3 and 10 minutes long. This can either be a devised drama or dance choreography and can be done individually or as part of a group. You will produce documentation including an outline of your creative idea, a log which tracks the development of your creative idea, and an evaluation on the effectiveness of your creative idea. 	30% Internal
Unit 3: Performing Arts in Practice	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This unit will be completed in Year 11. You will complete a series of tasks in response to an industry commission requiring you to propose an original creative work in response to a brief for an event. You will produce a practical example from your proposal and will pitch your proposal to a small audience. 	40% External

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

The qualification provides a suitable foundation to study Level 3 BTEC Performing Arts or A Level Drama or Dance. Career opportunities include: Actor, Professional dancer, Choreographer, Community arts worker, Dance movement psychotherapist, Theatre director, Drama or Dance teacher, Stage Manager. It can also help with careers in media, business, law, advertising, sales, hospitality and tourism.

Physical Education

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC GCSE Physical Education course is designed to encourage pupils to be inspired, motivated and challenged by the subject and enable them to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career pathways in sport and physical activity.

Pupils who pursue GCSE Physical Education **must**:

- ❖ have an immaculate participation record at Key Stage 3
- ❖ display a positive attitude towards the subject, being a positive role model to others
- ❖ **actively participate in competitive sport for school teams and be members of team/individual clubs outside of school**, participating in at least one sporting activity on a regular basis.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Unit 1: Introduction to Physical Education 50% theory	Unit 2 - The active participant in Physical Education 50% practical
Written examination: 2 hours.	Practical exam assessment
Assessed through a range of short and extended questions based on all units of work covered.	Assessed in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● three different activities in the role of a performer ● at least one individual and one team sport and one other activity from the activities provided ● a personal fitness programme linked to the chosen major activity (8% of grade).

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Summary of the theory content	Summary of the practical content
The subject content focuses on five key areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health, training and exercise 2. Exercise physiology 3. Movement analysis 4. Psychology of sport and physical activity 5. Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport. 	GCSE Physical Education is assessed in three different practical activities in the role of a performer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● one individual sport ● one team sport ● and one other activity from the range of activities covered. One activity will be a major activity which will have a personal fitness programme linked.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Pupils who study GCSE PE can pursue careers in sports science, PE teaching, Physiotherapy, sports coaching, personal training or diet and nutrition related jobs.

Some of the key hiring qualifications requested by employers in today's market, include **leadership**, **perseverance**, **dedication** and **strategic thinking**, all of which you learn in Physical Education at Islwyn High School.

Product Design

COURSE OUTLINE

Students will follow a 2 year GCSE course where the emphasis is on working in a variety of different areas including graphics, systems and control and resistant materials. They will analyse existing products and design and make a range of 3- dimensional products using a wide variety of materials.

Assessment is through written examination (50%) and controlled assessment (50%), which must include a design folder, and 3- dimensional products, and both are completed in Year 11.

Controlled assessment requires strong evidence of the use of ICT, and in-depth knowledge and use of industrial practices.

NOTE: A positive approach and commitment to all Design Technology subjects is essential throughout the course. Pupils will be expected to put in 'extra time' if necessary to keep up with coursework deadlines.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The subject content for GCSE Design and Technology will be assessed in the written examination and non-exam assessment (NEA).

Written examination: Design and Technology in the 21st Century Design.
Length: 2 hours.
50% of the qualification.

NEA: approximately 35 hours.
50% of the qualification.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Product Design is an exciting, creative subject leading to a range of potential careers including architecture, fashion, engineering and design.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Syllabus

A combination of theory and practical projects will give you an overview of technological processes which must be applied within problem solving activities.

The core involves the following:

- Designing and communication skills
- Knowledge of materials and making skills
- Evaluation
- Products and application
- Systems and control
- Awareness of the environmental, moral and social implications of technological activities.



Separate Science: Triple Award (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)



At Islwyn High School there are three qualifications offered to pupils: WJEC Triple Science (3 GCSEs); WJEC GCSE Double Award Science (2 GCSEs); WJEC GCSE Single Award Applied Science (1 GCSE).

The majority of pupils will study either Double Award or Single Award Science. However, pupils will have the opportunity to choose to study **Triple Award Science** as one of their options. Depending on progress, personal interest, aspirations and the advice of teaching staff, students will study Science in one of the three courses.

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC GCSE Science (Triple Award) specification allows students to achieve a GCSE in each of the three sciences: **Biology, Chemistry and Physics**. The course specification provides a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. It encourages learners to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, Science and to recognise its importance in their own lives and to society.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There are two tiers of entry: Higher Tier (Grades A*-D) and Foundation Tier (Grades C – G). **All students are awarded THREE GCSE Grades.** Each GCSE Qualification consists of:

Qualification Unit	Weighting
Unit 1: BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY and PHYSICS (1 for each subject) – Yr. 10	45 %
Unit 2: BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY and PHYSICS (1 for each subject) – Yr. 11	45%
Units 1 and 2 consist of: Written examination: 1hr 45 minutes. A mix of short answer, structured, extended writing and data response questions with some set in a practical context.	
UNIT 7: PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY and PHYSICS (1 for each subject) Practical Assessments that are carried out in centres but are externally marked by WJEC. These take place in the first half of the spring term (Jan-Feb) in Year 11.	10%

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Students cover a large range of topics across the three disciplines including: Cells, The Human Body and its Functions, Plants and Photosynthesis, Ecosystems, Classification, Disease, Homeostasis, Micro-organisms, Atomic Structure and Bonding, Chemical reactions, Metals, The Periodic Table, Acids, Bases and Salts, Reversible Reactions, Electricity, Waves, Energy, Motion, Radiation, Stars and Planets, Kinetic Theory, Nuclear Decay.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Scientific understanding changes our lives and is vital to the world's future prosperity. High grades at Science (Triple Award) provide an excellent foundation for all A-level Science Courses and also in a very wide variety of non-science based careers and qualifications.

Sociology

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Sociology is designed to foster in learners an understanding and critical awareness of the social world around them. The specification focuses on the importance of social structure in explaining social issues.

Learners will be encouraged to explore and debate contemporary social issues to enable them to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions and to question their everyday understanding of social phenomena. By following this course, learners will develop their own sociological awareness through active engagement with the contemporary social world. This specification will develop learners' ability to think sociologically in relation to their experience of the social world around them so that they are able to play a positive, active and informed role in society.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

There will be two 1hr 45 minute examinations both worth 50% of the final GCSE grade. Both of these exams will take place at the end of the year 11. There is no coursework in this GCSE.

Students who choose Sociology are required to have good literacy and writing skills.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?



Topics included in this GCSE are:

- Social concepts (understanding identity, gender, social class, feral children)
- The family (including divorce, marriage, gender roles)
- Education (including gender, social class and ethnicity attainment gap)
- Social stratification (including racism, poverty, sexism, disability, sexuality)
- Crime (understanding reasons why people commit crime)
- Social research methods (understanding how sociologists collect data and design social research).

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Studying sociology at GCSE will provide students with a solid foundation for studying A Levels including Criminology, Sociology and Psychology.

Job options relating to studying sociology at GCSE and A Level include:

- Teacher, police officer, criminologist, social worker, social policy maker, youth worker, journalist and many more.

Spanish

COURSE OUTLINE

This highly academic subject offers you an exciting challenge, allowing you to use your language skills to communicate in the country/countries where the language is spoken. You will concentrate on 'real' situations you might come across in future study and employment or whilst on holiday.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The examination consists of tests in the four skill areas of **LISTENING, SPEAKING, READING and WRITING**. Each exam is worth 25%. You and your teacher will decide whether you will sit foundation or higher papers.

Higher tier - A* - E

Foundation tier - C - G



WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The content of the course will cover the following broad themes:

- Identity and culture
- Wales and the world
- Current and future study and employment.



These broad themes will be divided into sub-themes to include things like self and relationships, health and fitness, entertainment, food and drink, travel and transport, holidays, environment, school life and the world of work. Pupils will also study aspects of Latin American culture and traditions, where Spanish is spoken.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

The course will help you to:

- develop the ability to use the language effectively as you progress to A level
- form a sound base of skills, language and attitudes which you might need for further study, work and leisure
- look more favourable when applying for university (many top universities look favourably at a language qualification for non-language based courses, such as History, Law and Medicine)
- become more employable as languages are vital in today's industries.

Scan the QR codes for more information and important facts about why languages matter.



SCAN ME



SCAN ME

REFLECTION ON MY CURRENT SUBJECTS

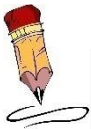
Reflect on how you feel about your current subjects in the blob tree and/or table.



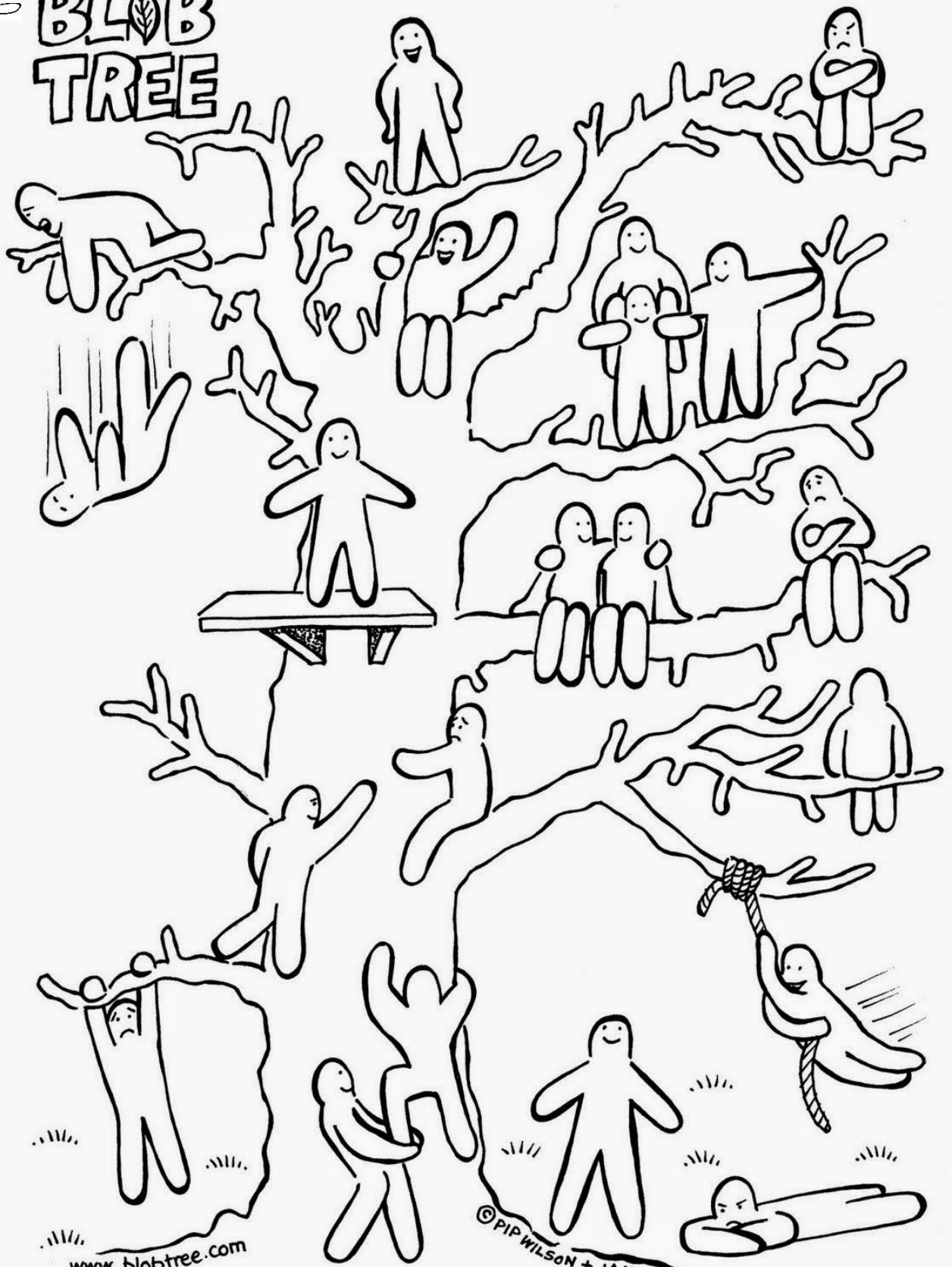
SUBJECTS I ENJOY	WHY I ENJOY THEM
SUBJECTS I DON'T ENJOY	WHY I DON'T ENJOY THEM

Notes on Research: Complete the table below to summarise any research you have carried out.

Possible Jobs/Careers	Why this interested me?	Subjects that I should consider studying to help me work towards this job/career



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