



Year 9 Options Booklet

Llyfryn Opsiynau Blwyddyn 9

2026

A guide to KS4
courses at
Islwyn High
School



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.

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A guide to KS4 courses at Islwyn High School

Canllaw i gyrsiau CA4 yn Ysgol Uwchradd Islwyn

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 contains details such as assessment - including Examinations/Coursework/Controlled Assessments - 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 School.

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

Best wishes,

Mr B. Watkins

Head of Year

The Learning Pathway - Y Llwybr Dysgu

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, Business Studies, Computer Science, Geography, Health and Social Care & Childcare, History, Music, PE, Product Design, Religious Studies, Separate Science: Triple Award**, Social Studies, Spanish</p> <p>Vocational GCSE: Construction, Engineering, Hospitality and Catering, IT Users Level 2, Performing Arts</p>

***Dependent upon final curriculum model, the 'Separate Science: Triple Award' course may be followed by certain classes rather than remain an option choice*

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. 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

Tuesday 3 rd March 2026	Initial email to parents/carers fo Year 9 pupils outlining the 'options process' and timeline
March - April 2026	Information booklet shared with parents/carers and students (subject/course videos to follow online)
Thursday 16 th April 2026	Year 9 Parents' Evening – an opportunity to speak with subject teachers regarding potential course options; Careers Wales adviser also on-site
April - May 2026	In-lesson and assembly talks (from subject specialists and Heads of Department) with a particular emphasis on courses which have not been studied at Key Stage 3; 'free survey' exercise to follow
June (dates to be announced)	Option column information distributed with final deadline for options to be made

When initial choices are processed, 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 events 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: (Head of Year) Mr Watkins watkib1@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.



Pupil Voice

Here are some comments from previous 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?

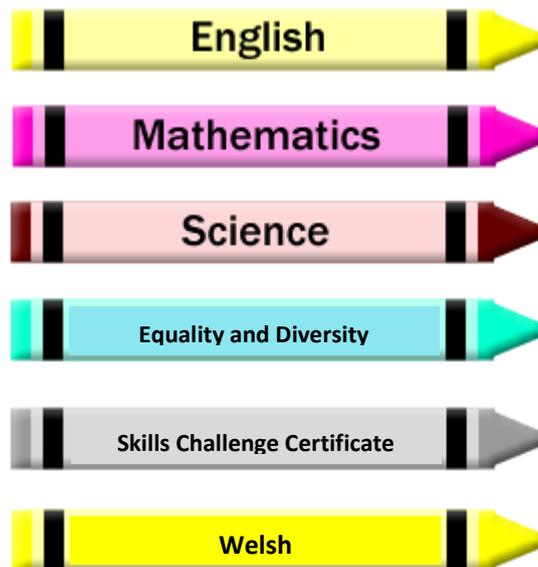
- Attend revision classes
- Revise more at home
- Ask for help from my teachers when I need it
- Attempt past paper questions to improve the types of questions I will be asked
- Revisit my classwork for 10 minutes each evening
- Completed the coursework to the best of my ability.

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



Pynciau Arholiad Craidd

English Language and Literature

COURSE OUTLINE

All KS4 pupils will follow a combined GCSE (either double award or single award). This course enables pupils to:

- appreciate how language connects us to the world around us through engagement with the spoken word and written texts from a range of times, places and cultures;
- read and listen to a range of spoken and written texts, considering how language, register and style convey meaning;
- understand the significance of purpose, audience, medium and context when communicating, expressing, understanding and responding to language;
- express themselves in speaking and writing through clear, accurate, fluent and creative use of English;
- develop and apply knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary, grammar and use of the English language

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The vast majority of pupils will study the double award course. This will include:

- A range of poetry (both studied and unseen)
- A range of non-fiction texts such as articles, reviews and autobiographies
- 'A Christmas Carol' – Charles Dickens
- 'An Inspector Calls' – J. B. Priestley
- 'Macbeth' or 'Romeo and Juliet' – William Shakespeare

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Single Award

- **Unit 1: Context and Meaning** – 30% written examination, 60 marks
- **Unit 2: Belonging** – 20% Non Examination Assessment (NEA), 60 marks
- **Unit 3: Influence and Power** – 20% NEA, 50 marks
- **Unit 4a: Motivations** – 30% written examination, 60 marks

Double Award

- **Unit 1: Context and Meaning** – 15% written examination, 60 marks
- **Unit 2: Belonging** – 10% Non Examination Assessment (NEA), 60 marks
- **Unit 3: Influence and Power** – 10% NEA, 50 marks
- **Unit 4a: Motivations** – 20% written examination, 60 marks
- **Unit 5: Continuity and Change** – 20% NEA, 60 marks
- **Unit 6: Connections** – 25% written examination, 80 marks

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

- Writing and Media – author, journalist, editor, copywriter, scriptwriter, content creator
- Marketing and Communication – PR specialist, social media manager, advertising executive
- Education and Academia – teacher, lecturer, tutor, researcher
- Law and Politics – lawyer (with further study), paralegal, political advisor, speechwriter
- Business and Management – HR, corporate trainer, business analyst
- Creative Industries – playwright, theatre director, actor, literary agent
- Translation and Linguistics – translator, interpreter, lexicographer

Mathematics

COURSE OUTLINE

All learners will follow the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) GCSE Mathematics and Numeracy. This is a double award qualification meaning that it is worth two GCSEs.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Unit 1: Financial Mathematics and Other Applications of Numeracy. This is a written examination which constitutes **30%** of the qualification. Questions will be set in personal and other real-world contexts. A calculator will be allowed in this paper.

Unit 2: Non-calculator. This is a written examination which constitutes **30%** of the qualification. The paper will include context-free questions and questions set in mathematical and other contexts. A calculator will not be allowed in this paper.

Unit 3: Calculator-allowed. This is a written examination which constitutes **40%** of the qualification. The paper will include a mix of questions set in real-world and other contexts, and context-free questions. A calculator will be allowed in this paper.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

There will be two tiers of entry for this qualification: Higher: A*-D; Foundation: C - G

Over the two year course, learners 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.

FURTHER QUALIFICATIONS OFFERED

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

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.

The Sciences: Double Award

In September 2026, the WJEC will offer a new suite of qualifications to Science at Islwyn High School. There will be **three Science qualifications offered to pupils**: Triple Award (3GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics); **WJEC GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) (2 GCSEs)**; WJEC GCSE Integrated Science (Single Award) (1 GCSE).

The majority of pupils will study Double Award and a few selected pupils will form one class to study 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 The Sciences (Double Award) specification provides the foundations for understanding the material world. It is an accepted qualification should pupils wish to follow a further A-level course at college.**

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 – Year 10	14.3%
Unit 2: CHEMISTRY 1 – Year 10	14.3%
Unit 3: PHYSICS 1 – Year 10	14.3%
Unit 4: BIOLOGY 2 – Year 11	15.7%
Unit 5: CHEMISTRY 2 – Year 11	15.7%
Unit 6: PHYSICS 2 – Year 11	15.7%
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: SCIENTIFIC ENQUIRY Scientific Enquiries are carried out in centres but are externally marked by the WJEC. This includes a one-hour practical task followed by a one-hour written task in two of the Science disciplines. These take place in the spring term (Jan-Feb) of Year 11.	10%

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Learners cover a large range of topics across the three disciplines including:

- **Biology** – *The basis of life and the continuity of life.*
- **Chemistry** – *Chemical substances and how they behave, chemical bonding, reactions and resources.*
- **Physics** – *Forces, motion, the universe, waves, electricity and energy.*

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.

GCSE Integrated Science: Single Award

In September 2026, the WJEC will offer a new suite of qualifications to Science at Islwyn High. There will be three Science qualifications offered to pupils: Triple Award (3GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics); WJEC GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) (2 GCSEs); **WJEC GCSE Integrated Science (Single Award) (1 GCSE)**.

The majority of pupils will study Double Award and a few selected pupils will form one class to study 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 Integrated 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 Integrated Science 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: Living on Earth Written examination: 1hour 30 minutes - a mix of short answer, structured, extended writing and data response questions with some set in a practical context which includes a pre-release paper prior to the examination.	45 %
Unit 2: Science in a Changing World Written examination: 1hour 30 minutes - a mix of short answer, structured, extended writing and data response questions with some set in a practical context.	45%
Unit 3: Scientific Enquiry Scientific Enquiries are carried out in centres but are externally marked by the WJEC. This includes a one-hour practical task followed by a one-hour written task. These take place in the spring term (Jan-Feb) of Year 11.	10%

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit 1 – Living on Earth

In this topic learners will gain knowledge, understanding and skills in the following areas: ***diet and exercise, disease prevention, energy in ecosystems, generating, distributing and storing electricity, using materials, environmental considerations of transport, efficiency in transport.***

Unit 2 – Science in a Changing World

In this topic learners will gain knowledge, understanding and skills in the following areas: ***managing human and environmental concerns, carbon in our climate – climate change, the impact of space travel on humans, challenges of living on other planets and the moon, communication, biological, physical and chemical techniques for identification.***

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.

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?



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.**



COURSE OUTLINE

The 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. This is a qualification that can foster your curiosity, develop language skills and strategies, and open doors to further study and jobs. Be part of the Government’s aim and be one of a million Welsh speakers by 2050!

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

There are three broad themes - Cynefin, Identity and Culture.

Within these themes you will learn:

- about the value of Welsh language socially and in the world of work;
- about its use in Wales and around the world;
- how to understand and use Cymraeg with others in a spontaneous and confident way;
- how to develop skills for work and life;
- how to respond creatively to literature.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

During the course, pupils will complete 4 units: two units are Non-Examination oral Assessments and two units are external reading and writing exams. **All examinations are single tier, which will allow all pupils to access all grades.**

Exam	Assessment	When?	Weighting
Unit 1	Paired oracy -responding to visual stimulus (non-examination assessment)	Year 11	25%
Unit 2	Paired oracy – responding to various sources (non-examination assessment)	Year 11	25%
Unit 3	Preparing for the future – translanguaging and translating tasks	Year 11	25%
Unit 4	Literature and creative writing	Year 11	25%

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Jobs advertised in Wales often require the ability to speak Welsh as essential or desirable. Welsh language skills are currently in demand in the Welsh workplace. 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



HEALTH &

WELLBEING

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, tennis, football, rugby, 'health, fitness and wellbeing', dance, rounders and cricket.



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.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

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.

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 10	Life, Crime and Social Survival		Sex, Drugs and Alcohol
Year 11	Preparing for Life After Islwyn High	Money Management	Impact of drugs on adult life

Option Courses

Pynciau Dewisol



Options 2026

Subjects to study in Years 10 & 11

Potential Option Subjects

- + Art
- + Business Studies
- + Computer Science
- + [Level 1 / 2] Construction in the Built Environment
- + [Level 1 / 2] Engineering
- + Geography
- + Health and Social Care, and Childcare
- + History
- + Hospitality and Catering
- + [TLM] IT Users Level 2 Extended Certificate
- + Music
- + Performing Arts
- + Physical Education
- + Product Design
- + Religious Studies
- + Separate Science: **Triple Award***
- + Social Studies
- + Spanish

**Dependent upon final curriculum model, the 'Separate Science: Triple Award' course may be followed by certain classes rather than remain an option choice.*

*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.***

COURSE OUTLINE

If you enjoy being creative, experimenting with materials, and expressing your ideas visually, GCSE Art and Design could be the perfect choice for you. This exciting course gives you the opportunity to explore your imagination while developing practical and creative skills across a wide range of artistic techniques.

Throughout the course you will learn how artists and designers communicate ideas, emotions, and messages through their work. You will experiment with different materials and processes such as drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media, and 3D work. You will also study the work of inspiring artists and designers to help develop your own ideas and creative style.

You will build a personal portfolio of work that shows your creativity, skills, and ability to develop ideas from initial research through to final outcomes. By the end of the course you will have produced a collection of exciting artwork and projects that reflect your own unique artistic style and creative journey.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

GCSE Art and Design is assessed through two units of work.

- **Unit 1 – Portfolio**
Assessment Type: Non-Exam
Assessment 60% of qualification: 120 marks



This unit is designed to enable you to develop knowledge, understanding and skills within the creative process. You will be encouraged to make personal discoveries and take creative risks through your own investigations. You will be required to produce a portfolio:

- through a sustained project that shows development, refinement, reflection and presentation;
- that is internally set, in consultation with your teacher, based on a theme, concept or specific design brief.

- **Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment (ESA)**
Assessment Type: Non-exam assessment 40% of qualification: 80 marks

The Externally Set Assignment contains five overarching 'big ideas'. You must choose one big idea and use given stimuli as a starting point to inform your work. You will undertake contextual and practical research and supporting studies during a preparatory period. This will inform your response during a 10-hour 'sustained focus' period.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

In GCSE Art and Design you will explore a variety of exciting techniques and themes. You will learn how artists, designers, and cultures inspire creative work, and use this inspiration to develop your own ideas.

You may work with:

- Drawing and illustration
- Painting and mixed media
- Printmaking
- Photography and digital art
- 3D materials and sculpture
- Graphic design techniques

You will keep a **sketchbook** to record your ideas, research artists, experiment with materials, and show how your work develops. Lessons are practical and creative, giving you the freedom to explore your own interests and style.

You will also:

- Visit galleries or explore artists' work
- Learn how to analyse and discuss art
- Experiment with new materials and techniques
- Create exciting final pieces based on your ideas



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

GCSE Art and Design is an excellent foundation for many creative careers and further study. After GCSE, you could continue with **A Level Art and Design**, creative college courses, or specialist training.

Careers linked to art and design include:

- Graphic designer
- Illustrator
- Animator or game designer
- Fashion designer
- Architect
- Photographer
- Interior designer
- Product designer
- Art teacher
- Museum or gallery curator



Creative skills are also valued in many other careers because they show **problem-solving, imagination, independence, and the ability to think differently.**

Business Studies

COURSE

The WJEC GCSE Business qualification will develop your understanding of the activities that make a business successful. You will gain an insight into critical issues facing businesses and ways in which these can be solved. You will research to make reasoned judgements and think critically about businesses in your area. You will also reflect on business activity in the context of the environment and sustainability. You will study the impact business has on society. You will explore job market trends and understand different business careers and employment opportunities available to you.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit 1: Introduction to the Business World – In this unit, you will study the fundamentals of business. You will explore the purpose of business activity and the nature of business enterprises, understanding the different types of business ownership and aims. Additionally, you will learn about markets and business sectors and the importance of the consumer. You will calculate costs and revenue to make business decisions.

Unit 2: Key Business Considerations - In this unit, you will undertake research on a chosen business in your locality and use your research findings to produce a report.

Unit 3: Business Strategies for Success – In this unit, you will explore the key business functions of finance, marketing, human resources, and production. Additionally, you will study strategies for business growth and understand how businesses are affected by political, legal, and economic external factors.

Unit 4: Business Creation – In this unit, you will develop enterprise skills. You will carry out primary and secondary market research to collect information for an entrepreneurial opportunity you have identified. You will produce a report that covers key aspects of your business proposal.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Units 1 and 3 are assessed by written examinations containing both short and extended answers, with some based around business situations.

Units 2 and 4 are Non-Examined Assessments where you will be given an assignment brief to complete. You will undertake research, analyse the data and provide judgements.

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

Unit 1	Written Examination: 1 hour 15 Minutes	30% of Qualification	60 Marks
Unit: Introduction to the Business World - Available in Year 10			
Main Topics	<i>Introduce learners to the key concepts to be explored throughout the course, introduce learners to skills, introduce learners to business fundamentals, introduce the business world and build up knowledge to allow for meaningful analysis and investigation of the themes that follow.</i>		
Unit 2	Non-examination Assessment: 5 Hours	15% of Qualification	48 Marks
Unit: Key Business Considerations - Available in Year 10			
Main Topics	<i>Allow learners to develop their skills in business ethics, business and the environment, business and technology.</i>		
Unit 3	Written Examination: 1 hour 15 minutes	30% of Qualification	60 Marks
Unit: Business Strategies for Success - Available in Year 10			
Main Topics	<i>Allow learners to develop their skills in business finances, marketing, human resources, and production</i>		
Unit 4	Non-examination Assessment: 8 Hours	25% of Qualification	60 Marks
Unit: Business Creation - Available in Year 11			
Main Topics	<i>Allow learners to make links to the other three units, allow learners to consider a wide range of business concepts and themes in a practical sense, allow learners to consider how businesses are created, developing a wide range of business skills.</i>		

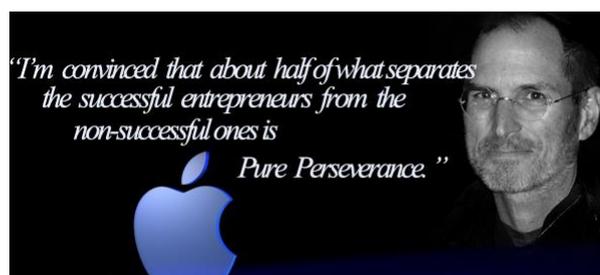
SKILLS, CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

GCSE Business helps to develop a wide range of skills for your future:

- Literacy Skills – reading, writing, understanding, and engaging with various forms of text and information.
- Numeracy Skills – understanding, interpreting, and working with numbers to solve business problems.
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving – analysing business information to make decisions or judgments.
- Personal Effectiveness Skills – achieving your goals by managing your time, setting targets and learning from your experiences.
- Creativity and innovation - thinking creatively by coming up with solutions to business problems.

GCSE Business will equip you with a range of skills that are not only valuable for studying business further, but which will combine with a variety of subjects.

This specification provides a suitable foundation for the study of Business at either AS or A level. In addition, the specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for learners who do not progress to further study in this subject.



Computer Science

COURSE OUTLINE



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

WJEC's revised GCSE Computer Science specification from 2025 is designed to encourage learners to apply and understand a broad range of fundamental principles that underpin computer science. Learners understand how computers work, learning key theoretical principles, whilst using their own programming skills to create applications and solutions, considering the ethical, legal and environmental issues on individuals and wider society.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit 1 will help build learners' understanding of the practical aspects of computer science such as hardware, software, systems, networks and communication, planning and developing computer-based solutions. In unit 2, learners will be given the opportunity to develop their programming skills, creating and developing solutions to real world problems using Python Tkinter.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Assessment is 50% written examination and 50% on screen examination and is divided into two units both examined in the summer of Year 11:

Unit 1 - Understanding Computer Science (50%)	Weighting
1 hour 30 minutes written examination to assess the practical content of the course	50%
Unit 2 – Computer Programming (50%)	
2 hour on-screen examination using Python Tkinter to assess the programming element of the course	50%

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 BTEC L1/L2 Construction in the 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.



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: health & safety legislation and regulations, fire safety, signage risk assessment and security of work sites.

Unit 2: Creating the Built Environment

In this Non-Examined Assessment unit (NEA), focus is on the development of 3 practical skills. The tasks assess 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.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

By studying for the **BTEC L1/L2** 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.



[Level 1/2] Engineering

COURSE OUTLINE

Do you ever look around your home and think of handy products that could improve people's lives or get inspired by the amazing feats of engineering all around you? Are you creative, and want to start building the skills you need for a successful career in the industry?

Students will follow a 2 year BTEC Vocational course where the emphasis is on working in a variety of areas of the Engineering world.

Assessment is through **Unit 1 - Manufacturing engineering products** (40%); **Unit 2 - Designing engineered products** (20%) and a **Written Examination** (40%). These units of work are completed across years 10 & 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.*

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The subject content for **L1/2 Engineering** will be assessed in the Written Examination and Non-Examination Assessments (NEA).

Written examination: Solving Engineering Problems.

- Length: 1 hour 30 minutes
- 40% of the qualification

NEA x2:

- Approximately 30 hours
- 60% (40 & 20) of the qualification

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

There are a wide range of opportunities within the field of engineering, for example; Aerospace engineer, Biomedical engineer, Civil/structural engineer, Computer engineer, Electrical/electronic engineer, Environmental engineer, Marine engineer, Mechanical engineer and Product engineer.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Syllabus

A combination of theory, design and practical projects will give you an overview of engineering processes which must be applied to different scenarios and real life products.

You will develop a range of skills which are attractive to employers, colleges and universities including:

- Communication
- Critical thinking
- Learning independently
- Research
- Taking on responsibility
- Time management



Geography

COURSE OUTLINE

"The study of Geography is more than remembering places on a map. It's about understanding the complexity of our world, accepting the diversity of cultures that exist across continents. It's about using that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together. Barack Obama.

Geography is the study of places and our relationships between people and their environments. Geographers explore the physical properties of the earth's surface and human societies spread across it. What can be more important for our future?

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Unit 1 - Our physical and human world (30% exam).

- Drainage basin and rivers
- Changing coastlines
- Migration
- Settlement change



Unit 2 - Developing fieldwork skills (25% fieldwork enquiry).

Unit 3 - Our dynamic and diverse world (30% exam)

- The geography of inequality
- The high and lows of our weather
- Wild weather
- Continual climate change
- Managing global challenges



Unit 4 - Sustainable solutions (15% decision making exercise)

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Exam 60%

Coursework/NEA 40%

SKILLS THAT WILL BE DEVELOPED

Geography is always in the news, from issues such as river and coastal flooding, mass migration, tropical storms and climate change. Geography will help you interpret and analyse issues and problems that people face around the globe.

Geography is about problem solving these issues, you will learn how to discuss and evaluate. These are important skills for your future career.

Collecting data and information during fieldwork visits. You will then learn how to analyse and evaluate this data and form conclusions.

The transferable skills practised in geography are actively sought by employers. There is a wealth of jobs that

geographers can do. Most jobs require an element of geography, be that a Doctor looking at the spread of disease or an engineer trying to reduce plastic use and waste. Most university courses now contain at least one module on sustainability. You will have a head start if you choose Geography

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION



Unit 2: The Black Death c. 1330–c.1360

Pupils will trace the dramatic spread of the deadly Black Death as it travelled from Asia across trade routes to Western Europe in the fourteenth century. They will learn about the terrifying symptoms that gave this disease its ominous reputation and left communities living in fear. Pupils will uncover the strange and sometimes desperate ways medieval society attempted to fight the plague, from bizarre remedies such as shaved chicken bottoms to the use of dried toads. They will also explore how people searched for answers through religion, superstition, and early medical ideas. Finally, pupils will analyse the profound impact the Black Death had on medieval society.

Unit 3: Changes in US society c.1880–c.1980

Pupils will explore the challenges and tensions facing the United States, including strict limits on immigration and the deep-rooted racism experienced by Black and Native Americans. They will also discover the vibrant culture and society of the era, learning how figures such as Charlie Chaplin transformed cinema and how Louis Armstrong helped shape the exciting new sound of jazz, alongside other powerful influences on American culture. Pupils will investigate the dramatic rise of the American economy during the boom years before examining how it all came crashing down with the devastating Wall Street Crash of 1929. Finally, they will study the impact of inspiring individuals such as Martin Luther King Jr. on the Civil Rights Movement, as well as the powerful push for equality during Second-wave feminism in the 1960s.

Unit 4: Coursework/Controlled Assessment



Learners will take part in an exciting historical enquiry where they explore a major period of change in society. Through a thematic study covering approximately 75 to 100 years, they will investigate how people's lives, ideas, and experiences evolved over time. By examining a range of historical sources, asking important questions, and developing their own interpretations, learners will uncover how and why societies change. When possible, we run a trip to the battlefields of Belgium/France as part of this unit.

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

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.

[TLM] IT Users Level 2 Extended Certificate

Digital Applications for Business: Level 2 Technical Award (Equivalent to 2 GCSEs)

COURSE OUTLINE

This qualification is designed for students who may enjoy a practical, project-based learning environment. Instead of a traditional terminal exam, students build a

comprehensive digital portfolio that demonstrates their ability to use professional IT software to solve real-world business challenges.

As a **Double Award**, this course carries the same weight as **two GCSEs** (B grade). The course provides an opportunity for students to progress into further education, digital apprenticeships, or the modern workplace with practical IT-related skills.



WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The Core Project

The course is structured around a central **Business Project**. Students step into the role of an IT Consultant, creating a suite of professional resources to help a business launch Desktop Publishing (DTP) projects, manage data and finances, and reach new customers, using email, mail merge letters, leaflets and flyers.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

How the Qualification is Achieved:

The journey through the course is based on consistent achievement and the building of a digital evidence folder:

1. **The Portfolio:** Students complete a series of practical tasks based on a chosen business project.
2. **The Evidence:** Students save their spreadsheets, documents, and designs into a digital portfolio as proof of their competency.
3. **The Result:** The teacher assesses the work as each unit is completed. Once the portfolio is verified, the student is awarded their double-GCSE equivalent grade.

"This qualification bridges the gap between being a consumer of technology and a professional creator, ensuring students are 'business-ready' by the end of Year 11."

OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

Key Skills Developed:

- **Professional Branding (DTP):** Designing high-quality marketing materials, brochures, and newsletters with a consistent corporate identity.
- **Financial Modelling:** Building sophisticated spreadsheets to manage budgets, calculate costs, and forecast growth using complex formulas and data analysis.
- **Data Management:** Learning how to organise, filter, and retrieve information efficiently to ensure a business remains organised and secure.
- **Digital Asset Management (Images):** Preparing and enhancing images to ensure all business communications meet professional visual standards.
- **Interactive Pitching (Presenting):** Creating high-impact, interactive presentations to communicate complex ideas clearly to customers and stakeholders.
- **Modern Communication:** Mastering professional email etiquette and online security awareness used in the UK workforce today.

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.



Bro:

Performing*	32.5%
Composing*	32.5% - 2 pieces
Appraising	35% - Externally marked listening exam, sat digitally online

****A combined total of 65% of the qualification is assessed through coursework.***

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

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) to an audience
- organised;
- able to work to deadlines (like in the music industry!);
- able to work as a team;
- willing to join choir, band or the show cast.

The following skills are required:

- the ability to play an instrument or sing;
- the ability to read **basic** music notation;
- basic piano skills;
- good ICT skills.



CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

This qualification provides a suitable foundation for the study of Music at A-level. It will also provide a satisfying and worthwhile course of study for you if you choose not to progress to study further. In the future, creativity is going to be one of the most important and in-demand skills at work (World Economic Forum). The study of creative subjects, like Music, is becoming even more important and relevant to young people to give you the chance to succeed, whatever your ambitions! At the same time, you will find many opportunities to develop and improve your personal wellbeing both independently and as part of a wider community. Importantly, studying music will develop many transferable skills including communication, presentation skills, team working, leadership, focus, refinement, creativity and self-confidence.

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: Principles of Physical Education and Health (40% of Qualification)	Unit 2 Performance and Personal Training (60% of Qualification)
Digital examination: 1 hour 30 mins. 80 Marks	Practical Non-Examination Assessment 120 Marks
Assessed through questions requiring objective response, quick responses, short and extended answers.	Assessment details: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Perform in one sport or physical activity from the approved list.● Perform in a second sport or physical activity <u>or</u> provide coaching in a sport or physical activity from the approved list.● Plan, implement and evaluate a personal training activity over 8-10 weeks for a sport or physical activity from the approved list.

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

By studying Physical Education and Health, you will be able to:

- perform effectively in different sports and physical activities by developing skills and techniques and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas;
- analyse physical performance and select appropriate strategies and interventions for development and improvement.
- think critically and reflectively about your own and others' performance;
- develop knowledge and understanding of health, wellbeing, sport and physical activity and the links between them;
- understand the factors that impact on levels of activity and the relationship with physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing;
- understand the socio-cultural influences on participation, and contemporary developments within sport and physical activity.

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 **Digital Online Examination** and **Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)**.

Written examination:

Design and Technology in the 21st Century Design

- Length: 90 minutes
- 30% of the qualification

NEA:

- Approximately 35 hours
- 70% 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.

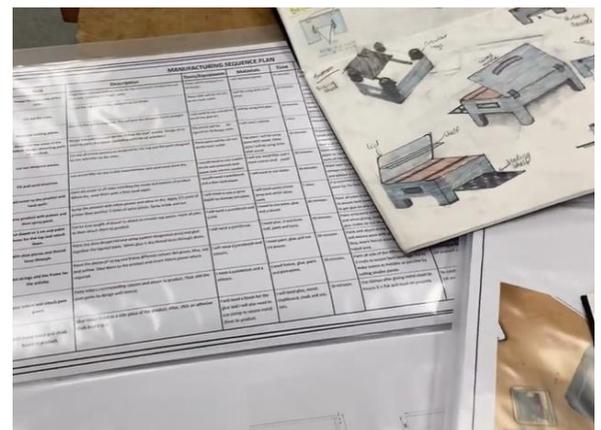
WHAT WILL I STUDY?

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.**



Religious Studies

COURSE OUTLINE

At GCSE, RVE becomes RS (Religious Studies). The course is made up of four topics studied over 2 years.

The course covers a wide range of religious, non-religious and ethical issues. Students find out about what religious people believe and how they act as well as examining different approaches to moral issues such as abortion, the death penalty and war.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The RS GCSE is 60% written examination and 40% Non-Examination Assessment. There will be two examinations: one in Year 10 and one in Year 11.



WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Students follow the WJEC Religious Studies GCSE course. They will be expected to study two world religions in depth- one of which must be Christianity. Students will then study a range of philosophical and ethical issues from both religious and non-religious perspectives. Some of the topics studied include the creation of the world and our place in it. We discuss the sanctity of life and how this applies to issues such as abortion, euthanasia and organ donation. We also tackle issues related to the changing nature of relationships in our modern world before moving onto the extremely relevant issue of human rights. We discuss complex topics such as censorship, discrimination and wealth. Students will have opportunities to express their own ideas and opinions on these issues while being encouraged to understand the views of others.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

RS is one of the most relevant subjects for a job where you are expected to work with members of the public and is highly sought after by employers. Related professions include; teaching, law, journalism, publishing, nursing, social services, caring services and childcare.

Separate Science: Triple Award

(Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

**Dependent upon final curriculum model, the 'Separate Science: Triple Award' course may be followed by certain classes rather than remain an option choice.*

In September 2026, the WJEC will offer a new suite of qualifications to Science at Islwyn High School. There will be three Science qualifications offered to pupils: **Triple Award (3GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics); WJEC GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) (2 GCSEs); WJEC GCSE Integrated Science (Single Award) (1 GCSE).**

The majority of pupils will study Double Award and a few selected pupils will form one class to study 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 (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 – Year 10 There will be one examination per subject.	45 %
Unit 2: BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY and PHYSICS – Year 11 There will be one examination per subject.	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: CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY and PHYSICS Controlled Assessments are carried out in centres but are externally marked by WJEC. This includes a one-hour practical task followed by a one-hour written task in each of the three subjects . These take place in the first half of the spring term (Jan-Feb) in Year 11.	10%

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Learners will cover a large range of topics across the three disciplines:

- **Biology** – *Cells, organ systems, ecosystems, variation, homeostasis and micro-organisms.*
- **Chemistry** – *Chemical substances, reactions, essential resources, chemical bonding, application of chemical reactions and organic chemistry.*
- **Physics** – *Electricity, energy, waves, forces, space and radioactivity.*

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.

Social Studies

COURSE OUTLINE

The WJEC GCSE Social Studies qualification will help learners understand various social issues in society. Learners will be able to appreciate that social issues are complex and can be explained from many different perspectives. As societies change, learners will understand the causes of these changes and how we as members of society can promote change through social action. Learners will also develop an understanding of how to become ethical, informed, and responsible citizens of Wales and the world.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

(Students who choose Social Studies are required to have good literacy and writing skills.)

- **Unit 1: Examination Assessment (30%)** - Short and extended answers reflecting contemporary social issues.
- **Unit 2: NEA (20%)** - Set and marked by WJEC (tasks with evidence sources based on a selected social issue set by the WJEC).
- **Unit 3: Examination Assessment (30%)** - Short and extended answers, reflecting social change and social movements.
- **Unit 4: NEA (20%)** - Set by the WJEC, marked by the centre and moderated by WJEC.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

The Social Studies qualification consists of four units:

Unit 1 – Society and Social Issues: This unit covers characteristics of society and a variety of social issues. You will become familiar with the diverse nature of society by studying the ideas of identity, rights, and how the various levels of governance in Wales, the UK, and the wider world influence how societies function.

Unit 2 – Investigating Society and Social Issues: Within this unit you will explore ways of researching society and social issues based on a variety of evidence sources.

Unit 3 – Social Change in Contemporary Society: This unit explores social change by explaining events that lead to changes, the agents and processes that cause these changes and the consequences of social change. You will examine social movements that have used various methods to deal with various social issues with varying impacts.

Unit 4 – Planning to effect Social Change: For this unit you will investigate a social issue of your choice and plan an effective, legal and non-violent social action.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROGRESSION

GCSE Social Studies will equip you with a range of skills that are not only valuable for studying this subject but will also support you in a variety of other subjects, including: Sociology, Psychology, Government and Politics, Law and other Humanities subjects at A Level.

This qualification will prepare you for a wide range of careers as it provides you with essential knowledge and a valuable and transferable skill set that can make you valuable and attractive to employers.

A selection of careers linked to social studies include: psychologist; social work; urban planning; journalism and broadcasting; police officer; probation officer; teaching; human resource manager; market research analyst; librarian; counselling; banking and finance; law; accountancy; politics; advertising and marketing

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 learn how to understand the language and communicate in both speaking and writing in realistic settings. You will also develop an awareness of the culture and society of the countries and communities where the language is spoken and make connections with your own language and culture. You will learn useful language that you can use in situations relating to leisure and wellbeing, travel and study or work.

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

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

- Language for leisure and wellbeing
- Language for travel
- Language for study and work

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Unit 1 - Oracy (Speaking): Non - Examination conducted by your teacher (Worth 30%)

Task 1: Read aloud a short sentence to show your understanding of Spanish pronunciation.

Task 2: Role play

Task 3: Short presentation (prepared in advance) and discussion/questions to follow.

Unit 2 - Reading and writing: Non- Examination completed in class (Worth 15%)

Task: You will study a short work (either a graphic novel, short story, film script or novel) in Spanish. You will then write a written response (up to 200 words) in Spanish about the short work you have studied.

Unit 3 – Listening: Exam at the end of year 11 (Worth 20%)

Task: You will listen to a range of speakers in Spanish and will demonstrate your understanding of what you have heard by answering questions in English.

Unit 4 - Reading and writing: Exam at the end of year 11 (Worth 35%)

Task 1: You will read texts in Spanish and answer a series of questions in English.

Task 2: You will also be required to complete a translation into English from Spanish.

Task 3: Write up to 120 words in Spanish from a choice of 3 questions (1 from each broad theme)

All units are tierless (A*-G)

WHAT SKILLS WILL I DEVELOP?

You will learn how to communicate clearly and accurately in speaking and writing.

- You will develop your understanding of the language by reading and listening.
- You will learn how to contribute to discussions and conversations.
- You will develop an awareness of the culture and society of the countries and communities where Spanish is spoken.
- You will make connections with your own language.

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

