



## **GCSE guide to success**

### **Class of 2023**



# Introduction

The aim of this booklet is to give both subject specific guidance and general advice around this academic year. As parents/carers there is a lot you can do to help your child, whether it is revising for exams or making sure they are getting enough sleep all the information in this guide adds towards making this a very successful couple of years and students having the best chance of achieving their potential in the GCSE exams in RS this academic year but also in the Summer of 2023

So, what can you do? Within each subject area there will be advice on how best to support your child for that specific subject. However it is important to also look at other means of supporting students through Year 10 and 11.

## Stress

Stress is something that can build up as students study for exams, approach exams or whilst students are taking their exams.

**Here are a few hints and tips to help students beat stress.**

### 1. A varied and healthy diet

Eating fresh ingredients and lots of fruit is really important. Juices filled with vitamin C, such as orange or grapefruit juice, are said to be good for your immune system so can help with stress. When you're busy and tired it can be tempting just to grab another pizza or ready meal, but cooking from scratch can be therapeutic as well as being healthier.

### 2. Exercise

Doing sport at least once a week is the best way to reduce stress. It helps your body produce endorphins, which make you feel good. Even daily walks of 30 minutes can help reduce stress levels but it's even better to work out intensively. Even if you don't feel like it at the time you will feel the benefits afterwards. Joining a sports club could also help with stress as the regular contact with other people should help improve your mood. And why not try yoga? It's a great way to ease your mind and relax your muscles.

### **3. Meditation**

It might sound simple, but sitting quietly for 10 minutes a day can really help with stress levels. If you've never tried meditation before, it's worth a go. Good breathing techniques can put you in a more relaxed state as they send oxygen surging through your bloodstream, helping to calm you down and beat the stress.

### **4. Take breaks regularly**

Short breaks between working can help you switch off. But longer breaks are important too. How about taking the weekend off to relax? Make time for fun and for yourself even if this means that you have to schedule time away from your work. You'll hopefully come back to your work feeling fresh.

### **5. Sleep (and sign off Facebook)**

Sleep is always the best medicine and some people find that small 20-minute naps can help increase productivity. As students we tend to spend too much time on social media sites and answering emails, texts and phone calls. Sociability is fun – but too much of it, and too much computer time, can lead to more stress. Failing to switch off from work because of your electronic gadgets will only make you even more stressed.

### **6. Try to see the positive side**

If you missed a deadline, try to appreciate what you learned from this mistake: now you know how to plan ahead. Things might seem bad, but if you try, there is usually something positive to be learned.

### **7. Listen to music**

Listening to music can help calm you down and put you in a better frame of mind. If you're feeling stressed, putting on some calming music while you work could really help.

### **8. Laugh**

They say that laughter is the best medicine, and it's really true. Laughing out loud increases oxygen and blood flow which automatically reduces stress. Not taking life too seriously can help everyone live a better and easier life. Make time for yourself, logout of Twitter and take breaks. It's about time that we students accept that we can achieve just as much in life without all the stress.

## Resilience

Resilience (or resiliency) is our ability to adapt and bounce back when things don't go as planned. Resilient people don't wallow or dwell on failures; they acknowledge the situation, learn from their mistakes, and then move forward. During Year 11 there will be periods where students may feel like they are struggling or aren't seeing the fruits of their labours, it's only through developing resilience and the attitude of not giving up that will allow them to overcome any barriers to success they encounter.

According to the research of leading psychologists, there are three elements that are essential to developing resilience:

**1. Challenge** – Resilient people view a difficulty as a challenge, not as a paralysing event. They look at their failures and mistakes as lessons to be learned from, and as opportunities for growth. They don't view them as a negative reflection on their abilities or self-worth.

**2. Commitment** – Resilient people are committed to their lives and their goals, and they have a compelling reason to get out of bed in the morning. Commitment isn't just restricted to their work – they commit to their relationships, their friendships, the causes they care about, and their religious or spiritual beliefs.

**3. Personal Control** – Resilient people spend their time and energy focusing on situations and events that they have control over. Because they put their efforts where they can have the most impact, they feel empowered and confident. Those who spend time worrying about uncontrollable events can often feel lost, helpless, and powerless to take action. Please bear in mind that some of these strategies will not be suitable for you. They may not work as well for you. Think about the preferred learning style audit above to help you decide which you think would help you most.

# **General Revision Tips you can give your child:**

## **1. Create a Revision Timetable**

Building a revision timetable can add structure to your revision and help you identify which GCSE subjects you need to prioritise to get better marks. Creating a revision timetable is a great way to organise your study time, plus it also helps boost your motivation to revise for your exams. Recognising a need for a revision timetable means that you have already made a great start to combat stress. Take the first step by setting your GCSE study goals to build a strong foundation for success.

## **2. Practice, Practice, Practice**

One of the biggest recommendations that past GCSE students suggest is to practice questions by doing as many GCSE past papers as you can. Practicing past papers will help you get familiar with the: Exam format Question style Time pressure Retrieve information quicker

## **3. Collaborate with Classmates in Groups**

If you find your coursework too much to tackle alone, then why not enlist the help and support of other students? Create or join online study groups and connect with thousands of GCSE students in any all of the subjects you are studying. This will allow you to fully prepare for your GCSEs as well as enrich your learning by exploring the thoughts and ideas of others. Interacting with other students will also help you improve your communication and collaboration skills. And in addition, you and your classmates can also test one another's knowledge and level of progress.

## **4. Take Regular Study Breaks**

Do you feel stressed, tired and that no new information is entering your head? There is no point forcing yourself to study for hours upon hours as this will not result in a positive outcome. Taking regular study breaks and exercising is proven to engaging your brain in studying and improve your exam performance in the long-run. Exercise is a powerful enabler which boosts your brain's ability to be productive so don't underestimate how important it is to take the stairs rather than the lift!

## **5. Understand Your Learning Style**

Everyone thinks that there is a best way to study but the reality is that each person is different. Once you understand your learning style by deciding if you are a visual, auditory, reading/writing or kinesthetic learner or whether you are concrete sequential, abstract sequential, abstract random or concrete random then remembering and recalling new information will become much easier. Practice will also tell you if you work better studying during the night/evening/morning/daytime.

## **6. Variety is the Spice of Life!**

Mix up your study habits and methods by listening to podcasts, watching videos or documentaries, moving to new study area or even something as simple as using different colours for your study notes. This is different to the other GCSE revision tips mentioned here as it encourages you to try a few different things to see what fits for you. Your brain will recall where you were or how you revised for a topic which will help you remember more information. Give it a go!

## **7. Use Mind Maps to Connect Ideas**

If you find it difficult to remember tons of new study notes, Mind maps may be the key to improving your memory. The theory behind mind mapping explains that making associations by connecting ideas helps you to memorise information easier and quicker. There are much more benefits to using Mind Maps for learning including being able to map out your curriculum, develop GCSE concepts in-depth and create sample exam answers.

## **8. Day of Your GCSE Exam**

The day of your exam can be the most stressful of the entire examination experience but there are ways which you can minimise your anxiety such as avoiding panicking friends and giving yourself plenty of time to get to the test centre on time. Also don't underestimate the power of eating a healthy breakfast the day of your exams!

## **9. Adapt for Different GCSE Subjects**

It may seem obvious but many students try to study for different subjects using the same study methods. Your GCSE revision should take account of the difference between your subjects and the challenges they represent. For example, flashcards are an ideal study aid to help you prepare for a language exam where you need to remember key terms. Also, an online quiz is a great way to test your GCSE Maths skills with sample questions.

## **10. Apps for Students**

If you want to stay ahead of your friends with the latest technology, get the best student apps before anyone else. Not only will they help you show off to your friends, some apps such as Exam Time are designed to improve your learning.

# KEEPING THE MOTIVATION UP

## FOR STUDENTS

- Don't stop going to, or working in, lessons you find hard or dislike – talk to someone about any difficulties you are having – there is always a solution
- Revise your revision schedule if necessary and stick to it – even when you don't feel like it. Don't wait until you are in the mood – the further behind you get the less you will be in the mood (agree the schedule with your parents for a hassle-free life)
- Resist the temptation to bury your head in the sand if things are getting out of hand – talk to your parents/tutor/teachers/Head of House
- Ignore what friends and others are doing or saying – you are working for an easy life for YOU now and later – let your friends have the hassle of redoing coursework or even the full GCSE

## FOR PARENTS

- ★ Agree the balance between work and social life and stick to the agreement. Again, flexibility is the key – if a special night comes up, agree that they can make up the work at a specified time
- ★ All students fall behind, feel demotivated or overwhelmed, or struggle with the balance of social, work and school demands at times.
- ★ When your child feels like this, berating and threatening them will have a negative effect. Talk to them about the issues, acknowledge their feelings and adopt a sensible attitude in wanting to find a solution
- ★ Be flexible – use the 80/20 rule. If your child is sticking to what they are supposed to be doing 80% of the time, they will be doing alright
- ★ If your child asks for your support, encourage them by helping them to see the difficulties in perspective. Teenagers often take an all or nothing 'catastrophic' approach to difficulties – "I've messed up this essay, I might as well give up."

## Useful Websites and stuff....

More information about the sites listed is given in the relevant chapters. Information correct at time of going to press.

### General support for teenagers

- [www.projecteducation.co.uk/gcse](http://www.projecteducation.co.uk/gcse) offers links to GCSE chat forums.
- [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)
- [www.childline.org.uk/explore/Pages/Explore.aspx](http://www.childline.org.uk/explore/Pages/Explore.aspx)
- [www.youthaccess.org.uk/](http://www.youthaccess.org.uk/)

### General parent support

- [www.parentlineplus.org.uk](http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk) confidential helpline for parents on 0808 800 2222
- [www.projecteducation.co.uk](http://www.projecteducation.co.uk)

### Exam boards

- [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk) the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)
- [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk) Edexcel
- [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk) Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR)
- [www.wjec.co.uk](http://www.wjec.co.uk) the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)

### Coursework and revision

(Please read notes on the use of essay banks in 'revision').

- [www.coursework.info](http://www.coursework.info)
- [www.sparknotes.com](http://www.sparknotes.com)
- [www.gcseguide.co.uk](http://www.gcseguide.co.uk) – Use the 'bookshop' option to see what revision guides are available in each subject area.
- [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize)
- [www.gcse.com](http://www.gcse.com)

### Careers

- <https://direct.gov.uk>. The governments' official careers information site. Visit the **Education and Learning** pages and choose '**Which way now? Years 10-11**' followed by '**Your Choices in Year 9**' to find out more about your options.
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/studentlife/careersandchoices/>
- Visit <http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk> and select **Planning your career** then **Job profiles** for free information on hundreds of different careers.
- <http://connexions-berkshire.org.uk/careers>  
**E-CLIPS** lets you view and print out leaflets on lots of different topics, including **Options after Year 9**.  
**Kudos Online** takes you through a series of questions to match you with career ideas.  
Your password to begin is the academy postcode = SL3 7EF.
- [www.Careersbox.co.uk](http://www.Careersbox.co.uk) - Careers films/videos – real people in real jobs
- [www.icould.com](http://www.icould.com) - Career advice, HE choices
- [www.opendoorsmedia.co.uk](http://www.opendoorsmedia.co.uk) - Regional training prospectus – everything you need to know about college, apprenticeships, careers, training schemes and jobs in local area
- [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) - National Apprenticeship Service
- [www.futuremorph.org](http://www.futuremorph.org) - STEM careers
- [www.targetjobs.co.uk](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk) - Careers info – construction, accountancy, banking, law, engineering, environment, media . . . etc



## KEY TASKS ON THE DAY BEFORE THE EXAM FOR STUDENTS

1. Make sure you know your timetable Get there early – only fools leave it too late and rush – catch the much earlier bus
2. Allow time for your brain to wake up – have a shower, eat breakfast – take a banana with you
3. Do a final check of the subjects you will be doing that day – know the structure and how many sections there are Make sure you have EVERYTHING you need and take spares – do not get into the stress of asking teachers for things you should have brought
4. Take a pen you enjoy writing with – take 2 just in case During the exam – Don't forget that it is natural to be nervous. It actually gives your brain the extra adrenalin it needs to make the final effort
5. If your mind goes blank, don't worry. Look at the question again, write down some notes – it'll get your brain ticking over again
6. Don't start writing until you know what the instructions are and you are ready to write sense Make and keep to a time scale for each question depending on the number of marks (you will have done this in revision classes – stick to it). I
7. f you only have 3 minutes left for a question, write the answer in note form – the examiner will give you marks for it
8. Allow a little bit of time at the end to check through your work to see if any changes need making. Examiners have said that this can make the difference between a higher and lower grade

## ON THE EVE OF THE EXAM FOR PARENTS

- ★ Please don't add to the stress levels by 'rising to the bait' when your child pushes the boundaries. Shelf the battles that don't need winning just yet.
- ★ Help prepare your child for the exam – talk with them about when it starts, how long it lasts for, what are the main topics that might come up.  
They may have worked all day and have come down stairs to relax, make sure they have some down time the night before.

# GCSE Art, Craft and Design (AQA)

## Priorities for students:

Students are currently completing a portfolio of work to be submitted for assessment in May 2023. This folder is worth 60% of the overall grade. On completion, the portfolio will contain two major projects: 'Yr 10 - Mechanic Organic' and 'Yr 11- Surreal Shoes'. Each project includes sketchbook work, showing artists research, annotations, plans, design ideas, drawings and evaluations. Loose sheets of work and 2D and 3D outcomes also make up the A2 folder.

Both projects begin with teacher lead tasks and become increasingly independent as they develop. Students should be ensuring all work is up to date and completing weekly homework tasks. After school GCSE Art club is held once a week in the Art department.

The exam paper will be released just after the Christmas holiday in Year 11. This is worth 40% of the overall mark. Students will need to select a starting point from seven choices. They will work on developing their ideas and building a personal project in response to their chosen question. During this period leading up to the exam, students should be working on their projects in and out of school.

## How is it examined/assessed:

There are four Assessment Objectives (they are the same for coursework and exam) These are the four areas that your child will be assessed on:

- AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

## How to support your son/daughter:

- We would like parents to ask their child to see their folder and sketchbook, check that work is being completed regularly and discuss with them their ideas and plans. You should see your child creating art work every week.
- Encouraging your child to attend Art club will help boost their grade. All levels of ability are welcome and students pushing for the highest grades will benefit as much as students who are behind and need to catch up.
- Discussing which artists your child is looking at in lessons and engaging in conversation about their art, helps students to feel confident about their work. Parents often have the best ideas even if the students don't want to admit it!
- During the trial exam and actual exam periods, your child may wish to complete their final outcome on a canvas, board or something similar. Whilst we provide general art materials in the Art department, we ask that parents support their child by providing such specialist items during exams.
- Presentation is important, however, we do not want students to spend hours colouring their sketchbook pages to make it look pretty, this will not get them any additional marks.
- Encourage your child to do their best. Avoid tearing out pages or doodling in their books. See if their work is consistent, your child should be proud to show you their sketchbook.

# Cambridge National in Creative iMedia (OCR)

## Priorities for students:

1. Practice using tools and techniques! Creative iMedia is a very practical subject that involves using lots of different software. Each piece of software has many tools and techniques that need to be used. In order to best select which tool or technique to use for a given scenario, not only do students need to remember the tool or technique exists, but also need to remember how to use it and justify why they have used it. The best way to do this is to practice using each tool or technique often.
2. Don't forget the exam! With Creative iMedia being so practical, it is easy to forget there is an exam. The exam covers all of the pre-production content, so regularly revisiting this content is important. Much of the homework will be exam focused.
3. Assessment starts at the start! Project work will be marked and sent to the exam board. This means that the work you do in Year 10 is just as important as the work you do in Year 11. 100% effort needs to be put into every piece of work.

## How is it examined/assessed:

There are 4 units, each worth 25% of the overall grade:

1. Pre-production skills - 1 hour and 15 minutes. This is the exam. Students usually take this at the end of Year 10.
2. 3 other in-lesson projects - marked by the teacher and moderated by the exam board. One of these units will be 'Creating digital graphics'. The choice of the other 2 often changes to reflect the interests and skills of the students. Units may include animation, sound, gaming, website design, modelling etc.

Whilst Creative iMedia is 'hands on', all units have an investigation element that is written. There is no escaping written work. Most of our work will be produced on a computer (with the exception of the exam, which is a traditional paper exam).

## How to support your son/daughter:

1. Free up the PC or laptop. Regular practice using all sorts of tools and techniques across different applications tends to make all the difference when it comes to students working independently on projects. We use the Adobe Creative Suite in lesson, but there are lots of both downloadable and web based alternatives online. The more practice the better, so little challenges like making a birthday card for an auntie, an invitation for a toddlers party or even removing the red eye from a family photo can be really worthwhile.

## Is a revision guide available:

Yes! We recommend the *My Revision Notes: OCR Cambridge Nationals in Creative iMedia L1/2: Pre-production skills and Creating digital graphics* book. These cost around £10 and can be purchased from Amazon or other retailers.

# GCSE Computer Science (OCR)

## Priorities for students:

1. Know the content! It is never too early to start revising. As soon as something is covered in a lesson, revision should start straight away. Regular self-quizzing is a good way to check whether knowledge has been committed to long term memory.
2. Practice answering exam questions! Knowing something is one thing, but to communicate that effectively in writing is quite another. Keywords are important to help convey ideas. Being able to apply what is known to a scenario is a skill that needs to be developed through practice. Some students find saying their answer in their head before writing it down helps. Command words and the number of marks available for a question can help with how to structure an answer.
3. Programming! Regular programming practice, solving problems and working in Python is essential. This not only helps to learn the syntax of a programming language (the rules), it also helps with computational thinking and approaching problems logically.

## How is it examined/assessed:

There are 2 papers, each worth 50% of the overall grade:

1. Computer Systems - 1 hour and 30 minutes
2. Computational thinking, algorithms and programming - 1 hour and 30 minutes

It is an exam board requirement that students have had at least 20 hours of programming practice throughout the course, which is then tested in the exam papers. Our students get much more time than this and often find the practicality of programming balances the theory work.

## How to support your son/daughter:

1. Take an interest. Ask them to show you what they have been learning. Talk through their code and allow them to explain how it works. Point out stories in the news that are related to technology. Share how you use technology at work and explore the advantages as well as the disadvantages to society.
2. Encourage and cajole them to do their homework on time. Homework is based on retrieval practice and is one of the best ways to both reinforce prior learning and ascertain whether there are any gaps in knowledge that need to be addressed.
3. Stay in touch. Our Computer Science teachers are always more than happy to help and can signpost an array of online resources. If support is needed above and beyond online resources and lessons, we offer extra-curricular support sessions for GCSE students.

## Is a revision guide available:

Yes! We recommend the *ClearRevise* revision guide for *OCR GCSE Computer Science J277*. These cost £8 and can be purchased from <https://clearrevise.com/>

## Smart Revise - [smartrevise.online](https://smartrevise.online)

Smart Revise is our recommended go to revision resource. We use it from day 1, for our lesson starters, our homework and all of our revision. It is a fantastic system made by current Computer Science teachers, specifically for the Computer Science course we offer. Good use should be made of the Quiz (multiple choice), Terms (keyword flashcards) and Advance (self-marking exam questions) modes. The analytics section allows drilling down into clear strengths and weaknesses. Whilst this is a paid resource, we have paid for students to have access for the duration of their course - so it is well worth having a look!

# BTEC Engineering (Pearson)

## Engineering

### Exam content is based on Unit 2

Revision notes, worksheets, worked example questions, are all accessible and available from the Engineering department free of charge. No purchase of the textbook is necessary.

All assignments are available on Google classroom with the BTEC assessment criteria and in class annotated presentations.

### Priorities for students:

1. Know the content. Complete the revision worksheets during lessons add your own notes to each page by sticking in post-its or flashcards
2. Memorise key facts: diagrams, key terms, processes, advantages and disadvantages to all processes is highly recommended.
3. All assignments outstanding from Component 1 & 2 are required in order to achieve successful completion of the course.

### How is it examined/assessed:

Exam paper is a paper based exam in January and is externally marked. Preparation of knowledge and content for the test will be covered across a number of weeks prior to the exam. Components 1 & 2 are completed in class and are marked internally and externally assessed.

External support for students.

Email - [students@pearson.com](mailto:students@pearson.com)



BTEC Tech Award Engineering Student Book

**Approx £20.00 from Amazon.**

## **3D Design (Art & Design)**

### **Exam content**

Is developed throughout semester 2 which supports the development of the essential vocational skill of responding to a project brief. The project-based nature of this unit allows learners to take ownership of their abilities through personalised study, and culminates in the production of a final externally assessed outcome (exam) under controlled conditions. This unit is externally assessed.

### **Priorities for students:**

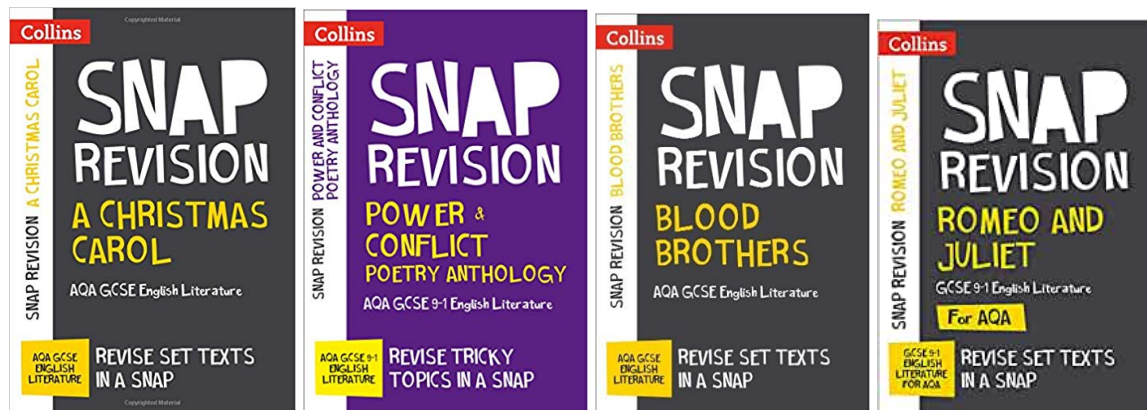
1. Know the content. Complete the homework theory tasks add your own notes to each page by sticking in post-its or flashcards
2. Memorise key facts: diagrams, key terms, processes, advantages and disadvantages to all processes is highly recommended.
3. Take ownership of the briefs and projects. Bring your own ideas, research, images, drawings, models to the projects.
4. All assignments outstanding from the other units are required in order to achieve successful completion of the course.

### **How is it examined/assessed:**

The externally assessed exam is available from January and consists of one externally set task with a broad-based thematic starting point. A preparatory period of study prior to the 10-hour final outcome period allows students to examine the context of the project and develop materials that can be used to support the final outcome. Internally assessed units are completed throughout the course and form part of the overall grade.

## AQA English Language and AQA English Literature

Students have all studied the following content/texts and these revision books will help with their independent revision. They are all available from [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk):



### Priorities for students:

1. Know the content. Read the revision books every week, add your own notes to each page by sticking in post-its or flashcards. Seneca quizzes are set every week but you can also complete extra quizzes.
2. Memorise key quotations, historical and social context, practise identifying word classes in texts.
3. Ask for past papers from your teacher.

### How is it examined/assessed?

Two English Language examination papers

Two English Literature examination papers

One Spoken Language assessment (a 2-3 minute speech that is video recorded)

# Geography GCSE (AQA)

## Priorities for students:

- Content: the GCSE Geography course is content heavy and students will need to ensure they are familiar with all the content. The units studied are UK Physical Landscapes (Coasts and Rivers), The Challenge of Natural Hazards, The Living World (Tropical Rainforests and Cold Environments, The Challenge of Resource Management (Energy), Urban Issues and Challenges and The Changing Economic World
- Command words: students need to be able to understand and correctly interpret key command words and questions stems. The most common are describe, suggest, discuss, explain, to what extent and evaluate.
- Case studies and examples: students will need to apply knowledge of case studies/examples to higher tariff questions. Case studies are broader in context and require greater breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding. Examples are more focused on a specific event or situation, are smaller in scale and do not cover the same degree of content. A good way of revising these is to create case study revision cards.

## How it is examined/assessed:

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all three of their exams at the end of the course.

- Paper 1: Living with the Physical Environment (The challenge of natural hazards, The living world, Physical landscapes in the UK, Geographical skills) Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes, 88 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation, grammar and specialist terminology (SPaG), 35% of GCSE.
- Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment (Urban issues and challenges, The changing economic world, The challenge of resource management, Geographical skills) Written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes, 88 marks (including 3 marks for SPaG) 35% of GCSE.
- Paper 3: Geographical Applications (Issue evaluation, Fieldwork, Geographical skills). Written exam: 1 hour 15 minutes, 76 marks (including 6 marks for SPaG), 30% of GCSE, pre-release resources booklet made available 12 weeks before Paper 3 exam

## How to Support to support your son/daughter:

- Due to the content heavy nature of this qualification students must start revising at the beginning of Year 11 and should focus on studying small sub-sections of units frequently.
- Ensure that students have the relevant revision resources. These can all be accessed on Google Drive.
- One of the most effective ways of revising is to complete past papers. These are available from class teachers who will also be happy to give feedback.

## Revision guide available:

- We recommend either the CGP Grade 9-1 GCSE Geography AQA Revision Guide or OUP GCSE 9-1 Geography AQA Revision Guide. The OUP revision guide is available on the Plympton Academy website or through class teachers at a cost of £7.00



# Health and Social Care- Pearson BTEC Level 2 TECH Award (New Qualification)

## **Priorities for students:**

The majority of the course is assessed through assignments that are produced during lessons drawing on knowledge gained in preparation for them. These assignments count for 60% of the final grade, with the other 40% coming from an end of year Controlled Assessment.

Throughout the 2 year course there are 4 assignments and students have completed 2 of them already in Year 10 (and over the Summer). It is vital therefore that they build on the good work already carried out and secure a fantastic foundation before the Controlled Assessment content is tackled. The Controlled Assessment itself draws upon knowledge gained over the 3 years to help consolidate that final 40%.

Therefore the biggest priority is to ensure that students complete all tasks set and on time. Also to ensure that they are producing work to reflect their MEG - is vital as every piece they produce counts towards a final grade.

## **Assignments to be completed in Year 10:**

### **Component 2: Health and Social care Services and Values**

In this component students will produce written work on how local services can meet the needs of two specific individuals. Students will also take part in a role play to demonstrate the care values consistent with the health care sector. This will cover the following learning aims:

A Understand human growth and development across life stages and the factors that affect it

B Investigate how individuals deal with life events.

## **Controlled Assessment content to be covered in Year 11:**

### **Component 3: Health and Wellbeing**

This is assessed during 3 x 1 hour sessions under exam conditions during the summer exam window. The content focuses on the following learning aims:

AO1 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of factors that affect health and wellbeing

AO2 Interpret health indicators

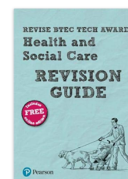
AO3 Design a person-centred health and wellbeing improvement plan

AO4 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how to overcome obstacles relating to health and wellbeing improvement plans

In this component, you look at the factors that can have a positive or negative influence on a person's health and wellbeing. You will learn to interpret physiological and lifestyle indicators and what they mean for someone's state of health. You will learn how to use this information to design an appropriate plan for improving someone's health and wellbeing, including short- and long-term targets. Additionally, you will explore the difficulties an individual may face when trying to make these changes.

## **How to support your son / daughter:**

- Ensure they are meeting deadlines set for assignment completion. They have the opportunity to work on them at home and this should be encouraged.
- Ensure that they are covering all content for specific criteria set for tasks.
- Encourage them to discuss the health and social care sectors whenever you have to use them
- Ensure they are reading/watching the news and are up to date on the current affairs of the NHS and the Social sector.
- Purchase the Revision Guide from Amazon in Year 11 for the Controlled Assessment



# History GCSE (OCR - SHP History B)

## Priorities for students:

History is a content heavy subject, which means that there will be a considerable amount of subject knowledge for your child to learn off by heart. They will study 5 different time periods and have 5 skill sets for their exams.. As a department we will fully support your child as they rise to the challenge of learning the content through the provision of Personal Learning Checklists, Knowledge Organisers and through revision material. We will also set homework on a near weekly basis which will facilitate your child in getting to grips with the content as well as practising the exam skill. We ask that your child is organised and engages with the support provided to ensure their success by starting revision early and avoiding 'cramming' the night before which is not a successful strategy for History due to the depth of content.

Therefore the biggest priority for your child is to ensure that they revise the content regularly and complete the homework which is set.

## How it is examined/assessed:

Your child will complete 3 papers for History which cover 5 topics all of which are provided by OCR SHP B, all of which take place at the end of year 11. The are assessed for 4 skills which are:

- ☐ AO1 - Knowledge of the past
- ☐ AO2 - Use of key concepts (cause, consequence, similar, difference, change, continuity)
- ☐ AO3 - Use of Sources
- ☐ AO4 - Use of Interpretations

A summary of the papers is listed below:

Topic	Time	Marks	Percentage of GCSE
The People's Health 1250 - Present and The Norman Conquest	1 hour 45 minutes	80	40%
The Making of America 1789 - 1900 and Living Under Nazi Rule 1933 - 1945	1 Hour 45 minutes	80	40%
History All Around Us (Buckland Abbey)	1 Hour	50	20%

## How to Support to support your son/daughter:

- ☐ Engage in their classcharts with them to monitor and support homework completion
- ☐ Support them in their learning through testing them using the flashcards they complete as well as those provided on Quizlet ([https://quizlet.com/Katie\\_Kerr21/folders](https://quizlet.com/Katie_Kerr21/folders))
- ☐ Make use of the revision material to direct them to useful Youtube videos
- ☐ Take a visit back to Buckland Abbey and discuss with them how the site is used and how it has changed
- ☐ Access practice papers with them on the OCR website: (<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/beta/gcse-history-b-schools-history-project-j411-from-2016/assessment/> )
- ☐ Help them to manage their revision time to ensure they are not 'cramming'
- ☐ Inform the History team if you feel your child requires additional support

## Revision guide available: Yes, we have several options:

You can buy a guide we have produced for the cost of the printing or you can have electronic copies for free.

Alternatively we recommend that you purchase the **My Revision Notes: OCR GCSE (9-1) History B: Schools History Project** which costs around £9.99 on Amazon.

# Hospitality and Catering- WJEC Award in Hospitality and Catering

## **Priorities for students:**

The majority of the course is assessed through assignments that are produced during lessons drawing on knowledge gained in preparation for them. These assignments count for 75% of the final grade, with the other 25% coming from an end of year exam.

Throughout the 2 year course there are 2 Units. It is vital therefore that they build on the good work already carried out and cement a high grade before the exam content is tackled. The exam itself draws upon knowledge gained over the 2 years and a final, in depth, study of the Hospitality industry and how it works.

Therefore the biggest priority is to ensure that they are producing their best work at all times as every piece they produce counts towards a final grade.

Each of the units of the WJEC Award in Hospitality and Catering have been designed so that knowledge, skills and understanding is developed through tasks that have many of the characteristics of real work in the sector. Each unit has what is referred to as an applied purpose which acts as a focus for the learning in the unit.

1 The hospitality and catering industry (Mandatory External Assessment)

2 Hospitality and catering in action (Mandatory Internal)

Learners must complete both units.

The units have been devised around the concept of a 'plan, do, review' approach to learning where learners are introduced to a context for learning, review previous learning to plan activities, carry out activities and review outcomes and learning. This approach mirrors many work related activities in hospitality and catering and also provides for learning in a range of contexts. This approach also enables learners to learn in such a way that they develop: skills required for independent learning and development and a range of generic and transferable skills. It provides the ability to solve problems, and develop the skills of project based research, development and presentation. Through the two units, learners will gain an overview of the hospitality and catering industry and the type of job roles that may be available to assist them in making choices about progression.

## **How to support your son / daughter:**

- Ensure they are meeting deadlines set for assignment completion. They have the opportunity to work on them at home and this should be encouraged.
- Encourage them to discuss the business of hospitality whenever you are out. Issues such as good customer service, the environment and why different establishments offer different products are all essential topics.
- Ensure they are revising throughout the year, rather than just in a block before the exam.
- Use past papers to improve understanding of the exam, these will be available to all students through Mr Tinkler.

# Mathematics - Edexcel

## Priorities for students:

### **Basic expectations**

- 8 quality and focused hours a fortnight of in class learning
- Keep neat and tidy notes from all lessons in your book
- Engage in all homework and MemRi tasks set on [Hegartymath.com](https://www.hegartymath.com)
- Attend all extra sessions you are invited to
- Attend every lesson with the correct learning equipment including a protractor and compass
- Use exam feedback, which highlights topics to focus on, as a starting point for revision

### **Recommended practise**

- Purchase a scientific calculator (We sell these on Parent Pay)
- Practise some maths every other day using the MemRi function on [Hegartymath.com](https://www.hegartymath.com)

## How is it examined/assessed:

- 3 separate papers which last 1.5 hours each
- Paper 1 is a Non-Calculator paper
- Paper 2 and 3 is a Calculator paper
- All topics can be assessed on any of the papers

## How to Support to support your son/daughter:

- Ensure they are equipped for lessons
- Encourage them to engage in regular homework and revision using the materials provided.
- Encourage them to regularly engage in short but frequent practise using [Hegartymath.com](https://www.hegartymath.com)

## Useful Websites:

- [Hegartymath.com](https://www.hegartymath.com)
- [Corbett Maths - https://corbettmaths.com/](https://corbettmaths.com/)
  - [Revision videos and worksheets](#)
  - [Answers to worksheets](#)
- [Mr Barton Maths - http://www.mrbartonmaths.com/](http://www.mrbartonmaths.com/)

**Revision Guides:** We believe that the best revision for Maths is to do Maths. We would recommend using [Hegartymath.com](https://www.hegartymath.com) as your revision site. We do however recognise that some pupils like to supplement this with a revision guide.

- [CGP Edexcel Maths - Higher Revision guide](#)
- [CGP Edexcel Maths - Foundation Revision guide](#)

# Music - Btec First Award

## Priorities for Students

This is a skills based subject and requires students to develop in all areas of performance. Lessons are practical although there is also a written element of the course. Priorities are to develop practical skills and complete logbook entries that relate to the course to document progression. Attending rehearsals is essential as students rely on teamwork and collaboration to create, refine and perform their work for assessments and their final exam.

## How is it examined/assessed?

Students complete 4 Units, 1 of which is a written exam in January and June of year 11. Students are marked throughout their BTEC lessons and in their performances. Logbooks and any written documentation is marked internally and sent to an external marker for verification.

## Unit 2: Managing a Music Product (25%)

### Learning aims:

In this unit you will:

- A. plan, develop and deliver a music product
- B. promote a music product
- C. review the management of a music product.

It is essential for this unit to work as part of a production team and band to plan and organise the Autumn Concert. You need to ensure you are a vital member of the team giving ideas and suggestions to obtain a higher level grade. All practical work needs to be supported with either written notes/logbook or a detailed Vlog.

## Unit 3: - Introducing Live Sound (25%)

### Learning aims:

In this unit you will:

- A. plan for a live music event
- B. demonstrate understanding of health and safety
- C. set up and use live music systems.

It is essential for this unit to work as part of a production team and band to plan and organise the Carol Service. You need to ensure you are a vital member of the team giving ideas and suggestions to obtain a higher level grade. All practical work needs to be supported with either written notes/logbook or a detailed Vlog.

## Unit 1: The Music Industry (25%)

### Learning Aims:

- A understand different types of organisations that make up the music industry
- B understand job roles in the music industry.

This Unit will be assessed through a 60 minute exam with multiple choice questions and 8 mark questions that need detailed answers. Students will have the opportunity to sit Mock exams and practice for this exam during their lessons.

**Final Unit (25%) Students will need to choose one of the following Units to complete the course. All units are internally assessed with Unit 5 and 7 encompassing a recital performance in June of year 11.**

**Unit 5** Skills development as an individual Performer - sole and ensemble performance in a recital evening.

**Unit 6** - Recording in a Music studio - Recording other members of the class in the Department recording studio.

**Unit 7** - Introducing Music Sequencing - creating a performance piece on either a computer or DJ desk to be played at the Recital evening.

### **How to support your son/daughter**

We are eager that all students are regularly performing on their chosen instrument of study or using a music sequencing programme. Students are welcome to use the Music department facilities before and after school and at break and lunchtime. We also expect Students to participate in the department ensembles and clubs which cover all areas of interest in music making and technology. We also run many trips to see concerts and Musicals to inspire the students.

It would be helpful asking students about their practical work. Encouraging them to speak to you about the process and their intentions will help them to understand their own successes and where they may need to adapt or shape their ideas to make sure their intentions are clear.

### **Booklets and support**

Students will have a google slide document for each of their units of work (except Unit 1). Structured Templates are shared on google classroom for students to follow and there is also guidance on the Pearson Btec website. Students also have guided written lessons with a member of staff once a fortnight on these documents to support all their practical work, as well as being set homework tasks.

# Performing Arts- Btec Tech Award

## Priorities for students

This is a skills based subject and requires students to develop in all areas of performance. Lessons are practical although there is also a written element of the course. Priorities are to develop practical skills and complete logbook entries that relate to the course to document progression. Attending rehearsals is essential as students rely on teamwork and collaboration to create, refine and perform their work for assessments and their final exam.

## How is it examined/assessed?

Students complete 3 components, 1 of which is externally set and marked. Students are marked throughout their BTEC lessons and in their performances. Logbooks and any written documentation is marked internally and sent to an external marker for verification.

### Component 1: Exploring the Performing Arts (30%)

During Component 1 students will:

- explore performance styles, creative intentions and purpose
- investigate how practitioners create and influence what's performed
- discover performance roles, skills, techniques and processes.

### Component 2: Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts (30%)

During Component 2 students will:

- take part in workshops, classes and rehearsals
- gain physical, interpretative, vocal and rehearsal skills
- apply these skills in performance
- reflect on their progress, their performance and how they could improve

### Component 3: Performing to a Brief (40%)

To achieve this aim students will:

- use the brief and previous learnings to come up with ideas
- build on their skills in classes, workshops and rehearsals
- review the process using an ideas and skills log
- perform a piece to their chosen audience
- reflect on their performance in an evaluation report.

## How to support your son/daughter

Your son/daughter will be required to attend additional rehearsals, costume runs and technical runs outside of school to prepare for their evening assessments (which you will be invited too also). Ensuring they attend these rehearsals is essential. We run many trips to the theatre to inspire the students and develop their understanding of performance styles and approaches. Please do encourage them to take up these opportunities as much as possible.

It would be helpful asking students about their practical work. Encouraging them to speak to you about the process and their intentions will help them to understand their own successes and where they may need to adapt or shape their ideas to make sure their intentions are clear.

## Booklets and support

Students will receive guide booklets indicating what tasks they have to complete, this will be uploaded to their google classroom and deadlines for the booklet will be submitted to class charts. Please feel free to access this and help guide students through the written component.

Students will receive opportunities to work with a member of staff on their practical and theoretical tasks.

# GCSE Photography (AQA)

## Priorities for students:

Students are currently completing a portfolio of work to be submitted for assessment in May 2023. This folder is worth 60% of the overall grade. On completion, the portfolio will contain two major projects: 'My Identity' and 'Structure'. Each project includes sketchbook work showing ideas, shoot plans, photographer research, contact sheets, annotations, image selections and evaluations. Final edited outcomes will be printed and mounted on to black card.

All projects begin with teacher lead tasks and become increasingly independent as they develop. Students should be ensuring all work is up to date and completing weekly homework tasks. After school GCSE support club is held once a week in the Art department. The exam paper will be released just after the Christmas holiday. This is worth 40% of the overall mark. Students will need to select a starting point from seven choices. They will work on developing their ideas and building a personal project in response to their chosen question. During this period leading up to the exam, students should be working on their projects in and out of school.

There are four Assessment Objectives (they are the same for coursework and exam). These are the four areas that your child will be assessed on:

- AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.
- AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.
- AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.
- AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

## HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR SON/DAUGHTER:

- We would like parents to ask their child to see their folder and sketchbook, check that work is being completed regularly and discuss with them their ideas and plans. You should see your child creating work every week (plans, shoots, presentation).
- Encouraging your child to attend the support club will help boost their grade. All levels of ability are welcome and students pushing for the highest grades will benefit as much as students who are behind and need to catch up.
- Discussing which themes/photographers your child is looking at in lessons and engaging in conversation about their work, helps students to feel confident about their portfolio. Parents often have the best ideas even if the students don't want to admit it!
- Whilst owning a camera is not a necessity, as the course develops it would be advantageous for your child to have their own equipment. Advice will be given about suitable cameras to purchase for the course.
- Students who are able to access interesting/alternative locations for their shoots often attain more highly than their peers. We really appreciate parental support with regards to transport to and from these places.



# Science

## Combined Science (AQA) (Trilogy 8464 )

### Priorities for students:

1. Keep your exercise book neat and up to date
2. Know the content. Get a revision guide and read it every week. Add your own notes to each page by sticking in post-its or flashcards
3. Memorise key facts: equations, symbols, units, names, diagrams
4. Your homework in Year 10 and Year 11 will be to recall information from earlier years and make into a revision resource. Keep up with this work and carefully build up a revision booklet of your own

### How is it examined/assessed:

- 6 exam papers at the end of Year 11, 2 each in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
  - o Triple Science: Each exam is 1hr 45
  - o Trilogy Science: Each exam is 1hr 15
- Required practical reports (8 for Trilogy, 10 for Triple)

### How to Support to support your son/daughter

- Encourage them to read through the revision book and make notes
- Encourage them to practice exam questions
- Encourage them to use the resources on the Google Classroom

### Are revision guides available:

CGP Revision guides £2.75 each

Chemistry-[https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books\\_gcse\\_science.books\\_gcse\\_science\\_aqa\\_revision.book\\_CAR45](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books_gcse_science.books_gcse_science_aqa_revision.book_CAR45)

Physics-[https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books\\_gcse\\_science.books\\_gcse\\_science\\_aqa\\_revision.book\\_PAR47](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books_gcse_science.books_gcse_science_aqa_revision.book_PAR47)

Biology-[https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books\\_gcse\\_science.books\\_gcse\\_science\\_aqa\\_revision.book\\_BAR45](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books_gcse_science.books_gcse_science_aqa_revision.book_BAR45)

### Trilogy (Combined) Science

CGP Revision guides £5.50 each

Foundation-[https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books\\_gcse\\_science.books\\_gcse\\_science\\_aqa\\_revision.book\\_SAFR45](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books_gcse_science.books_gcse_science_aqa_revision.book_SAFR45)

Higher-[https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books\\_gcse\\_science.books\\_gcse\\_science\\_aqa\\_revision.book\\_SAH4](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/School/books_gcse_science.books_gcse_science_aqa_revision.book_SAH4)

# Spanish- (Edexcel)

## Priorities for students:

We believe languages should be widely accessible, and our new GCSEs in Spanish have been developed to help students of all abilities benefit from learning a language and learning about the world around them. Students should constantly review which of the elements is a strength and which is in need of more revision and additional time. We recommend peer revision and they can help support each other well, especially in the build up to exams.

## How is it examined/assessed:

Paper 1: Listening and understanding in Spanish \*(Paper code: 1SP0/1F and 1H) Written examination

- Foundation tier: 35 minutes including 5 minutes reading time; 50 marks
- Higher tier: 45 minutes including 5 minutes reading time; 50 marks
- 25% of the total qualification

Paper 2: Speaking in Spanish \*(Paper code: 1SP0/2F and 2H) Internally conducted and externally assessed

- Foundation tier: 7–9 minutes plus 12 minutes preparation time; 70 marks
- Higher tier: 10–12 minutes plus 12 minutes preparation time; 70 marks
- 25% of the total qualification

Paper 3: Reading and understanding in Spanish \*(Paper code: 1SP0/3F and 3H) Written examination

- Foundation tier: 45 minutes; 50 marks
- Higher tier: 1 hour; 50 marks
- 25% of the total qualification

Paper 4: Writing in Spanish \*(Paper code: 1SP0/4F and 4H) Written examination

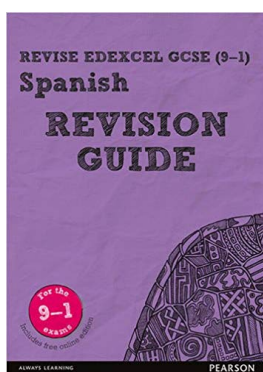
- Foundation tier: 1 hour 10 minutes; 60 marks
- Higher tier: 1 hour 20 minutes; 60 marks
- 25% of the total qualification

## How to support your son/daughter:

One thing which has been proven to really help student is to Listen and watch as much authentic content as you can. Spanish TV shows, songs, and newspapers can all help.

<http://www.rtve.es/> is a great place to start

## Is a revision guide available:



Can be purchased through the academy or alternatively they are found on Amazon

# Sport- BTEC Level 2 First Award in Sport

## Exam Board - Pearson

### Priorities for students:

- Complete the Unit 1 exam to the highest standard possible (DISTINCTION) by using the resources on Google Classroom, Video and PODcast playlists, your knowledge organiser, your own book notes and the additional exam questions and resources given to you by your class teacher.
- Complete ALL Unit 2 assessments to a high standard to gain an overall DISTINCTION grade for the unit. Become confident in knowing the essential keywords/terminology used in the unit and apply this to your own and others sports performance examples.

### How is it examined/assessed:

- Unit 1 Fitness for Sport and Exercise - 1 x Online Exam (75mins)
- Unit 2 Practical Sports Performance - Powerpoint / Filmed Practical Performance / Written Report
- Unit 3 Applying the Principles of Personal Training - Posters / Powerpoint / Planned and Performed training programme
- Unit 6 Leading Sports Activities - Written report / Planning and Delivery of practical sessions / Written Review

### How to support your son/daughter:

- Check the progress of their coursework and ensure they meet assessment deadlines. Coursework maybe broken up into smaller sections that lead to a final overall assessed piece of work.
- Frequently check that they understand the keywords and can explain their meaning. Challenge them by asking if they can apply it to a sports performance.
- Use the BTEC Sport documents on the Academies website to assist them with their revision and completion of coursework.

### Is a revision guide available:

Although the PE Department have a number of the following books that can be used in lessons you may find it useful to have your own copy at home.

**Revision Guide** - Clear diagrammatic outline of the assessed material

Available from the Exam Board

[BTEC First in Sport Revision Guide](#)

Also available at Amazon

[Pearson REVISE BTEC First in Sport Revision Guide: for home learning, 2021 assessments and 2022 exams \(BTEC First Sport\)](#)

**Revision Workbook** - Useful exam style questions and answers

[BTEC First in Sport Revision Workbook](#)

Also available at Amazon

[BTEC First in Sport Revision Workbook: for home learning, 2021 assessments and 2022 exams \(BTEC First Sport\)](#)

# Religious Studies GCSE (Eduqas)

## Priorities for students:

- Content: the GCSE Religious Studies course is content heavy, with a wide range of key vocabulary that students will need to know. The units studied are Christian Beliefs and Practices; Jewish Beliefs and Practices; Issues of Relationships; Issues of Life and Death; Issues of Good and Evil; Issues of Human Rights.
- Command words: students need to be able to understand and correctly interpret key command words and question stems. The questions will ask students to define, describe, explain, to what and evaluate. Students will need to understand what each of these questions is requiring of them.
- Students are taking their GCSE in year 10 so need to start making revision resources now in preparation. Flashcards are a great way to memorise/practice key terms, mind maps can help recall key content and highlight areas of weakness that should be a focus for future revision and practicing past exam questions in a timed environment will ensure that students are exam ready. Past papers can be found here: [https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies-gcse/#tab\\_pastpapers](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/religious-studies-gcse/#tab_pastpapers) and useful revision resources can be found here: <https://resources.eduqas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceByArgs.aspx?subId=26&lvlId=2>

## How it is examined/assessed:

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all three of their exams at the end of the course.

- Component 1: Religious, Philosophical and Ethical Studies in the Modern World. Written examination: 2 hours, 50% of qualification covering- Theme 1: Issues of Relationships; Theme 2: Issues of Life and Death; Theme 3: Issues of Good and Evil; Theme 4: Issues of Human Rights
- Component 2: Study of Christianity. Written examination: 1 hour, 25% of qualification covering Christian beliefs and Practices.
- Component 3: Study of a World Faith. Written examination: 1 hour, 25% of qualification covering Jewish Beliefs and Practices

## How to Support to support your son/daughter:

- Engage in their classcharts with them to monitor and support homework completion
- Support them in their learning through testing them using the flashcards they complete.
- Make use of the revision material to direct them to useful Youtube videos
- Help them to manage their revision time to ensure they are not 'cramming'
- Inform the RS team if you feel your child requires additional support

## Revision guide available:

- We recommend My Revision Notes WJEC Eduqas GCSE (9-1) Religious Studies Route A: Covering Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism (it is important to note that students only need to learn Vhristian and Jewish content)  
<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Revision-Notes-Eduqas-Religious-Studies/dp/1510414622>