



Co-op Academy  
Walkden



# Year 9 Options Booklet 2026-2028

The Key Stage Four Curriculum	2
Curriculum Time Allocations	3
Option Choices	4
Choosing Options	6
Options Principles	6
Options Timeline	7
Key Terms Explained	9
GCSE English Language	10
GCSE English Literature	11
GCSE Maths	12
Level 2 in Further Mathematics	14
GCSE Science (Combined Trilogy)	15
Physical Education at Key Stage 4	16
PSHE at Key Stage 4	16
GCSE Art and Design (Fine Art)	17
GCSE Business	18
GCSE Citizenship	19
GCSE Computer Science	20
GCSE Design and Technology	21
GCSE Drama	23
GCSE French	24
GCSE Geography	25
GCSE History	26
GCSE Art and Design: Photography	27
GCSE Religious Studies	28
GCSE Science (Separates)	29
GCSE Sociology	30
GCSE Spanish	31
Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Child Development	32
Level 1/2 Award in Construction and the Built Environment	33
BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Performing Arts: Dance approach	34
Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Health & Social Care	35
Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering	36
Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Sports Studies	37
Entry Level History	38
Entry Level Geography	40
Entry Level BTEC Pre-Vocational Studies	41
Making the Right Choices	42

# The Key Stage Four Curriculum

The curriculum is divided into two parts, the core curriculum and options. These are outlined below.

## Our Core Curriculum (compulsory for all pupils)

English Language

English Literature

Mathematics (Further Maths can be taken as an additional qualification after school)

Combined Science (worth two GCSE grades). Separate Sciences can be taken as an additional option.

Core Physical Education: non-examination (Sports Studies or BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Dance can be taken as an additional option)

PSHE: non-examination



## Curriculum Time Allocations

Periods per fortnight	Year 10	Year 11
English	9	9
Maths	8	8
Science*	9	9
PSHE	1	1
Core PE	3	3
Options Subjects	5	5

\* Separate Science is an option which includes the allocated time for Combined Science so pupils should expect to study Separate Sciences for 14 hours per fortnight.

## Option Choices

In addition to the subjects in the core curriculum, pupils will choose **FOUR** subjects from a range of courses, although some combinations are prohibited.

Each of the courses are described in this booklet and organised alphabetically within each qualification type.

### GCSE Options

GCSE Art and Design (Fine Art)

GCSE Business

GCSE Citizenship

GCSE Computer Science

GCSE Design and Technology

GCSE Drama

GCSE French

GCSE Geography

GCSE History

GCSE Art and Design (Photography)

GCSE Religious Studies

GCSE Separate Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

GCSE Sociology

GCSE Spanish

### Vocational and Technical Award (GCSE equivalent) Options

Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Child Development

Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Construction and the Built Environment (Technical Award)

BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Dance

Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Health and Social Care

Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering

Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Sports Studies

### Hive Provision

Entry Level History

Entry Level Geography

BTEC Pre-Vocational Studies

These qualifications are appropriately accessible and suitable for some of our pupils in the HIVE provision only.

The vast majority of subjects at KS4 are taken at Level 2: GCSE or Vocational/Technical equivalent.

## Understanding Progress 8.

Progress 8 is the government's standard for measuring school performance, tracking your child's academic growth from Year 6 SATs to Year 11 GCSEs across eight specific qualifications. To ensure every pupil receives a broad and balanced education, these eight grades are grouped into three "buckets": English and Maths, the EBacc subjects, and an Open category. This structure influences how options are selected, ensuring that there is a strong mix of core academic qualifications alongside their personal interests.

### The Ebacc Bucket

The most specific requirement is the EBacc (English Baccalaureate) bucket. This section consists of three "slots" that can *only* be filled by specific core subjects: Sciences (including Computer Science), Humanities (History or Geography), and Modern Foreign Languages.

The majority of pupils at Co-op Academy Walkden are encouraged to complete the EBacc suite of subjects to include selecting either Geography or History as their first option. Pupils can also select French or Spanish but we do recognise that the full combination of subjects (to include a language) will not suit all of our pupils.

## Choosing Options

Pupils will take FOUR subjects from the options offered, although some combinations are prohibited (as explained below):

- Pupils must pick one option from either Geography or History, this will be their first qualification.
- All other options will be picked in the open option block, pupils will be required to rank (2, 3, 4) their three preferred remaining options in order, whilst also choosing a fifth option that will be a reserve (R).

## Options Principles

Pupils can select from a wide range of courses and the following principles ensure that all pupils receive a broad curriculum:

- Pupils can only take ONE of the Design and Technology courses: Level 1/2 Award in Constructing the Built Environment or GCSE Design Technology.
- Pupils can only take ONE of the Art courses: GCSE Art and Design - Fine Art or Photography.
- Pupils can only take ONE of the Sports courses: Cambridge National Sports Studies or BTEC Level 1/2 Dance.
- GCSE Separate Sciences, GCSE Computer Science and GCSE Business and GCSE Sociology can only be taken by pupils at the discretion of the leaders of each department. Pupils must have demonstrated outstanding effort and achievement (at least Silver) in English, Maths, Science to be able to access these courses and achieve well.

## Options Timeline

**January 2026:** The options process will be launched with pupils via a series of presentations in PD time. The presentations will be delivered by each Head of Department and will equip pupils with everything that they need to know about the courses on offer. In lessons, subject teachers will provide pupils with additional information on option choices and pupils will be supported in reading the booklet and understanding the process in their PD sessions until Friday 23rd January.

**January 22nd 4-8pm:** Parents and carers are invited to accompany pupils to a joint Options Evening and Progress review evening. This is an opportunity to consider pupils' current progress when making choices and the chance to speak to subject specialists.

There will also be a presentation from Mr Hemmings and the opportunity to seek careers advice.

Mrs Bentley (Y9 Raising Aspiration Lead) and Mrs Norris (Head of Year 9) will also be available.

**Friday 23rd January (3pm):** Once pupils have received all of the information that they need to make informed choices, the online form will be opened for parents and carers so that pupils can submit their final choices:

<https://studentoptions.co/coopwalkden>. This is not a first-come-first-served process and we will do our best to accommodate pupils' priority choices.

**Friday 30th January:** Deadline for the submission of choices via above online form. Please ensure that qualification selections are in keeping with the information above regarding prohibited combinations.

**Summer Term 2026:** Options choices will be confirmed via Arbor to parents and carers.

## Course Withdrawal or Change

Courses have to be viable in size in order to run. We will always try to accommodate pupils' priority choices but this may not always be possible due to staffing and pupil numbers opting. Unfortunately, we may have to withdraw a course offer in these circumstances.

## Requests for Option Changes

Very occasionally, pupils may feel that they have made a wrong decision with an option and may request a change.

Please be aware that due to timetabling and staffing constraints it will not always be possible to change options. However, requests will be considered which are submitted in writing via email from parents/carers to [walkden.options@coopacademies.co.uk](mailto:walkden.options@coopacademies.co.uk) detailing the reason for the request.

The deadline for all option changes will be Friday 5th July 2026. Unfortunately, no changes will be considered after this date.

# Key Terms Explained

## GCSE

The General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) assesses pupils through a number of written examinations at the end of the course. Coursework elements have been removed from most subjects and a 9-1 assessment framework introduced with a 9 being the highest grade and a grade 5 considered a 'strong pass'.

## BTEC

Designed to meet the needs of employers, BTECs are work-related qualifications for pupils taking their first steps towards successful employment, progressing through their careers or planning to enter university. Each BTEC has an examined element and a number of assignment briefs. BTECs are equivalent in size and value to GCSE.

## OCR Nationals

Cambridge Nationals are designed specifically for pupils aged 14-16. They are industry relevant, geared to key sector requirements and are very popular with schools and colleges because they suit such a broad range of abilities and are an excellent start for vocational study. They enable progression to Level 3 qualifications, such as Technical awards and A-levels. Cambridge Nationals are equivalent in size and value to GCSEs.

## Level 2 Vocational Awards

Level 2 Awards are based on industry approved content and provide the opportunity to inspire the next generation of young people to consider a subject in its widest context as a career of choice. The Level 2 award is equivalent in size and value to GCSE.

## Entry Level Awards

This term describes a suite of qualifications which can help young people build skills, increase knowledge and boost their confidence. They are known as 'certificates' or 'awards' and are for pupils who are not ready for GCSEs.

# GCSE English Language

## Course Leader

Miss Mealey

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

This course is an essential part of everyday life. It is used to communicate, understand and develop insight into the world around us. It provides an appreciation of the intricacies of our daily talk and the impact that words can have. English Language encourages pupils' critical understanding of literature; challenges them to deconstruct literary texts and enables pupils to understand how different times and perspectives inform our view of the world.

Across Years 10 and 11, pupils develop their knowledge of written and spoken forms. Pupils learn to unpick and critique writers' use of methods and craft their own creative fiction and non-fiction pieces. Pupils build on their knowledge of KS3 when reading texts to retrieve information from an extract; analyse the writer's language choices; analyse the writer's structural choices; evaluate the writer's methods in response to a statement; summarise and synthesise information from two sources; compare the viewpoints of writers and the methods used to present these viewpoints. Pupils develop their manipulation of language in writing to form and develop ideas; organise and structure writing for effect; select and develop vocabulary and literary methods; select and develop punctuation and grammatical forms for effect.

## Assessment

Two written papers.

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes - Explorations in creative reading and writing

Paper 2: 1 hour 45 minutes - Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Studying GCSE English Language provides the essential toolkit for navigating diverse professional landscapes, as it provides the core skills of critical analysis, precise communication, and structural storytelling. For aspiring journalists and copywriters, the curriculum's focus on writing for specific audiences and purposes is fundamental to crafting persuasive or informative copy that meets professional standards. This same command of language allows a brand strategist to define a company's voice or a development producer to pitch compelling narratives for television. Furthermore, the technical rigour required for content operations or bid executive roles such as high-level proofreading, understanding legal nuances, and managing complex information. This stems directly from the ability to dissect and assemble sophisticated texts. Ultimately, GCSE English teaches you not just how to read and write, but how to strategically manipulate language to achieve a specific result in the real world. By excelling in English language, you open doors to major local employers such as the BBC, ITV, Dock 10 (Studios) and Salford City Council (Communications).

# GCSE English Literature

## Course Leader

Miss Mealey

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

In Year 10, pupils study the content of the English Literature texts, focusing on: plot and character development; concepts and themes; writers' intentions and contextual factors and writers' methods and their effects. Pupils will study: *An Inspector Calls*, *Macbeth*, *A Christmas Carol* and the *Power and Conflict* poetry cluster. Year 10 focuses on creating and consolidating the vast stores of conceptual knowledge pupils will need to be able to compose an effective essay response in Year 11.

Year 11, revisits pupils' knowledge of the Literature texts and focuses on pupils' application and connection of this knowledge in order to form conceptualised essays in response to the texts. Year 11, pupils are taught how to form a line of argument for their essays; how to effectively select and connect textual references; how to analyse the writer's literary methods; how to discuss the writer's intentions and how they have been established.

## Assessment

Two written papers

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 minutes - *Macbeth* and *A Christmas Carol*

Paper 2: 2 hours 15 minutes - *An Inspector Calls*, *Power and Conflict poetry*, *Unseen Poetry*

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Studying English Literature develops high-level skills in critical interpretation, cultural empathy, and persuasive argumentation making it a versatile foundation for careers that require reading between the lines. Literature allows people to excel in publishing and editorial roles, where they refine manuscripts and manage narrative consistency. The ability to analyse complex themes and historical contexts is highly valued in the legal profession particularly for roles like solicitors or paralegals who must dissect dense documents. Additionally, the creative and psychological insights gained from studying characters and plot make English Literature graduates ideal for creative direction and screen writing where understanding human emotion and journey is key to designing digital products or media. By excelling in English language, you open doors to major local employers such as the BBC, ITV and Dock 10 (Studios).

# GCSE Maths

## Course Leader

Mr Crampton

## Awarding Body

Edexcel

## Course Description

GCSE Mathematics at Co-op Academy Walkden provides pupils with the opportunity to develop their problem-solving and analytical skills in a variety of mathematical areas including algebra, number, geometry, proportion, probability and statistics. This course encourages logical thinking, enhances mathematical confidence, and prepares pupils for further study or careers where mathematics is essential.

The Foundation tier focuses on key concepts and skills, allowing pupils to achieve grades 1–5, while the Higher tier offers more challenging content, preparing pupils for grades 4–9. Both the Foundation and Higher tiers of GCSE Maths offer distinct benefits, ensuring that each pupil is able to progress at a pace and level suited to their abilities. Tiering at the end of Year 9 ensures that pupils are placed in the tier that best aligns with their abilities and aspirations, allowing for targeted support and a more personalised approach to learning.

Foundation Tier:

- **Accessible Content:** The Foundation tier focuses on the core mathematical concepts and skills needed to understand everyday mathematics. It covers key areas such as basic algebra, arithmetic, and geometry.
- **Gradual Progression:** Pupils can build confidence as they master fundamental skills and progress to more complex topics at a manageable pace.
- **Targeted for Grades 1-5:** This tier is ideal for pupils aiming to achieve a grade 5 or below, ensuring they have the necessary understanding for future education or career paths where a basic level of maths is required.
- **Supportive Learning Environment:** The curriculum is tailored to ensure that pupils can succeed in a supportive, structured environment, providing plenty of practice with core topics.

Higher Tier:

- **Challenging Content:** The Higher tier delves deeper into advanced mathematical concepts, including more complex algebra and trigonometry. It is designed to stretch pupils and encourage problem-solving and critical thinking.
- **Broader Opportunities:** By taking the Higher tier, pupils can aim for higher grades (4-9), which opens doors to more advanced studies in mathematics or STEM-related fields.
- **Preparation for Future Study:** The Higher tier provides the rigorous mathematical foundation needed for pupils who wish to pursue A-levels in maths or other related subjects at university, or careers in fields like engineering, economics, and technology.
- **Enhanced Problem-Solving Skills:** Higher tier pupils develop the ability to tackle abstract and complex problems, which boosts their analytical thinking skills.

## Assessment

Three written papers:

- Paper 1: 1 hour 30 mins No calculator allowed
- Paper 2: 1 hour 30 mins Calculator allowed
- Paper 3: 1 hour 30 mins Calculator allowed

All papers assess the following strands of mathematics. Content is split across the three papers and there is no clear pattern to this within the following strands:

- Number
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Ratio and Proportion
- Probability and Statistics

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

GCSE Maths unlocks a wealth of opportunities in Salford's dynamic Business, Finance, and Professional Services sector, where employers like AJ Bell, Bupa, and Salford City Council actively seek analytical talent. Excelling in this subject equips you for diverse roles ranging from Trainee Accountants to Investment Operations Specialists and CASS Analysts. Post-GCSE, you can progress locally through Salford City College's A-Level Mathematics or T-Levels in Finance, blending study with industry placements. Looking ahead, the University of Salford offers specialised degrees and competitive Degree Apprenticeships. Notably, the AJ Bell Apprenticeship Academy at Salford Quays provides a direct pathway into the investment industry, allowing you to earn a salary while securing professional qualifications. This mathematical foundation is your key to a thriving career in Salford's economic hub.

# Level 2 in Further Mathematics

## Course Leader

Mr Crampton and Miss Doorey

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

*This is an additional qualification that high achieving mathematicians might be interested in studying in extra after-school sessions. It is not part of the four option choices that pupils will select but pupils who are interested in this extra opportunity in Year 10 should register their interest with Mr Crampton.*

This qualification is for high achieving pupils in mathematics and covers high order mathematical skills. It offers the opportunity for stretch and challenge that builds on the Key Stage 4 curriculum and is an additional qualification to GCSE Mathematics. The content develops on pupils' prior knowledge of Key Stage 4 Maths and covers topics such as algebra and geometry, which are crucial to further study in the subject, in greater depth and breadth. This qualification places an emphasis on higher order technical proficiency, rigorous argument and problem solving skills. This course also gives pupils an introduction to calculus and matrices and develops further skills in trigonometry, functions and graphs.

The AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics is an untiered Level 2 linear qualification for learners who:

- Are expected to achieve grades 7, 8 and 9 in GCSE Mathematics.
- Are likely to progress to A-Level study in Mathematics and possibly Further Mathematics.

Pupils are selected for this course and lessons will take place after school 3:00 and 4:00 one day per week (TBC).

## Assessment

Paper 1: Non-calculator (1 hour 45 minutes)

Paper 2: Calculator (1 hour 45 minutes)

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Level 2 Further Maths elevates your skills beyond standard GCSEs, equipping you with the advanced logic and calculus required by Salford's booming Digital Innovation and FinTech sectors. Major employers at MediaCityUK, including AJ Bell and BDO LLP, actively seek this "higher-order" thinking for elite roles like Data Scientists and Quantitative Analysts. This course serves as the ultimate bridge to A-Level Mathematics at Salford City College or T-Levels in Finance, providing a qualification highly respected by Russell Group universities. Furthermore, the University of Salford prioritises these skills for degrees in Civil Engineering and Computer Science. Excelling here also gives you a distinct competitive advantage for prestigious Level 6 Degree Apprenticeships, such as those at the AJ Bell Apprenticeship Academy. By mastering complex problem-solving now, you open doors to high-earning careers and world-class qualifications in the modern high-tech economy.

# GCSE Science (Combined Trilogy)

## Course Leader

Dr Gardner

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Combined Science is a core subject for all pupils who do not opt for the single sciences. This course will cover the three sciences: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The qualification is linear, meaning the exams are all at the end of Year 11. The topic content that pupils will be taught across Year 10 and 11 is below:

**Biology:** Cell Biology, Organisation, Infection and Response, Bioenergetics, Homeostasis and Response, Inheritance, Variation and Evolution, Ecology.

**Chemistry:** Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table, Bonding, Structure, and the Properties of Matter, Quantitative Chemistry, Chemical Changes, Energy Changes, The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change, Organic Chemistry, Chemical Analysis, Chemistry of the Atmosphere, Using Resources.

**Physics:** Energy, Electricity, Particle Model of Matter, Atomic Structure, Forces, Waves, Magnetism and Electromagnetism.

Pupils will also be assessed on their ability to demonstrate the necessary scientific skills through required practicals that are incorporated into the topics. Alongside these scientific skills, pupils need to have an understanding of numeracy and literacy in order to access the science exam papers.

## Assessment

This qualification is worth 2 GCSEs. Pupils will sit six written papers each of 1 hour 15 minutes:

Paper 1: Biology, Chemistry and Physics

Paper 2: Biology, Chemistry and Physics

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Pupils who study GCSE Science can go on to study a huge variety of subjects at A-Level or BTEC Level 3 as it is a gateway qualification to a vast number of academic pathways. This course will also build on a number of problem solving and analytical skills that would create a strong foundation for a number of apprenticeship options. This subject is highly valued within most career sectors due to the large number of transferable skills studied. Particular careers that are in demand in the Salford and Greater Manchester region are Clinical Scientist (Genomics), Therapeutic Radiographer, Consultant (Medicine), Pharmacy Assistant Technical Officer, Clinical Engineer, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers. Other careers related to science qualifications include Medicine, Veterinary Sciences, Architecture, Sports Science and many more.

# Physical Education at Key Stage 4

Physical Education is compulsory for all Year 10 and 11 pupils. The aim throughout Core PE in Y10 and 11 is to promote engagement and lifelong activity. Mental health, managing stress, leadership and independence are underlying themes that run through all of the practical schemes of learning. Pupils will get involved in a range of activities which promote active, healthy lifestyles.

Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a range of sports, including Netball, Handball, Football, Rugby, Athletics, Orienteering and Fitness. The core Physical Education programme aims to build upon many of the activities covered at Key Stage 3 in order to develop a depth of understanding and engagement which would allow pupils to continue to enjoy the activity once they leave school.

## PSHE at Key Stage 4

Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) is an important aspect of school life and is essential in the development of young people's lives. PSHE helps pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage many of the critical opportunities, challenges and responsibilities they will face as they grow up and into adulthood. This is a statutory subject that enables all of our pupils to develop our core values of respect, tolerance and equality.

The key themes that will be covered during PSHE at KS4 are:

Health and Wellbeing - Physical and Mental Wellbeing

Relationships - Consent, Healthy Relationships and Sexual Health

Living in the Wider World - Careers, Further Education, College and Employability Skills

# GCSE Art and Design (Fine Art)

## Course Leader

Mrs McGowan

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Pupils will complete two coursework projects over the two year course. This will include a Year 10 project focusing on the theme of Culture and a starting point of their own choice in Year 11. Each project will include a combination of research, recording/drawing, artist study, development and final pieces. The projects enable pupils to work within the parameters of a given topic and a set of criteria but also to develop an individual style and/or direction. Pupils will develop skills in drawing, painting, mixed media and will have the opportunity to work in ceramics if they wish.

The externally set assignment is a project with a variety of starting points set by the exam board. Pupils will choose one of these starting points and will be introduced to a variety of relevant artists, craftspeople and designers in both historical and contemporary contexts for inspiration.

Pupils will complete observational drawings, experiment in a variety of different types of media, produce artist research pages and develop design ideas before finally producing an informed, meaningful and personal response.

## Assessment

Component 1 - Portfolio (60%)

Component 2 - Externally Set Assignment (40%)

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Pupils who study GCSE Art and Design can go on to study Art and Design A-Level or a BTEC Level 3. These qualifications can lead to studying a wide range of subjects at university in specialised areas of Art and Design or onto exciting art-based apprenticeships. Some universities require you to have a foundation degree in Art and Design. It is therefore worthwhile to look at colleges and universities that have a good reputation for these. An Art and Design qualification is extremely flexible and highly valued in industries and job roles such as Architecture, Product and Interior Design, Illustration, Game Design and Fashion Design. With the growth of Factory International (Aviva Studios) and HOME Manchester, there is a rising demand for creative job roles such as digital artists, set designers, gallery management, conservation specialists in Salford and around the Greater Manchester area.

# GCSE Business

## Course Leader

Mrs Moir

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Studying Business at GCSE will give pupils the opportunity to explore real business issues and how businesses work. Pupils will build their knowledge and understanding of different business contexts, ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts. Pupils will apply their knowledge and the understanding gained to making business decisions. Pupils will investigate the interdependent nature of business activity, internal and external influences on business, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources, and how these interdependencies underpin business decision making. Pupils will learn how to analyse quantitative and qualitative data and understand the impact and limitations this data has in the day-to-day making of business decisions.

Pupils will be given a number of case studies and will be required to draw on the knowledge and understanding gained to ensure they are able to use business terminology to identify and explain business activities and be able to apply business concepts to familiar and unfamiliar contexts. The activities undertaken throughout the course will develop problem solving and decision making skills relevant to business such as investigation, analysis and evaluative skills. In addition, pupils will be expected to make justified decisions, using both qualitative and quantitative data, including its selection, interpretation, analysis and evaluation.

This course is suitable for pupils who have demonstrated high levels of effort and progress in English Language and Maths.

## Assessment

Pupils will complete two written papers at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 mins - Influences of Operations and HRM on Business Activity (50%)  
Paper 2: 1 hour 45 mins - Influences of Marketing and Finance on Business Activity (50%)

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Studying GCSE Business provides a firm foundation for progressing onto a wide variety of further education pathways studying Business, Enterprise, Economics and Accountancy, whether this is through A level routes, vocational courses or apprenticeships. GCSE Business pupils will be equipped with a robust understanding of the commercial world, fostering essential skills in financial literacy, strategic planning, and ethical decision-making. By exploring core modules such as marketing, human resources, and operations, pupils develop a 'business mindset' that is highly transferable to any career path, whether they aspire to climb the corporate ladder or launch their own startup. Through the expansion of transport networks within Greater Manchester and Salford, there are now growing numbers of businesses in the legal, financial, insurance and property sectors, providing almost 12000 jobs in the Salford area. Beyond broadcasting, Salford Quays and MediaCity are a major commercial district, housing headquarters for firms like TalkTalk, BUPA, and AJ Bell.

# GCSE Citizenship

## Course Leader

Mr Sims

## Awarding Body

Edexcel

## Course Description

Citizenship is concerned with understanding how society is governed and how citizens can actively participate in democratic life. In its simplest form, it is the study of rights, responsibilities and participation in society. In this GCSE, pupils explore a wide range of political, legal and social issues, including democracy, the role of the state, human rights, the justice system and global citizenship.

In Year 10, pupils will study Theme A, which focuses on identity, diversity and shared values, alongside Theme B, which examines democracy at local and national level, and Theme C, which explores the role of law, justice and human rights. In Year 11, pupils will study Theme D, focusing on power, influence and the role of the media, and Theme E, which involves taking Citizenship action through planning and carrying out a practical project. The Edexcel GCSE Citizenship course encourages pupils to become informed, responsible and active citizens, equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to engage confidently in society.

## Assessment

There are two written papers, each worth 50% of the GCSE, and each paper is worth 80 marks.

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 mins , Section A: Living together in the UK, Section B: Democracy at work in the UK, Section C: Law and Justice, Section D: Citizenship issues and debates

Paper 2: 1 hour 45 mins. Section A: Own citizenship action, Section B: Power and influence: others' actions. This section will relate directly to a source which focuses on citizenship actions carried out by other people, requiring pupils to understand, comment on, and suggest actions., Section C: Power and influence

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Citizenship is the perfect choice if you are interested in how power, justice, and the law shape our community. In Salford, this subject links directly to our Professional Services and Public Sector growth. Local employers like Salford City Council and the BBC at MediaCity need people who understand legal frameworks, policy, and advocacy. Whether you aspire to be a Policy & Strategy Advisor, a Legal and Rights Management Officer, or an Urban Planner helping to design net-zero buildings with companies like Muse, Citizenship gives you the foundation to advocate for change. You will develop the "soft skills" that Salford employers value most: critical thinking, debating, and a deep understanding of your rights and responsibilities in a modern democracy.

# GCSE Computer Science

## Course Leader

Mrs Moir

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Computer Science is built around the key thought processes of logical thinking and problem solving. This course will develop pupils' understanding of how a computer works, their computational thinking skills, understanding of algorithms and programming skills, as well as wider concepts and the impacts of computing technology.

In Year 10, pupils will develop their understanding of systems architecture, the hardware that makes up a computing system and how data is represented within the computer system, including memory and storage. In addition, practical programming units will enable pupils to learn programming structures and techniques and will be interwoven throughout the year to ensure pupils experience regular opportunities to develop and master skills using high level programming languages such as Python and SQL.

In Year 11, pupils are expected to develop their wider knowledge of computing concepts such as networking, cyber security and the ethical, legal and environmental impacts of technology and computing. Practical programming opportunities will continue to be interwoven, to ensure pupils are confident in developing structured, robust and effective code.

This course is suitable for pupils who have demonstrated high levels of effort and progress in Computing and Maths.

## Assessment

Pupils will complete two written papers at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1: 2 hours - Computational Thinking and Programming Skills (50% of GCSE)

Paper 2: 1 hour 45 mins - Computing Concepts (50% of GCSE)

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Studying Computer Science at GCSE level provides pupils with a powerful toolkit of computational thinking, logical reasoning, and complex problem-solving skills that are increasingly essential in a digital-first economy. Beyond mastering programming languages, pupils gain a deep understanding of how the world "behind the screen" functions, preparing them for a wide range of high-value careers in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and software engineering. For pupils in the North West, this qualification is a gateway to a thriving regional tech ecosystem; the Greater Manchester area is currently the leading UK tech destination outside London, generating over £30 billion annually for the local economy. Pupils in Salford are uniquely positioned next to MediaCity, Europe's largest purpose-built digital hub. Home to digital powerhouses like the BBC (which develop iPlayer and Bitesize here), ITV, and dock10. HOST Salford: The *Home of Skills & Technology* offers specialised 'Skills City' bootcamps and 'CyberFirst' hubs designed to fast-track local young talent into technical roles.

# GCSE Design and Technology

## Course Leaders

Mrs Smallwood

## Awarding Body

OCR

## Course Description

This qualification relates authentic real-world 21<sup>st</sup> century awareness of iterative design practices and strategies used by the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries, and shifts the focus of learning onto the process of designing rather than on the outcome.

This is a creative GCSE where pupils will be challenged to 'think outside the box.' Pupils will explore different material areas before specialising in one for their controlled assessment and main practical project. Pupils will use their hand drawing skills as well as CAD (Computer Aided Design) skills which will develop their technical, orthographic and isometric drawing. Pupils will develop an understanding of materials, their uses and properties as well as new and emerging technologies, energy, forces, structures and modern designers.

Design and Technology enables pupils to develop a range of transferable skills such as communication, creative thinking and problem solving whilst also developing their understanding of technology and the working world.

## Assessment

Unit 1 Written Exam: 2 hours, 100 marks, 50% of GCSE

One examination paper, worth 50% of the total GCSE, assesses two areas, core knowledge and understanding of design and technology principles; and in-depth knowledge and understanding of at least one main material area.

Section A is worth 55 marks, and focuses predominantly on core knowledge.

Section B is worth 45 marks, and pupils choose a product within a situational context in (one of) their chosen in-depth material area (s).

In-depth material areas include:

- Papers and boards;
- Natural and manufactured timber;
- Ferrous and non-ferrous metals;
- Thermo and thermosetting polymers;
- Natural, synthetic, blended and mixed fibres, woven, non-woven and knitted textiles.

Unit 2 Non-Exam Assessment (NEA): 35-40 hours approx, 100 marks, 50% of GCSE

Marking criteria giving learners the opportunity to:

- Explore to identify needs and requirements
- Create solutions to meet those needs
- Evaluate whether the needs have been met

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Pupils of GCSE Design and Technology (DT) have access to a wide range of local career paths across Design, engineering, manufacturing, and construction. In the engineering sector, roles such as Mechanical or Electrical Engineers focus on designing and maintaining complex systems, while Advanced Manufacturing Technicians utilise CNC and robotics for precision fabrication. Other current local careers include Architect technician, CAD engineer, Graphic designers and Product designers. These careers typically require a mix of Degree-level qualifications or Advanced Apprenticeships, directly building upon the problem-solving and technical skills developed in the GCSE DT curriculum.

For further education, many Salford colleges offer Graphic design & Communication, or Textiles. Loreto College in Manchester currently offer an A level in the following courses: 3D design course, Fashion and Textiles or Graphic communication. There are many Universities that can then further develop these skills in Architecture, 3D and product design, Decorative Arts etc. More locally, The University of Salford currently offers a degree in BSc (Hons) Architectural Design and Technology.

# GCSE Drama

## Course Leaders

Ms Saunders

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Drama is a highly practical and explorative subject; an art form that enquires, analyses and portrays real life issues and characters. It requires pupils to articulate how they would perform in certain roles, teaching them the skills to act and explore the technical elements of theatre-making. Practical work is at the heart of the course.

Throughout the two year course, pupils will look at the processes of devising a production, interpreting playwrights' intentions through scripted performances and ask them to review professional theatre through visits by studying practitioners and techniques.

The course develops a vast array of transferable skills, including collaboration, communication, leadership, problem-solving and an understanding of how to amend and refine work in order to make a smooth transition to the next level of study. It will also develop confidence and social skills vital for any career.

## Assessment

The course consists of three components:

Component 1: Understanding Drama. This consists of a written exam split into three sections which is externally assessed (40% of final exam).

Component 2: Devising Theatre. This is an internally assessed component consisting of a practical performance and an evidence portfolio (10% practical performance, 30% portfolio).

Component 3: Texts in Practice. This component is externally assessed and comprises the practical performance of two extracts from a scripted play (20% of final exam).

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Drama utilises skills linked to career pathways far and beyond creative arts including the six specific skills that employers have identified that they are looking for in their employees; Organisation, communication, Teamwork, Leadership, Creativity and Problem solving. Pupils who study Drama go on to study and work in a myriad of fields including; Medicine, Law, Business, Performing and Creative Arts, Media, Journalism, Content Production, Teaching and Politics.

Growth in the creative sector in Salford has grown by 142% since 2021 making a career using Drama a clear pathway for our pupils as we have Media City and many theatres in Manchester offering a variety of employment opportunities.

There are a number of Higher Education Pathways to continue studying Drama including Salford Colleges, Pendleton, Winstanley and Loreto.

# GCSE French

## Course Leader

Mr Ribot

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Pupils are encouraged to study a language GCSE. In GCSE French pupils study the following themes: people and lifestyle, popular culture, communication and the world around us.

Lessons contain a balance of the four key skills in learning a language: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Pupils build on the foundations from studying French at KS3 and develop their communication skills throughout the course.

Pupils will have opportunities to develop their independent writing skills, spontaneous speaking and understanding of complex authentic texts in French; both written and spoken. GCSE French is a challenging but rewarding course to study and a qualification that will open many doors to college, university and the employment market.

## Assessment

There are four examinations at Higher or Foundation Tier each worth 25%:

Paper 1: Listening and Understanding

Paper 2: Speaking

Paper 3: Reading and Understanding

Paper 4: Writing

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Pupils who study GCSE French can go on to study A Level French at college and there are many university courses that include French as a whole degree or as a component part.

There are many jobs directly linked to French such as interpreting, translation, teaching, lecturing, bilingual work and sales work. Furthermore, there are hundreds of jobs and careers indirectly linked to French that value and recognise the commitment and hard work of learning a new language.

Choosing GCSE French or Spanish offers a significant competitive edge within Salford's rapidly growing 'Creative & Technology' and 'Professional Services' sectors. As MediaCityUK continues to expand, anchor institutions like the BBC and ITV increasingly seek individuals with the linguistic skills to manage international content and global journalism, while firms such as BDO and AJ Bell value cross-cultural communication essential for roles in audit, compliance, and international finance. Furthermore, in our local Industrial Economy, companies like METTLER TOLEDO require linguists for Field Service Engineering and global trade roles. These GCSE courses prepare you by developing cultural intelligence and high-level communication precision - transferable skills that are highly prized by Salford employers looking for the next generation of adaptable, global-thinking professionals.

# GCSE Geography

## Course Leader

Mrs Lloyd

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

In Year 10, pupils will study 'The Challenge of Natural Hazards'; evaluating the impacts of earthquakes in Haiti and Japan and the impact of a tropical storm in the Philippines. Through the study of 'The Living World', pupils will explain the location of biomes including tropical rainforests, hot deserts and desert fringe areas and assess the exploitation of these environments and the need for sustainable management. Pupils will deepen their understanding of landscapes in the UK through the study of coastlines, with a focus on the Jurassic Coast, as well as river landscapes through the study of the River Severn; the formation of river features as well as flood management.

In Year 11, pupils will study 'Urban Issues and Challenges'; contrasting the urban growth of Lagos, the opportunities and challenges of Makoko and evaluating the impacts of urban change in Manchester. Through 'Changing Economic World' pupils will be able to explain the positive and negative impacts of industrial growth in Nigeria and evaluate the post industrial economy in the UK. Pupils will investigate sustainability through 'Resource Management' assessing current and projected trends of consumption and the impact this may have on food resources.

## Assessment

There are three examination papers:

Paper 1: 1 hour 30 minutes 'Living with the Physical Environment'

Paper 2: 1 hour 30 minutes 'Challenges in the Human Environment'

Paper 3: 1 hour 30 minutes 'Geographical Application'

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Choosing GCSE Geography opens significant pathways for further study and careers within the area of Salford. As the city of Salford expands and there is a greater demand for housing and transport infrastructure there are essential roles in 'Urban Planning' to design and manage the development of towns, cities, and surrounding land. Quantity surveyors estimating the cost and completion of construction projects. There is an increased need for sustainable practices across resources, energy analysts and waste management specialists are required to ensure adequate supply and stable infrastructure.

Geography is a facilitating subject which develops foundational knowledge and transferable skills which are highly valued by employers. As well as this Geography develops communication skills and future trend forecasting which are required for industries as they develop sustainable practices in the future.

# GCSE History

## Course Leader

Mrs Kelly

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

This course consists of a period study on Germany 1890-1945, a thematic study of Health and the People in Britain since c.1000, a wider world depth study on Conflict and Tension between East and West 1945-72, and a British depth study on Elizabethan England c.1568-1603.

In Year 10, pupils will complete their period study exploring democracy and dictatorship in Germany, 1890-1945. They will then start their wider world depth study, developing an understanding of how conflict and tension developed between East and West and the consequences of different events in the Cold War which impacted on superpower relations between 1945 and 1972. Towards the end of Year 10, pupils will commence their thematic study, exploring how medicine has developed over a period of 1000 years, considering how different factors have influenced the health of the population over time.

After completing their thematic study, Year 11 pupils will move on to an in-depth study on Elizabethan England between 1568-1603, including a study of the historic environment at a particular historical site from the period. At the end of Year 11, pupils will be examined on all four parts of the GCSE through two exams, each lasting two hours.

## Assessment

Paper 1: Two hours: 'Understanding the Modern World' (Germany 1890-1945 and Conflict and Tension 1945-72).

Paper 2: Two hours: 'Shaping the Nation' (Aspects of British Life Since c.1000 and Elizabethan England).

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Choosing a GCSE in History in Year 9 provides you with a set of "future-proof" skills that are highly valued by both Universities and employers. The course teaches you how to investigate and analyse complex sources, and build persuasive arguments. It is officially recognised as a "facilitating subject", keeping your future options open for competitive A-Levels and degrees like Law, Politics, and Journalism. Beyond traditional heritage roles, a History GCSE develops the critical thinking and communication skills essential for modern careers in business, marketing, and the civil service, where the ability to sift through information to find the truth is a major advantage. By studying the past to understand the "why" and "how" of today's world, you'll gain the analytical edge needed for success in high-demand sectors like legal services, media, and digital content management.

# GCSE Art and Design: Photography

## Course Leader

Mrs McGowan

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Photography is a computer based course, taught through four projects over two years. The projects are based on titles which the pupils are encouraged to explore in depth including: camera basics, abstract, light and dark and an independent project, exploring themes such as portraiture, landscapes, still life and experimental photography.

Pupils are taught how to use a professional SLR camera developing skills in composition, lighting, digital editing (Photopea), manual camera settings (aperture, shutter speed and ISO) as well as storytelling through images.

Over the two year course pupils will create a sustained digital portfolio (Component 1) with investigations, experiments, and final outcomes, plus an exam project (Component 2). Pupils may also include physical photography work if they wish.

To inform their investigations pupils are introduced to a range of both historical and contemporary photographers and artists. Pupils will learn how to work in their style as well as producing their own personal responses.

## Assessment

Component 1 - Portfolio (60%)

Component 2 - Externally Set Assignment (40%)

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

This course provides a strong foundation for further progression to Art and Design related courses such as A-level Art and Design, Photography and Fashion. Pupils will also find it useful for enhanced vocational and career pathways, higher education, foundation studies, apprenticeships and university courses. The creative industries are the biggest employer in the UK at present and the qualification is valued and relevant to the following career paths and job roles: Medical Illustrator, Television Art Director, Cinematographer, Graphic Designer and Set Designer to name but a few. Particular careers that are in demand in the Salford and Greater Manchester region are commercial photographers, content creators, video producers and digital artwork/retouchers.

# GCSE Religious Studies

## Course Leader

Miss Rudman

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

GCSE Religious Studies invites pupils to explore life's fundamental questions, morality, and the diverse beliefs shaping our global society. This qualification balances religious doctrine with philosophical inquiry through two core components.

Component one, focuses on the study of Religions, framed around the beliefs and practices of Christianity and Islam. Pupils examine key concepts such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, Tawhid, and the Five Pillars.

Component two, takes a thematic approach, challenging pupils to apply beliefs and practices to modern ethical issues, including relationships, peace and conflict, and crime and punishment. By evaluating contrasting religious and non-religious views on topics like social justice and medical ethics, pupils develop critical thinking and articulate their own perspectives. This course not only fosters a deep understanding of diverse traditions but also equips pupils with the analytical skills necessary to navigate complex moral landscapes in the modern world.

## Assessment

Paper 1: The Study of Religions: 1-hour and 45-minute exam worth 50% of the GCSE. It consists of two five-part questions for each religion studied, testing knowledge, understanding, and evaluation.

Paper 2: Thematic Studies: 1-hour and 45-minute exam worth 50% of the GCSE. It consists of five-part questions for each of the four chosen themes.

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

GCSE Religious Studies is far more than just learning about beliefs; it is the study of ethics, diversity, and human decision-making. In Salford's health sector, employers like Salford Royal and The Christie value RS because it teaches you to navigate complex "bioethical" issues - such as when a medical treatment conflicts with a patient's personal beliefs.

For those looking toward the professional offices at MediaCity or Salford City Council, RS provides the "cultural intelligence" needed to work in a global city. Whether you are a Policy Advisor at the BBC or a Legal Officer at BDO, you will use the critical thinking and debating skills from RS to understand different perspectives, tackle inequality, and ensure that Salford's growth is fair and inclusive for everyone.

# GCSE Science (Separates)

## Course Leader

Dr Gardner

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

*This course is an option for pupils who have demonstrated high levels of commitment and effort in their Science lessons. This course will be delivered in Science lessons and additionally in the hours allocated for one option.*

This course will cover the three sciences: Biology, Chemistry and Physics. This qualification is linear, meaning the exams are all at the end of Year 11. Topics include:

Biology: Cell Biology, Organisation, Infection and Response, Bioenergetics, Homeostasis and Response, Inheritance, Variation and Evolution, Ecology.

Chemistry: Atomic Structure and the Periodic Table, Bonding, Structure and the Properties of Matter, Quantitative Chemistry, Chemical Changes, Energy Changes, The Rate and Extent of Chemical Change, Organic Chemistry, Chemical Analysis, Chemistry of the Atmosphere, Using Resources.

Physics: Energy, Electricity, Particle Model of Matter, Atomic Structure, Forces, Waves, Magnetism and Electromagnetism, Space.

Pupils will also be assessed on their ability to demonstrate necessary scientific skills through required practicals that are incorporated into the topics. Alongside these scientific skills pupils need to have a solid understanding of numeracy and literacy skills in order to access the separate science exam papers. Pupils should have demonstrated this in their achievements to date.

## Assessment

Pupils will be awarded a separate grade for each science. There are six written exam papers:

Paper 1: Biology, Chemistry and Physics 1 hour 45 minutes each

Paper 2: Biology, Chemistry and Physics 1 hour 45 minutes each

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Pupils who study GCSE Science can go on to study a huge variety of subjects at A-Level or BTEC Level 3 as it is a gateway qualification to a vast number of academic pathways. This course will also build on a number of problem solving and analytical skills. This subject is highly valued within most career sectors due to the large number of transferable skills studied. Particular careers that are in demand in the Salford and Greater Manchester region are Clinical Scientist (Genomics), Therapeutic Radiographer, Consultant (Medicine), Pharmacy Assistant Technical Officer, Clinical Engineer, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers.

# GCSE Sociology

## Course Leader

Mr Sims

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Sociology is a social science concerned with the study of society and human behaviour. In its simplest form it is the 'science of society'. In this GCSE the topics are widely varied and cover a range of issues related to social class, gender, ethnicity, social inequality and crime. Pupils will debate broad theoretical issues such as the impact of changing social values and attitudes in contemporary society, as well as exploring questions concerning the effectiveness of the criminal justice system. In Year 10, pupils will study the sociology of the family and the sociology of education. In Year 11 pupils will complete Unit 2 which covers the sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification.

## Assessment

There are two written papers each worth 50% of the GCSE.

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 mins

Section A: The Sociology of Families

Section B: The Sociology of Education

Paper 2: 1 hour 45 mins.

Section A: The Sociology of Crime and Deviance

Section B: The Sociology of Social Stratification

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Sociology allows you to look "under the hood" of society to understand why people behave the way they do and how different groups interact. This is incredibly relevant to Salford's Health, Social Care, and Innovation sector. If you are looking toward a career at Salford Royal (Northern Care Alliance) or Bupa, Sociology helps you understand the social factors behind public health. It is essential for roles such as a Public Health Professional, Social Worker, or even a Sustainability Consultant, where you need to understand how local communities adapt to a changing world. By studying Sociology, you gain the analytical tools needed to tackle social inequality and improve lives, making you a prime candidate for any local role that involves working with people and data.

# GCSE Spanish

## Course Leader

Mr Ribot

## Awarding Body

AQA

## Course Description

Pupils are encouraged to select a language at GCSE. Pupils who choose GCSE Spanish will have the opportunity to develop independent writing skills, spontaneous speaking and understanding of complex authentic texts in Spanish, both written and spoken.

Lessons contain a balance of the four key skills in learning a language: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Pupils build on the foundations from studying Spanish at KS3 and develop their communication skills throughout the course.

GCSE Spanish explores the following themes:

“People and lifestyle”, “popular culture” and “communication and the world around us”.

## Assessment

There are four components at foundation and higher level:

Paper 1: Listening and Understanding (25%)

Paper 2: Speaking (25%)

Paper 3: Reading and Understanding (25%)

Paper 4: Writing (25%)

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Pupils who study GCSE Spanish can go on to study A Level Spanish at college and there are many university courses that include Spanish as a whole degree or as a component part.

There are many jobs directly linked to Spanish such as interpreting, translation, teaching, lecturing, bilingual work and sales work. Furthermore, there are hundreds of jobs and careers indirectly linked to Spanish that value and recognise the commitment and hard work of learning a new language.

Choosing a language GCSE offers a significant competitive edge within Salford's rapidly growing 'Creative & Technology' and 'Professional Services' sectors. As MediaCityUK continues to expand, anchor institutions like the BBC and ITV increasingly seek individuals with the linguistic skills to manage international content and global journalism, while firms such as BDO and AJ Bell value cross-cultural communication essential for roles in audit, compliance, and international finance. Furthermore, in our local Industrial Economy, companies like METTLER TOLEDO require linguists for Field Service Engineering and global trade roles. These GCSE courses prepare you by developing cultural intelligence and high-level communication precision - transferable skills that are highly prized by Salford employers looking for the next generation of adaptable, global-thinking professionals.

# Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Child Development

## Course Leader

Miss Rudman

## Awarding Body

OCR

## Course Description

This qualification is designed for pupils aged 14–16 who are interested in the childcare sector. It provides a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills used by professionals to support the growth and well-being of children.

This course is an ideal choice for pupils who thrive on practical, real-life learning, fostering both independence and confidence. You will develop hands-on expertise by preparing nutritionally balanced meals, selecting appropriate childcare equipment, and planning play activities that stimulate growth. Crucially, you will also learn to identify risks and prevent accidents to ensure a safe environment for children. The qualification builds valuable transferable skills; you will refine your research abilities through equipment evaluation and enhance your communication skills by justifying professional recommendations.

## Assessment

The course is divided into three interrelated components, designed to build pupil confidence and vocational attributes over time.

Component 1 - Health and Well-being for Child Development - External exam - 40%

Component 2 - Create a Safe Environment and Nutritional Needs - Internal assessment - 30%

Component 3 - Understand the Development of a Child (1–5 Years) - Internal assessment - 30%

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Studying Child Development provides the essential foundation for a career in Salford's thriving Health and Public Sector, an area that has seen a 58% employment increase since 2019. This course equips you with an understanding of "holistic development" between physical, cognitive, and social growth which is critical for roles at major employers like Salford Royal and Salford City Council. You will build practical skills in nutrition and safety while developing the observation and research abilities required by huge local organisations like Bupa. Whether you aim to become a Social Worker, Clinical Scientist, or Public Health Professional, this training prepares you to assess needs and support families through crises. By mastering these core competencies, you will not only join a workforce of over 26,000 but also contribute directly to Salford's mission of becoming a "Child Friendly City."

# Level 1/2 Award in Construction and the Built Environment

## Course Leader

Mrs Smallwood

## Awarding Body

EDUCAS

## Course Description

This course has been designed to provide pupils with a hands-on introduction to the construction industry from the build perspective. Pupils will spend some of their time in the construction workshop, developing their skills in a range of trades. Pupils will also learn skills that employers in the construction industry really value such as planning and preparation whilst also learning about health and safety on building sites, materials, infrastructure etc.

In Year 10, pupils will focus on unit 1 (exam content) which introduces learners to the construction sector and the type of professional and trade roles and activity that is undertaken. The learner will explore the different types of buildings and structures that the built environment forms. Sustainability and the impact of the built environment on the local community is explored along with reduction measures that can be employed.

In Year 11, pupils are expected to develop their practical skills further and will focus on three of the following areas: joinery, electrics, bricklaying, plumbing, tiling or decorating. Examined elements can be taken across Year 10 and Year 11.

## Assessment

Unit 1: Introduction to the Built Environment 40%, 80 marks: 1 hour and 30 min online exam

Unit 3: Construction Coursework 60%, 120 marks: Internally assessed - this consists of 3x practical assessments and 3x supporting written coursework portfolios.

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Pupils of *Level 1/2 Award in Construction and the Built Environment* have access to a wide range of local career paths within Salford with current opportunities for Quantity Surveyors, architect technicians and Site Managers available to oversee daily operations, requiring strong spatial analysis and risk management skills. Additionally, the area supports specialised roles like Sustainable Construction Specialists, who implement green building practices, and Field Service Engineers, who provide technical equipment repair across the region. These careers typically require a mix of Degree-level qualifications or Advanced Apprenticeships, directly building upon the problem-solving and technical skills developed in the Construction curriculum.

Further education routes are available locally at *Salford City skills* or the *North-West Construction Technical Excellence College (CTEC) in Wigan*, *Hopwood Hall College in Middleton* and many other options across greater Manchester where pupils can continue onto a level 3 or focus on a specific trade skill area and gain a T Level or HND. Manchester also has a wealth of apprenticeships available for trades skills.

# BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Performing Arts: Dance approach

## Course Leader

Mrs Hughes

## Awarding Body

Pearson

## Course Description

Pupils will have the opportunity to develop knowledge and technical skills in the following areas of Dance:

Development of key skills that prove their aptitude in dance, such as reproducing dance repertoire and responding to stimuli; processes that underpin effective ways of working in the dance sector, such as development of ideas, rehearsal and performance; knowledge that underpins effective use of skills, processes and attitudes in the performing arts sector, such as roles, responsibilities and different styles of dance.

In Year 10, pupils will study three different styles of dance and choreographers. Pupils will produce written work on the different dance styles and choreographers as well as taking part in workshops.

Pupils will perform two minutes of professional repertoire and in Year 11, pupils will create a dance performance in response to a brief set by the exam board.

## Assessment

Component 1 Exploring The Performing Arts: Internally Assessed.

Component 2 Developing Skills and Techniques in The Performing Arts: Internally Assessed

Component 3 Responding to a brief. This will be shown to an invited audience and marked externally.

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Being close to Salford MediaCityUK offers a wealth of opportunities ranging from professional performance at venues like The Lowry and Factory International to roles in choreography, arts management, and dance education. This course can also lead into other roles, such as, dance teacher, professional dance, rehearsal director and a dance movement psychotherapist.

Following studying Btec Dance, pupils can progress to prestigious Level 3 programmes at Pendleton Sixth Form College or Shockout Academy, eventually feeding into degree-level study at the University of Salford. With the creative sector projected to create a million new jobs by 2030, this course provides a direct pathway into this sector.

# Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Health & Social Care

## Course Leader

Mrs Schafer

## Awarding Body

OCR

## Course Description

In year 10, pupils will complete a compulsory unit, Supporting individuals through life events which is coursework based. The assignments for this unit include, exploring life stages and development and the impacts life events can have on individuals and sources of support people in society might need.

In year 11, pupils will complete the second compulsory unit, Principles of care in health and social care settings, which is a 75 minute exam. The final unit that pupils will complete is Health promotion campaigns, which is coursework based. Pupils in this unit explore the current health issues within society and the impact this has and factors that affect health and well being.

## Assessment

R032- Principles of care in health and social care settings- Exam 40%

R033- Supporting individuals through life events- coursework- 30%

R035: Health promotion campaigns- coursework- 30%

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

This subject serves as a vital entry point into a multi billion pound industry that is currently the largest employer in the North West. Within Salford, the landscape is dominated by the Northern Care Alliance NHS Foundation Trust, which operates Salford Royal Hospital. This provides a direct pathway for pupils into professional roles such as Registered Nursing, Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, and Clinical Psychology.

Following studying Health and Social Care, pupils can transition into Level 3 BTEC National Diplomas in Health and Social Care or T-Levels in Health at Salford City College, which offer extensive work placement opportunities with local care providers. For those aspiring to degree level study, the University of Salford's School of Health and Society is the largest provider of nursing and midwifery training in the North West, offering world-class facilities for pupils pursuing careers as Paramedics, Physiotherapists, or Social Policy Analysts. With the sector projected to require an additional 60,000 workers across Greater Manchester by 2028, a foundation in Health and Social Care ensures pupils are entering a career path defined by professional stability, competitive salaries, and the opportunity to make a profound impact on the local community.

# Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering

## Course Leader

Mrs Clarke

### Awarding Body

EDUQAS (WJEC)

### Course Description

In Year 10, pupils will cover a variety of content to include gaining an understanding of nutrition in relation to a variety of dietary needs. This understanding will then support pupils in completing a mock practical where pupils will plan a menu for a specific dietary need. Furthermore, during Year 10, pupils will cover the knowledge needed for the external exam. This will allow pupils to explore the Hospitality and Catering industry covering topics such as job roles, types of provision and health and safety. Pupils will also develop and produce a range of food products which will enable them to develop their understanding of a variety of skills, processes and cooking methods.

In Year 11, pupils will complete Unit 2 which is a portfolio of work demonstrating their understanding of nutrition, cooking methods, menu planning and evaluation. As part of this process, pupils will complete a 3 hour practical exam where they will demonstrate a range of preparation skills and cooking methods. Furthermore, during Year 11, pupils will continue to develop and recall knowledge from Year 10 on the Hospitality and Catering industry for the written exam.

### Assessment

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry 40% - External Exam 1h 20 minutes

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action 60% - Internal Assessment 12 hours (including 3 hour practical assessment)

### Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Choosing Hospitality and Catering opens doors to some of the most exciting jobs in Salford. As we have MediaCity on our doorstep, there is a huge demand for people to run catering for the BBC and ITV or work as top chefs in the stylish hotels at the Quays.

However, this course isn't just for future chefs! The skills you learn like how to keep food safe and how to be precise with measurements are the same skills used by Pharmacy Assistants at Salford Royal Hospital. If you care about the planet, this subject also helps you find "green" jobs. You could work as a consultant helping local businesses reduce their food waste and shop more sustainably. Whether you want to work in a fast-paced kitchen, a hospital, or an environmental company, this subject is a great first step.

# Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Sports Studies

## Course Leader

Mrs Schafer

## Awarding Body

OCR

## Course Description

In Year 10, pupils will complete a compulsory unit Performance and Leadership in Sport Activities which is coursework based. The assessments for this unit include: practical performance in a team and/or an individual sport; understanding of coaching through assessing their own performance and developing a specific action plan in order to improve their own level of ability. Pupils will then study Sports' Leadership, which is coursework based.

In Year 11, pupils will complete the second compulsory unit, Contemporary Issues in Sport which is a 75 minute exam. The final unit pupils will complete is based on 'Sport and the media' which is a coursework based unit. Pupils learn about the different sources of media that covers sport and the positive and negative effects media has on the sport

## Assessment

### Mandatory Units:

- Performance and Leadership in Sport Activities (coursework)- 40%
- Contemporary Issues in Sport (examination)- 40%

### Optional Unit:

- Sports and the media (coursework)- 20%

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Choosing Sport Studies in Salford provides pupils with a strategic gateway into a sector where traditional athletic performance meets global digital innovation. With MediaCityUK hosting the national headquarters for BBC Sport and ITV, pupils are uniquely positioned for careers in Sports Broadcasting, Digital Content Creation, and Performance Analysis. The presence of elite organisations like Salford Red Devils, Salford City FC, and Sale Sharks creates high demand for specialised professionals such as Strength and Conditioning Coaches, Sports Rehabilitators, and Match Analysts. Furthermore, the local public health sector, led by Salford Community Leisure, offers vital pathways into Exercise Physiology, Health Improvement, and Sports Development.

Upon completion of Sport Studies, pupils can advance to Level 3 BTEC Extended Diplomas or A-Levels in Physical Education at local institutions like Salford City College (Eccles Sixth Form), which maintains elite academy partnerships with the Manchester United Foundation. For those pursuing higher education, the University of Salford provides nationally recognised degrees in Sport & Exercise Science, Sports Journalism, and Sport Business Management. These pathways facilitate a seamless transition into a regional labor market expanding at an annual rate of 7%, ensuring that whether a pupil aspires to be a Performance Nutritionist, PE Teacher, or Sports Marketing Manager, they are equipped with the specialised skills required for the 2026 economy.

# Entry Level History

## Course Leader

Mrs Cutting

## Awarding Body

OCR

## Course Description

The Entry Level Certificate in History provides a broad curriculum for learners to engage their interest in History. The content aims to create independent learners, critical thinkers and decision makers – all personal assets that can make pupils stand out as they progress to further education and/or the workplace. This is a recognised and meaningful qualification in History including a range of topics from Crime and Punishment to Modern American History and the Vikings.

This course is suitable for some of our HIVE pupils.

## Assessment

There are three units which are all completed in lesson time:

- Thematic Study (40 marks): Internally-assessed/ externally moderated
- Depth Study (30 marks): Internally-assessed/ externally moderated
- Study of a Site or Individual (30 marks): Internally-assessed/ externally moderated

Learners have to study one of five thematic studies and one of eight depth studies. Once these two areas have been chosen, pupils can decide which topics interest them most.

In the 'Study of Site or Individual', pupils can select either a famous individual from the past in whom they are particularly interested or an historical site. They carry out some research on the individual or site and present their findings in a variety of ways, e.g. by designing pages for a website or by producing a wall display or a cartoon strip.

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Choosing OCR Entry Level History in Year 9 can be an excellent pathway for SEND learners, offering a supportive and accessible route into a subject that builds valuable, long-lasting skills. The course is designed to help pupils investigate information, understand different viewpoints, and express their ideas clearly, all within a structured framework that can be adapted to individual learning needs.

Entry Level History provides a gentle introduction to the subject while still developing the core skills that make History so valuable. These include critical thinking, organisation, and communication abilities that help pupils in everyday learning and prepare them for future study or training. Many SEND learners respond well to the clear, manageable tasks and practical assessment style offered by the OCR Entry Level qualification.

The benefits of studying History reach far beyond traditional historical careers. The subject helps pupils learn how to judge what information is trustworthy, how to explain their thinking, and how to make sense of the world around them. These are essential skills for a wide range of modern careers, including roles in business, public services, media, and digital work areas where SEND learners often thrive when given the right support.

By exploring the past in a structured and accessible way, pupils build confidence in problem-solving, reasoning, and understanding complex ideas at their own pace. With appropriate adjustments and encouragement, OCR Entry Level History can support SEND learners in developing independence, resilience, and a strong foundation for whichever pathway they choose next.

# Entry Level Geography

## Course Leader

Mrs Cutting

## Awarding Body

OCR

## Course Description

The Entry Level Certificate in Geography provides a broad curriculum for learners to engage their interest in Geography. The course is designed to inspire and engage pupils providing a broad and coherent course of study.

Pupils will study 'The Dynamic World' investigating local places and cities and how they change over time. Pupils will assess the risks posed by the hazards of tectonics and floods through case studies and discover the importance of tropical rainforests and sustainable futures including food and energy.

Pupils will also conduct field work and an independent project as part of their studies. This course is suitable for some of our HIVE pupils.

## Assessment

All assessments are internally assessed and externally moderated

- Dynamic World: 1 hour Assessment (30 marks)
- Fieldwork Notebook (30 marks)
- Personal Project (40 marks)

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Choosing Geography in Year 9 provides pupils with a set of highly transferable, "future-proof" skills that are valued by colleges, universities, and employers. The OCR Entry Level Geography course helps learners develop the ability to investigate real-world issues, interpret a range of geographical data, and understand how physical and human processes shape the world around us.

Geography is widely recognised as a subject that keeps future pathways open. It supports progression to a range of qualifications, including GCSE Geography, Environmental Science, Travel and Tourism, and Social Sciences. The subject builds strong foundations for further study in areas such as Urban Planning, Geology, International Development, and Environmental Management.

Beyond traditional geography-related careers, the subject nurtures analytical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills that are essential in modern sectors such as business, sustainability, logistics, public services, and digital industries. Employers value geographers for their ability to evaluate information, understand global challenges, and communicate findings clearly.

By studying how people interact with environments and how global issues such as climate change, resource use, and population growth affect our future, pupils gain a deeper understanding of the world and develop the adaptable mindset needed for success in a wide range of high-demand careers.

# Entry Level BTEC Pre-Vocational Studies

## Course Leader

Mrs Cutting

## Awarding Body

Pearson

## Course Description

Pupils will develop pre-employability skills to allow them to progress to further learning, training and, ultimately, to become successful in their future career choices. The course is designed to give pupils the opportunity to develop a broad range of skills for example: using public transport, handling money and transactions, preparing a meal for others and following instructions to complete a task.

This course is suitable for some of our HIVE pupils.

## Assessment

Pupils must complete and achieve ten optional units. All units are internally assessed and externally verified.

## Higher Education and Careers Pathways

Right now, Salford is growing fast. Thanks to big investments in areas like MediaCityUK, local employers are actively looking for new staff in healthcare, shops, hotels, and construction. The Entry Level BTEC in Pre-Vocational Studies is designed to help you step into these opportunities. This course focuses on the exact skills Salford employers say they need most: reliability, good communication, and working well in a team. By finishing this course, you will be ready to apply for real jobs like a retail assistant or support worker or move up to the next level of training in digital skills and trades where workers are needed most.

# Making the Right Choices

The following resources are designed to help pupils to make an informed choice about the courses they wish to pursue at Key Stage 4. Take the time to consider the questions in the table and rank the subjects based on the following:

- 1 - Absolute certainty that you want to study this.
- 2 - This course is one you would like to consider.
- 3 - You are unsure whether this course is suitable for you.
- 4 - This is not a course that really appeals to you.
- 5 - Absolute certainty that you will not study this.

## Key Stage 4 Qualifications

Courses	Is this an option you would enjoy studying?	How could this option enhance your career choices?	Rank Order
GCSE Art and Design (Fine Art)			
GCSE Business			
GCSE Citizenship			
GCSE Computer Science			
GCSE Design and Technology			
GCSE Drama			
GCSE French			
GCSE Geography			
GCSE History			
GCSE Art and Design: Photography			
GCSE Religious Studies			

GCSE Science (Separates)			
GCSE Sociology			
GCSE Spanish			

### Technical and Vocational Awards

Course	Is this an option you would enjoy studying?	How could this option enhance your career choices?	Rank
Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Child Development			
Level 1/2 Award in Construction and the Built Environment			
BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Dance			
Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Health & Social Care			
Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering			
Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Sports Studies			

### Entry Level Courses

Course	Is this an option you would enjoy studying?	How could this option enhance your career choices?	Rank
Entry Level Geography			
Entry Level History			
Entry Level Pre-vocational			

### Additional Courses

Course	Are you interested in studying this extra qualification after school?	What questions do you have?
Further Maths		

Questions to consider for yourself:

Have you chosen qualifications that will help you to develop a variety of skills?

Have you ensured that you have not chosen subjects that give you the same qualification, For example GCSE Design and Technology/ Level 1 Construction?

Have you chosen subjects that you think you will enjoy?

Have you considered the Ebacc - including taking French or Spanish into GCSE?

Do you think your subject will help you to achieve your aspirations and ambitions?