

Walsall Academy



Key Stage 4 Curriculum 2016-2019

Information for Students and Parents

Key Stage 4

Key Stage 4 covers a very important phase of education from Year 9 to Year 11.

The qualifications that students achieve in Key Stage 4 will be a platform for career prospects post 16 whether that is in the world of work or in continued education.

Students can study academic GCSEs and vocational qualifications in Key Stage 4. A BTEC Level 1/2 course is equivalent to one GCSE at grade 9 to 1. We want our students to have a wide range of choices when they leave Walsall Academy. This is the reason why we plan programmes of study which keep options open and blend GCSEs with vocational qualifications.

The English Baccalaureate is a suite of qualifications introduced by the Government in 2010. Students have access to this programme of study which consists of six GCSEs in: English, Mathematics, Sciences (x2), Modern Foreign Languages and either History or Geography. Students who achieve GCSE grades 9 to 5 in these subjects are likely to improve their prospects of university entrance. Since its introduction, Walsall Academy has consistently achieved above local and national averages. In 2015 we were in the top 100 comprehensive schools in the country for this performance measure.

The Senior Leadership Team will keep the predicted grades for students under regular review and work with parents if there is any risk of under-achieving. Personal Tutors will be supporting students to achieve the best they can.

During Key Stage 4, students may be required to attend additional lessons until 5pm. These lessons are provided to boost performance. Homework, sporting and Session 3 activities will be organised to take this into account.

In line with agreements made with parents on entry to the Academy, we are planning for the provision of education for our students up to the age of 18. Courses taken during Key Stage 4 will naturally fit into our Sixth Form plans. We, therefore, view the 13-18 phase as a complete experience for students at Walsall Academy.

N.B – Course specifications and grading are currently changing in accordance with government guidelines. New GCSEs are currently being introduced in all subject areas.

GCSE Grading changes

The GCSEs that the current Year 8 will be taking in 2019 will no longer be graded A* to G. They will instead be graded using a numerical system from 9 to 1. Grade 4 will be roughly equivalent to the lower end of a current grade C. Grade 5 is the grade for a 'good' pass. Grade 6 will be required to study A levels in the Sixth Form.

Grading the New GCSEs in 2017

Ofqual

| NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | U | | | |
| | | | <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>4 = C and above and above</p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as currently achieve a grade C and above. ■ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as achieve an A and above. ■ The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G. | | | | | | | | | |
| A* | | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | U | | | |
| CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE | | | | | | | | | | | | |

September 2014

Ofqual/14/5517

What will my subjects be?

Compulsory Subjects

There are compulsory subjects that all students will study:

English
Mathematics
Sciences

Compulsory Curriculum Area with Preference

There are three areas of the curriculum which are compulsory but within which there are elements of student preference:

Modern Foreign Languages (students have already opted prior to Year 8)
Design Technology, Art & Design or Hospitality & Catering
History and/or Geography

Personal Preference Subjects

In addition there are a range of subjects from which students can make a preference. It is important when considering these preferences that subjects are chosen which provide the student with opportunities for their career aspiration and also allow the student to maximise their performance in the assessment of the subject.

Additional Courses

Students will have a Physical Education session each week (and can also opt for PE as an examination subject). There will also be short courses in Religious Education and Health & Sex Education. The PSHE and Citizenship programme of study will be delivered across all curriculum areas and within Personal Tutor sessions and assemblies.

Work Related Study Skills

Careers Guidance continues to be available, which will allow all students to build a Personal Careers Plan in preparation for the next stage of education or work.

Some identified students may be advised to consider a work related study skills course which may eventually link to a work related educational experience.

Partnerships

Each student's individual needs are the focal point in our partnership with parents. It is the Academy's responsibility to ensure that parents and students are properly advised about decisions that are made.

In the interest of deploying the school's resources effectively, the Academy reserves the right to implement minor amendments to a student's curriculum profile if necessary.

What happens next?

You will find further details about each subject at the end of this booklet for your information.

Mr Clarke, Senior Deputy Head, will be co-ordinating Personal Programmes of Study.

Time line

1 March 2016 - Year 8 Information Evening and distribution of Personal Programme of Study Packs

10 March 2016 – Deadline for the return of Personal Preference Forms to be handed in to Personal Tutors

By 27 May 2016 – Letter to parents and student providing information on the Personal Programme of Study agreed

What will my subjects be?

| Compulsory subjects: |
|---|
| English Mathematics Sciences Modern Foreign Language Geography or History Art, Design Technology or Hospitality & Catering |

One choice from option 1:

| Option 1 | Guidance |
|----------------------|--|
| Geography History | If you wish to study both Geography and History, you may choose History as one of your 2 choices in option 3, then choose Geography in option 2. |

One choice from option 2:

| Option 2 | Guidance |
|---|-----------------|
| Art & Design Design Technology Hospitality & Catering | |

Two choices from option 3:

| Option 3 | Guidance |
|---|--|
| Business Studies Performing Arts – Dance* Performing Arts – Drama* Music/Music Technology** Health and Social Care History*** Computing Physical Education/Sport Travel and Tourism | *You can study either Dance or Drama, not both **You can study either Music or Music Technology, not both ***Only choose History if you wish to study both Geography and History. |

Compulsory Subjects

GCSE English Language

The exam consists of two closed book exam papers:

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives.

Students will draw upon a range of texts as reading stimulus and engage with creative as well as real and relevant contexts. Students will have opportunities to develop higher-order reading and critical thinking skills that encourage genuine enquiry into different topics and themes.

This will ensure that students can read fluently and write effectively. Students will be able to demonstrate a confident control of Standard English and write grammatically correct sentences, deploying figurative language and analysing texts.

GCSE English Language is designed on the basis that students should read and be assessed on high quality, challenging texts from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Each text studied will represent a substantial piece of writing, making significant demands on students in terms of content, structure and the quality of language. The texts, across a range of genres and types, will support students in developing their own writing by providing effective models. The texts will include literature and extended literary non-fiction, and other writing such as essays, reviews and journalism (both printed and online).

GCSE English Literature

English Literature consists of two closed book examinations:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry.

In studying the set texts students will have the opportunity to develop reading comprehension and reading critically as well as writing.

GCSE Mathematics

Students continue to develop their skills, concepts and understanding of the four broad areas of the subject – Number, Algebra, Shape and Handling Data. They will also prepare for the statutory element of mathematics called functional mathematics. Assessment is made at two tiers called Foundation and Higher. No decision is made about the Tier of Entry for a student until the end of Year 10.

GCSEs in the Sciences

In Key Stage 4, students will continue to study Science as three subjects, leading to either 2 or 3 GCSEs depending on the recommendation of the teaching staff. Students will complete practical investigations and examinations. There are two pathways that can be taken:

- GCSE Combined Science (double award)
- GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics

GCSE in a Modern Foreign Language

The course builds on the foundation established in Key Stage 3 and students will continue with the language programme they have been following in Year 8. Over the three years students will develop their confidence and ability in the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

For students sitting their GCSE from 2018 onwards the syllabus will follow three themes;

- Identity and Culture,
- Local, National, International and Global Areas of Interest, and
- Current and Future Study and Employment.

Students will sit four external examinations each of which are equally weighted at 25%

- Unit 1 listening
- Unit 2 speaking
- Unit 3 reading
- Unit 4 writing

It is possible that some students will not study a language to full GCSE, but will have additional Numeracy or Literacy sessions instead. Parents and students will be advised accordingly in these circumstances.

Compulsory Curriculum Area with Preference (Option 1)

Students must indicate a preference to study either Geography or History. Students are able to study both Geography and History.

GCSE Geography

GCSE Geography involves the study of both the physical and human environment. Topics include: extreme weather conditions and natural weather hazards, global ecosystems and urban trends in different parts of the world. Students will develop their knowledge of the geography of the UK, looking at its landscapes, environmental challenges, changing economy and society. Students will study different approaches to fieldwork in at least two contrasting environments. All content will be assessed by external exams.

GCSE History

GCSE History includes a study of wider-world and British development and depth studies. GCSE History students follow the OCR School History Project specification. The topics will include 'Living under Nazi Rule 1933-45' and 'The People's Heath c.200-present'. Students will complete 3 exams at the end of Year 11 which will cover 5 different eras of History. This course will give students a wide breath of knowledge on Britain and the wider-world. As part of learning the skills required for this course there is a trip to Belgium which looks at the Battlefields of World War I. This allows a deeper understanding of the context of Europe at the start of the 20th Century.

It is possible that some students will not study History or Geography to full GCSE, but will have additional Numeracy or Literacy sessions and work based learning instead. Parents and students will be advised accordingly in these circumstances.

Compulsory Curriculum Area with Preference (Option 2)

Students must indicate a preference to study either Art & Design, Hospitality & Catering or Design Technology.

GCSE Art and Design

This course involves the use of a broad range of media and approaches that build into a practical portfolio of work, including drawing, painting, printmaking and ceramics. Students also have opportunities for developing more personal themes and ways of working. Students will develop their ideas through investigations into artists and artistic styles and demonstrate a critical understanding of sources from a given starting point.

Students have the opportunity to work with 'Artists in Residence'. There will be a final examination involving time to prepare personally chosen themes from an examination paper for a ten hour final piece. Students will need to produce extensive preparatory work as part of the examination project.

- 60% Coursework and 40% examination

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Hospitality

This is a vocational course which can lead to the BTEC National Level 3 in the Sixth Form. The students will learn about a wide variety of topics giving them a good understanding of the Hospitality and Catering Industry in the UK. They will also develop practical skills in Food Preparation, Food Service and Customer Service skills. In Year 9 students will complete an induction course where they will develop basic practical skills and take their Chartered Institute of Health Level 1 Certificate in Food Hygiene.

The course consists of three units assessed by portfolio work and one external written examination.

Core Units

- Unit 1 Introducing the Hospitality Industry (Theory)
- Unit 2 Working in the Hospitality Industry (Theory and Practical)

Mandatory Unit

- Unit 3 Food Safety and Health and Safety in Hospitality (Theory)

Specialist Unit

- Unit 6 Planning, Preparing, Cooking and Finishing Food (Theory and Practical)

Students will be involved in preparing, cooking and serving food and drinks. To develop their employability skills, students are encouraged to support a range of different events.

GCSE Design and Technology - Resistant Materials

This specification has been designed to encourage candidates to be able to design and make products with creativity and originality, using a range of materials and techniques. Candidates will be enthused and challenged by the range of practical activities possible. A working knowledge of woods, metals, plastics and composite materials will be required, but other materials may be used in addition. The use of new technologies is encouraged in this specification.

- 60% Coursework and 40% examination

GCSE Design and Technology – Product Design

This course combines the use of graphic media, textiles, resistant materials and CAD/CAM. Final routes to examination will be based upon the recommendation of teachers following assessment of students' skill set. A final project enables students to develop a product of their own. CAD/CAM is used to develop both products and electronic circuits. A series of projects in these areas will prepare students for coursework projects and theory work necessary for the examinations. All students follow a core course in Product Design in Year 9.

- 60% Coursework and 40% examination

Optional Curriculum Areas (Options 3 and 4)

Business Studies

This programme of study consists of an introductory year to business studies where students will learn key terms, concepts and develop analytical and evaluative skills which will support the remaining two years of study at Key Stage 4. In Year 10 students will study either BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Business or those who show an aptitude for the subject will progress on to GCSE Business Studies.

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Business

Students will develop the following skills:

- Analysing and selecting information
- Communicating effectively
- Teamwork
- Understanding and interpreting numerical data
- Problem solving
- Computer literacy
- Meeting deadlines
- Organising time and prioritising work
- Writing reports

The course consists of three units assessed by portfolio work and one external on-screen examination.

Core Units

- Unit 1 Enterprise in the Business World (Internal)
- Unit 2 Finance for Business (External)

Specialist Units

- Unit 8 Recruitment, Selection and Employment (Internal)
- Unit 4 Principles of Customer Service (Internal)

GCSE Business will be offered to students who show an aptitude for this subject.

Across the course of study students will develop their understanding of business activity (ownership and planning), external influences (technology, economy), operations (production, procurement, quality), finance, marketing and human resources. They will consider these factors in relation to businesses of different scales in local, national and global contexts.

Students starting Business in 2016 will be the first cohort to sit the reformed GCSE with assessment envisaged to be 100% examination at the end of Year 11.

Computing

In Year 9, students will complete an introductory course preparing them for the Computing and Computer Science courses. The topics that are offered provide students with the knowledge they will need to develop on the understanding of the hardware of a computer system, common types of software and simple logic. They will acquire the skills to write simple computer programs and finally develop knowledge of computer technology developments and the effects it has on daily lives.

The courses are very practical, covering the main areas of Computing, giving students experiences that will be valuable in the world of work and in higher education and training.

GCSE Computer Science

The course gives students a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. Students will be familiar with the use of computers and other related technology from Year 9. However, this course will give them an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which many students find absorbing.

The course will develop critical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skills through the study of computer programming, giving students a fun and interesting way to develop these skills, which can be transferred to other subjects and applied in day-to-day life.

It will enable students to develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies, understanding of how they work and apply this knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts. They will acquire and apply knowledge, some technical skills and an understanding of the use of algorithms in computer programs to solve problems using a range programming languages.

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Performing Arts (Dance)

No previous Dance experience is required just an enthusiasm and interest for the subject alongside commitment and dedication to demonstrate your talent. This qualification is aimed at students who not only have a passion for Dance performance but also those who may wish to pursue a career as a Choreographer, Teacher, Dance Journalist or Dance Business, alongside many other career aspirations.

Students will study one compulsory unit and one further optional specialist skills unit which are assessed internally. They will also study another unit which is assessed externally.

Compulsory Units:

- Preparation, Performance and Production (Internally Assessed)
- Individual Showcase (Externally Assessed)

Optional Specialist Unit:

- Dance Skills

Throughout these units students will develop skills in a variety of Dance styles such as; Contemporary, Jazz, Ballet, Street, Lyrical and International. They will also have the opportunity to showcase their own choreography talents in their very own themed Dance showcase. Students will develop their audition skills within their externally assessed unit which will help to prepare them for their future careers. Students will be formally assessed during each unit through coursework and recorded performances that will take place in front of an invited audience. This will ensure students finish their course a confident Dance performer.

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Performing Arts (Acting)

BTEC Drama is suitable for all students who are interested in performing as well as studying the business of acting. The course is delivered in three units where students will partake in a range of exciting and innovative performances. They will be formally assessed throughout each unit through coursework and recorded performances that will take place in front of an invited audience. The course covers scripted plays, devised performances, exploration of classical and contemporary styles as well as studying the business of performing arts including the integration of technical elements such as lighting and sound.

Compulsory Units:

- Individual Showcase External Assessment
- Preparation, Performance and Production

Specialist Unit:

- Acting Skills

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Health and Social Care

Students will study the following units of work:

Core Units

- Human Lifespan Development
- Health and Social Care Values

Optional Units

- Effective Communication in Health and Social Care
- Promoting Health and Wellbeing
- The Impact of Nutrition on Health and Wellbeing

Students will take part in a range of activities including:

- Visiting health/ social/ educational services
- Role play activities
- Creating and designing leaflets/posters/ websites
- Written documents.

GCSE History (If you wish to study both Geography and History)

As page 9.

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Music

This programme of study consists of four units which address key aspects of knowledge and understanding of the music industry, as well as focusing on broader musical aspects such as musical performance and music composition. There are two compulsory units that give students the opportunity to take an in-depth look into the music profession, focusing on the jobs available within the music industry. This qualification also contains additional specialist units which will allow students to focus on areas of interest.

Students will study two compulsory units and two additional specialist units depending on the pathway chosen.

Compulsory Units:

- The Music Industry
- Managing a Music Product

Specialist Units:

- Introducing Music Composition
- Introducing Music Performance
- Music and Production Analysis

These units cover topics related to the music industry and beyond. Including; practical musical performance, exploring musical theory and composition.

Some students will study a GCSE if they have an aptitude and interest in studying Music at AGCE level.

GCSE Music

The GCSE music course will provide opportunities for students to enjoy and develop their practical musical skills and musical knowledge.

There are three areas of study within the Music GCSE course:

Performing – 30% coursework

Students will develop their performing skills on any chosen instrument including voice and will be encouraged to take up instrumental tuition at the Academy. Two performances will be recorded and assessed.

Composing – 30% coursework

Students will develop their composing and appraising skills and submit two compositions for assessment. The use of ICT will feature heavily.

Appraising – 40% with final examination

There will be a variety of musical styles studied through 8 set works and students will further develop their listening skills. The Listening Paper is a series of musical examples taken from these set works with related questions.

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Music Technology

This programme of study consists of four units which address key aspects of knowledge and understanding of the music industry, as well as focusing on broader musical aspects such as studio recording and music using ICT. There are two compulsory units that give students the opportunity to take an in-depth look into the music profession, focusing on the jobs available within the music industry. This qualification also contains additional specialist units which will allow students to focus on areas of interest.

Students will study two compulsory units and two additional specialist units depending on the pathway chosen.

Compulsory Units:

- The Music Industry
- Managing a Music Product

Specialist Units:

- Introducing Live Sound
- Introducing Music Recording
- Introducing Music Sequencing

These units cover topics related to the music industry and beyond. Including, planning and leading musical events, live studio recording, album production and mixing, DJ-ing and sequencing music using ICT.

Physical Education

Students will follow a sport/leisure related theory course depending on the recommendation of teaching staff. There are two courses which can be followed:

GCSE Physical Education

60% coursework including practical scores, observational analysis and a training plan to improve fitness and 40% theory assessed in an external examination. The areas of study include:

- Health, fitness and lifestyle and training
- Physical and mental demands and diet
- The participant as an individual, leisure, recreation and social factors
- Practical performance in four different sporting activities across a wide range of sports

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Sport

Students will complete three coursework units and one externally assessed unit, one of which will be based on practical sport.

Students will study two compulsory units and two further optional units depending on the pathway chosen.

Compulsory Units:

- Fitness for Sport and Exercise
- Practical Sport Performance

Additional Units:

- The Mind and Sports Performance
- The Sports Performer in Action

BTEC Level 1/2 First Award in Travel and Tourism

Students will study the following compulsory units of work:

- The UK Travel and Tourism Sector - To gain understanding of the UK travel and tourism sector and start a journey to explore the world of travel and tourism, an exciting and vibrant global sector.
- Understanding Customer Service in Travel and Tourism - To explore the different approaches to customer service, and appreciate how these lead towards meeting the expectations of customers.
- Understanding the Nature and Effects of World Travel - To gain awareness of the world from the perspective of the worldwide traveller.

Students then study a selection of the following optional units:

- Development of the UK Travel and Tourism Sector
- Developing Customer Service Skills in Travel and Tourism
- UK Tourism Destinations
- European Holiday Destinations
- Worldwide Holiday Destinations
- Holiday Planning
- Exploring Marketing in Travel and Tourism