

Walsall Academy



Key Stage 4 Curriculum 2017-2020

**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 and 2016 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.

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 2017 - Year 8 Information Evening and distribution of Personal Programme of Study Packs

10 March 2017 – Deadline for the return of Personal Preference Forms to be handed in to Personal Tutors

By 26 May 2017 – 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 1.

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: 21st Century texts and Transactional Writing

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.

The GCSE English Language course will enable learners to:

- read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding;
- read critically, and use knowledge gained from wider reading to inform and improve their own writing;
- write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately;
- use grammar correctly, punctuate and spell accurately;
- acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

GCSE English Literature

English Literature consists of two closed book examinations:

Paper 1: Shakespeare and Unseen Poetry

Paper 2: 20th Century Prose and Anthology Poetry

Students will be encouraged to be inspired, and engaged by following a broad, coherent and satisfying study of books, poems and plays. Students will develop an understanding of the ways in which literature is rich and influential, and how it informs our understanding of the world around us.

The GCSE English Literature course will enable learners to:

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

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%. They will sit either the foundation or the higher tier for all units.

- 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: Natural hazards and global ecosystems, Economic Development 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 follow the AQA GCSE Geography (9-1) course/specification.

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'; 'The Norman Conquest 1065-87'; 'The Making of America 1789-1900'; 'Crime and Punishment c.1250-present' and a historical site study. All content will be assessed by 3 external exams at the end of Year 11. This course will give students a wide breath of knowledge on the development of 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.

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 – Product Design

This course combines the use of graphic media, electronics, 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 and begin controlled assessment in Year 10.

- 50% Coursework and 50% 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. It is envisaged that in Year 10 students will study either BTEC Level 2 Technical Certificate in Business Enterprise or those who show an aptitude for the subject will progress on to GCSE Business Studies.

BTEC Level 2 Technical Certificate in Business Enterprise

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.

- Unit 1 The Business Enterprise Environment (External)
- Unit 2 Researching a Concept for a New or Revised Product or Service (Internal)
- Unit 3 Promoting and Financing an Enterprise Idea (Internal)
- Unit 4 Planning and Pitching an Enterprise Idea (Internal Synoptic)

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.

The course consists of two units assessed by examination at the end of Year 11:

- Unit 1 Investigating Small Business
- Unit 2 Building a Business

Computing

In Year 9, students will complete an introductory course preparing them for the 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 Computer Science, 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 Tech Award in Performing Arts (Dance and Drama Pathways)

No previous experience in either dance or drama 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 Performing Arts performance but also those who may wish to pursue a career as a Choreographer, Director, Teacher or Performing Arts Business, alongside many other career aspirations. Performing Arts is a subject which embeds a variety of skills that employers will look for in any line of work such as; confidence, critical thinking, self-discipline, leadership and positivity.

Students will study two compulsory units that will be internally assessed and one further compulsory unit which will be assessed externally.

Compulsory Internal Units:

- Exploring the Performing Arts
- Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts

Compulsory External Unit:

- Performing to a Brief

Exploring the Performing Arts

In this unit students will develop knowledge and understanding of a range of performance styles and disciplines. They will look at elements such as roles, responsibilities and the application of relevant skills and techniques. They will broaden their knowledge through observing existing repertoire and by learning about the approaches of practitioners and how they create and influence performance material.

Developing Skills and Techniques in the Performing Arts

In this unit, students will develop performance skills and techniques. They will specialise in either the Dance or Drama discipline and take part in workshops and classes where they will develop technical, practical and interpretative skills through the rehearsal and performance process. They will work from existing performing arts repertoire, applying relevant skills and techniques to reproduce the work. Throughout their development, they will review their own progress and consider how to make improvements.

Performing to a Brief

In this unit, students will have the opportunity to respond to a brief set by the exam board. They will be given a brief that outlines the performance requirements and which asks them to consider their target audience and to start the creative process by using the given stimulus included in the brief. Working as part of a group, they will develop their ideas for a workshop performance and apply their skills and techniques to communicate their creative intentions to their audience.

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

Students will study the following units of work:

Core Units

- Human Lifespan Development
- Health and Social Care services and Values
- 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 2 Technicals in Music and Music Technology

No previous experience in either Music or Music Technology 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 Music performance but also those who may wish to pursue a career as a Composer, Performer, Teacher or Studio Engineer, alongside many other career aspirations. Music and Music Technology are subjects which embed a variety of skills that employers will look for in any line of work such as; confidence, critical thinking, self-discipline, leadership and positivity.

This programme of study consists of 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.

These units 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.

Typical Units Include:

- Music Composition
- Music Performance
- Musical Analysis
- Live Sound
- Music Recording
- Music Sequencing

These content covers topics related to the music industry and beyond. Including areas such as practical musical performance, exploring musical theory and composition, live sound engineering, studio multi-track recording and music sequencing 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% theory assessed in two external examinations. 40% coursework including practical scores and an analysis and evaluation of performance.

The areas of study include: applied anatomy and physiology; movement analysis; physical training; use of data; sports psychology; socio-cultural influences; health, fitness and well-being.

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 appeal of destinations to a wide range of tourist's types and how some destinations have tried to increase their appeal.

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