



DESS COLLEGE

GCSE OPTIONS 2025

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum

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Introduction to the Curriculum

Here at DESS COLLEGE, we understand learning between the ages of 14 and 19 is significant in preparing young people for life and work. When students start Year 10 they enter Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum. These years are very important and with the help and support of both home and school, students can achieve their full potential.

Careful thought is required to ensure that each student follows a course which best suits his or her needs. Students are encouraged to study a broad and balanced curriculum and our Key Stage 4 Curriculum has been structured accordingly to achieve this aim. The KS4 Curriculum not only mirrors some of the statutory requirements in the UK, but also offers students a choice of option subjects to select from.

The UK law requires that all students study the following:

- English (including English Literature) = 2 GCSE's
- Mathematics = 1 GCSE
- Double Award Science "Trilogy" = 2 GCSE's or Separate Sciences = 3 GCSE's
- Core PE (non-GCSE, not examined)
- Some statutory elements of PSHE (non-GCSE, not examined)

In addition to the UK statutory requirements, the UAE Ministry of Education has mandated that all students must study Arabic until the end of Year 10.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a school performance measure used in the UK. Although at DESS COLLEGE, we are not required to enforce the EBacc on students, you might like to bear in mind the restrictions on choices within the UK. As well as taking the Core subjects (English, Maths, Science), many students in the UK are also required to choose History or Geography and a Foreign Language.

DESS College requires:

All students study the above in line with UK Statutory requirements and will select three further subjects, making a total of eight or nine GCSE subjects altogether. Students have the option to achieve a further GCSE in Arabic B, at the end of Year 10.

Muslim students follow the Islamic Education course as part of the 'Common Core', whereas non-Muslim students will follow the "Getting Ready for the Outside World" course. The two subjects are timetabled at the same time, with the remaining time for Islamic Education coming from one 25 minute morning lesson.

Students who have registered at the school using an Arab passport are required by UAE law to study the Ministry of Education Arabi course, known as Arabic A, for three hours per week.

Advice for Students

Do choose a subject if:-

- You are successful at it
- You enjoy it
- This subject may help you to achieve your career plans

Do not choose a subject if:-

- The subject looks an easy option - all GCSE courses have a similar level of difficulty.
- You want to do it because your friend is also doing the subject. He or she may have different abilities and different career plans. They may also be in a different group to you.
- You like the teacher you have this year. It is quite possible that you will have a different teacher next year.

For some subjects, it is possible to study them at A level, even if you do not choose them at GCSE.

These are: Business Studies, Economics, Media Studies, Psychology, Drama, Physical Education and Information Technology. A number of BTEC subjects are also offered in Sixth Form which do not require GCSEs.

Looking ahead to A level choices and beyond, some subjects are called **'facilitating subjects'** if they are more frequently required for entry to degree courses at university. Choosing these courses gives you a wide range of options for university. These subjects include the Core subjects (Sciences, English and Maths) as well as Geography, History and Languages. Students in Year 11 choosing their A levels who do not have a clear idea of what they want to study at university are advised to choose two facilitating subjects so that they have a wide range of degree courses to choose from.

Many future careers will be unaffected by GCSE subject choices, but applicants to Law degrees need to have History or English Language or Literature A levels. If you have a particular career/course/University in mind, it would be worth looking online to double-check entry requirements or speaking to Mr Burke or Mrs Dunne for guidance.

You are fortunate to be surrounded by an extensive support network including parents, older siblings and friends, a form tutor, subject teachers, a G.R.O.W. teacher, a Head/Deputy Head of House, as well as Senior Teachers.

We all want to help you make the right choice, so please involve us in your decision!

THE COMMON CORE



INFORMATION ABOUT COMPULSORY SUBJECTS

ARABIC A

KEY FACTS
Students who have registered at DESS COLLEGE using an Arab passport are required by UAE law to study the Ministry of Education Arabic course, known as Arabic A, for three hours per week. Arab students must, therefore, choose Ministry Arabic as one of their 4 option subjects.
However, there are some advantages. Firstly, the students will use their certificates to be equated in their home country when needed, thus removing any obstacles to university applications. Secondly, Arabic native students can obtain higher grades easily when they take Arabic A level “ as a second language” as a private candidate when applying to certain foreign universities in different countries.

ARABIC B

KEY FACTS	
Arabic B is a compulsory subject at Year 10. All students will follow the KHDA curriculum and will be given the option to be entered for the GCSE Examination at the end of Year 10. Information regarding the GCSE programme can be seen below:	
Qualification Type	General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)
Specification Codes	1AA0
Level	Level 1 / 2
Accreditation Status	Accredited
Availability	UK and International
For further information, please contact	Ms Nahed Atassi, Head of Arabic B
Subject Information Video	Arabic

What are the benefits of studying Arabic?

Studying Arabic will give students the opportunity to learn how to communicate in Arabic in Dubai, the UAE and the other Arabic speaking countries. They will learn more about Arabic civilisation and culture. Choosing GCSE Arabic will provide students with the chance to develop their language skills and improve their skills of memorisation and speed reading.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9 – 1) in Arabic allows students to develop their ability to communicate with Arabic native speakers in both speech and writing. Students will study across a variety of contexts relevant to their age and interests and will also develop a greater awareness of the culture of Arabic-speaking communities and countries.

Assesment Objectives			
		Students Must:	% in GCSE
A01	Listening	understand and respond to different types of spoken language	25
A02	Speaking	communicate and interact effectively in speech	25
A03	Reading	understand and respond to different types of written language	25
A04	Writing	understand and respond to different types of written language	25
Total			100

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

KEY FACTS	
This is a compulsory subject for all GCSE Students	
Examining Board	Pearson Edexcel
Syllabus/Code	English Language 4EA1 BR
For further information, please contact	Mrs Kate Cope, Director of English
Subject information video	English Language & Literature

What are the benefits of studying English Language?

Enjoyment and a love of language and literature are fundamental to the planning and delivery of our curriculum, coupling a skills-based approach with dynamic and engaging content.

Communication skills are vital. Being able to speak, listen, read and write are the cornerstones of building personal relationships and being successful in all aspects of life. Within English Language, we encourage formal, ambitious and sophisticated written expression, whilst also developing an inquisitive mindset in the analytical components of the qualification.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Reading

Students will read, understand and analyse a range of text types with a focus on:

- Critical reading comprehension
- Summary and synthesis
- Evaluation of writers’ methods
- Critical comparison

Writing

Students will aim to write clearly, coherently, accurately and persuasively, using a range of vocabulary and sentence structures in order to write for impact.

How will students be assessed in GCSE English?

Assesment			
Unit	Title	Mode & Weighting	Time
1	Paper 1: Non-Fiction Texts & Transactional Writing	Exam - 60%	2hrs 15 mins
2	Coursework: Poetry & Prose Texts & Imaginative Writing	NEA - 40%	Re-drafted throughout two-year course

What can students do next?

Success at GCSE English Language is an excellent foundation for studying all A-levels. Students must achieve a Grade 4 in English Language to study all A-level subjects. Students wishing to study English Language or Literature at A-level must achieve a minimum of a Grade 6 in English Language. It is also an indication to employers that students are able to understand how language can convey meaning and the importance of technical accuracy within written communication.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

KEY FACTS	
This is a compulsory subject for all GCSE Students	
Examining Board	Pearson Edexcel
Syllabus/Code	English Language 4ET1 BR
For further information, please contact	Mrs Kate Cope, Director of English
Subject information video	English Language & Literature

What are the benefits of studying English Literature?

The English Department aims to embed a love of English and creates a safe environment for all students to speak, listen, read, write and think. Students are encouraged to read a wide range of classic literature alongside reading widely, often and for pleasure. The English Literature course will develop their ability to critically evaluate works of literature in depth in order to appreciate the power of English literary heritage.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Reading

Students will study a range of prose, poetry and drama with a focus on:

- Literal and inferential comprehension
- Critical reading
- Evaluation of writers' choices
- Critical comparison and contrast
- Analysing form and structural features and using literary and linguistic terminology writing
- Students will write effectively and analytically about literature, producing clear and coherent text, using Standard English.

How will students be assessed in GCSE English Literature?

Assesment			
Unit	Title	Mode & Weighting	Time
1	Paper 1: Poetry & Modern Prose Unseen Poetry, Poetry Anthology & Of Mice and Men	Exam - 60%	2hrs
2	Paper 2: Modern Drama & Literary Heritage Texts An Inspector Calls & Romeo and Juliet	Exam - 40%	1hr 30mins

What can students do next?

Success at GCSE English Literature is an excellent foundation for studying English Literature at A level. Students require a minimum of a Grade 6 at GCSE to be able to study English Literature. It is also an indication to employers that students are able to recognise patterns, understand how language can convey meaning and how written communication can be manipulated for specific effects.

GROW (Getting Ready for the Outside World)

KEY FACTS	
This is a compulsory subject for all non-Muslim GCSE Students	
Non-examined	
For further information, please contact	Mr Luke McHale, Head of Moral, Social, Cultural & Emotional Education

GROW (Getting Ready for the Outside World) is a carefully tailored, developmental programme of learning through which students acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives now and in their future. As part of the school approach, GROW lessons help our students develop the qualities and attributes needed to thrive as individuals and members of society. The programme contributes to personal development by helping students to build their personal identities, confidence, self-esteem, resilience, manage risk, make informed choices and understand what influences their decisions.

It enables them to recognise, accept and shape their identities, to understand and accommodate difference and change, to manage emotions and to communicate constructively in a variety of settings. Developing an understanding of themselves, empathy and the ability to work with others will help students to form and maintain good relationships, develop the essential skills for future employability and better enjoy and manage their lives.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

GROW is a non-examined subject which covers topics such as:

- Body Image
- Healthy Eating, Active Living, Sleep and Mental Health
- Building Healthy Relationships
- Stress
- Bullying
- Group Dynamics
- Resolving Conflict
- Values and Virtues
- Self-Confidence

The ultimate aim of the subject is to help students understand topical issues and provide a platform for them to develop and express their own opinions about their changing world. The most important place to start is with the individual. It is a vital process for students to know who they are and what their role is in the various societies in which they operate (home, school and their community). GROW enables students to become effective learners, allowing them to develop life-long learning and thinking skills. It supports them as they move from childhood through to adolescence, encouraging them to become confident, independent, resilient young people and effective global citizens.

GROW helps students to:-

- Acquire knowledge and understanding of themselves, others and the world they live in
- Make informed choices
- Understand and manage their emotions
- Become morally and socially responsible
- Take on a range of roles and relationships
- Value themselves and respect others
- Contribute to their community
- Appreciate difference and diversity
- Safeguard the environment
- Plan and prepare for their future

MATHEMATICS

KEY FACTS	
This is a compulsory subject for all GCSE Students	
Examining Board	Edexcel
Syllabus/Code	Mathematics 1MA1
For further information, please contact	Mrs Sharon Davies, Director of Mathematics
Subject information video	Mathematics

What are the benefits of studying Mathematics?

Aside from the obvious reasons of love of, and interest in the subject, Mathematics is one of the most powerful tools for analysis and problem solving known to mankind.

It is vital for students to study Mathematics for the following reasons:

- To develop logical and creative thinking processes in order to improve problem solving ability
- To increase the capacity of their brain through vigorous efforts to solve problems and overcome difficulties in understanding
- To pick up the mathematical skills necessary for everyday life
- To develop a skills base for further study of mathematics or for a career involving higher level mathematics
- To obtain qualifications which are vital for certain careers or further study

What will students have the opportunity to study?

At DESS College we offer a two year GCSE course which runs through Year 10 and 11. Students will be entered for the relevant examinations at the end of Year 11.

How will students be assessed in GCSE Mathematics?

There are two tiers of entry - Foundation (F) (Grades 1 to 5, equivalent to Grade C to B) and Higher (H) (Grades 4 to 9, equivalent to Grade D to A*). Both entry levels are assessed by three examinations, one non-calculator paper and two calculator papers. These examinations have equal weighting towards the final award. The content covered on these papers will comprise a mixture of the following topics:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, Proportion and Rates of change
- Geometry and Measure
- Statistics and Probability

There is no coursework for GCSE Mathematics.

Unit	Title	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
1	GCSE Mathematics Non-calculator	Examination	1/3	1hr 30 mins
2	GCSE Mathematics Calculator	Examination	1/3	1hr 30 mins
3	GCSE Mathematics Calculator	Examination	1/3	1hr 30 mins

MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EDUCATION

KEY FACTS	
This is a compulsory subject for all students up to the end of Year 10	
Internally Assessed	
For further information, please contact	Mr Luke McHale, Head of Moral, Social, Cultural & Emotional Education

Moral, Social and Cultural Studies (MSC) follows a diverse and engaging curriculum set by the UAE Ministry of Education that gives schools flexibility in the subject’s delivery. All students in Year 10 are timetabled an hourly lesson per week covering the three strands of Moral, Social and Culture - with a focus on promoting a holistic knowledge and understanding of the UAE.

What are the benefits of studying Moral, Social and Cultural Education?

At DESS COLLEGE our vision is to get to the heart of the question ‘Where have we come from and where are we going to?’. We view the subject as a vehicle for developing real depth of understanding in the past, present and future of the Arabian Peninsula and neighbouring countries and continents. We believe it to be crucial that students, as future leaders and shapers of our country’s future, are able to appreciate the extraordinary circumstances that have taken place in and around the UAE for them, and their family, to be here today.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

In a single year, students might go from exploring Asia’s early civilisations and pre-Islamic history, to the expansion of global empires, to the founding of the UAE and the current geo-political situation of the GCC. Students will be encouraged to be ambitious, discursive and collaborative in their approach to learning.

Assessment is an important part of the MSCE curriculum. The assessments have been designed to accelerate the development of skills required in other Humanities subjects with students being taught to write clearly, concisely and critically.



CORE PHYSICAL EDUCATION

KEY FACTS	
This is a compulsory subject for all Key Stage 4 students	
Non-examined	
For further information, please contact	Mrs Ellie Stollery, Head of Physical Education

What are the benefits of studying Physical Education?

During core Physical Education students will develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially through physical activity. It is the aim of the department that students will have the knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation to pursue physical activities in the future.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

During Key Stage 4, students will be expected to tackle more complex and demanding activities with increasing independence.

Students will have the chance to involve themselves in activities that focus on competition, performance, team and individual work and health and fitness. Students will also be expected to take on the roles of coach, leader and official, as well as performer.

Students will participate in a number of activities during Core PE including: Athletics, Aquatics activities, Badminton, Basketball, Cricket, Football, Health Related Fitness, Netball, Rounders and Volleyball.



SCIENCE

KEY FACTS	
This is a compulsory subject for all GCSE Students	
Examining Board	AQA
Syllabus/Code	Multiple
For further information, please contact	Mrs Susan White, Director of Science
Subject information video	Science

What are the benefits of studying Science?

All students at DESS COLLEGE begin their GCSE journey in Science in Year 9. This is a core subject and has strong emphasis on scientific literacy. Science is able to inform problem solving and decision making in many areas of life. Many of the major challenges and opportunities that confront our world need to be approached from a scientific perspective, taking into account social and ethical considerations.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

In Term 3 of Year 9, teachers will advise students which pathway is best for them to continue with in Science.

GCSE Combined Science/Trilogy :

This course covers all three Sciences. It is a course designed to fully prepare students for the basic concepts required to continue onto A level. There are 16 required practical tasks covered across the 3 subjects. The slight reduction in content in this course allows students the time to fully develop and apply the knowledge gained in the subjects. Students gain two GCSE grades, an average of marks across the three subjects.

Separate Sciences in Biology, Chemistry and Physics :

A small number of students in the cohort will take the pathway that leads to three GCSE grades in Science. Students recommended for this course will have shown high marks across Year 9 and 10 content. They will already be able to apply their knowledge to unfamiliar situations. Students will have demonstrated that they are able to cope with the workload across all of their other subjects. This course has a higher volume of content in comparison to the Combined course.

Unit	Title	Number of assessments	Lenght of each exam	Marks for each exam
1	Trilogy/Combined Science – 2 GCSE grades	6 written assessments at the end of Year 11 (2 Biology, 2 Chemistry, 2 Physics)	1hr 15mins	70
2	Biology – Separate Science	2 Written assessments at the end of Year 11	1hr 45mins	100
3	Chemistry – Separate Science	2 Written assessments at the end of Year 11	1hr 45mins	100
4	Physics – Separate Science	2 Written assessments at the end of Year 11	1hr 45mins	100

INFORMATION ABOUT OPTIONAL SUBJECTS

ART AND DESIGN

KEY FACTS

Examining Board	Edexcel
Syllabus/Code	Art and Design 1FA01 (Fine Art)
For further information, please contact	Mrs Clare Hall, Director of Creative Arts
Subject information video	Art & Design

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Art and Design?

GCSE Art and Design is about having an adventurous and enquiring approach and developing the skills to express it. Students will develop an understanding of past and contemporary Art and Design and will be able to produce a personal response embracing a range of ideas. It is an opportunity to develop their skills, both formally and creatively. Students will learn how to make meaningful and appropriate creative decisions based on problem solving. Above all, studying art develops skills in time management, organisation and independence, all key skills vital to future success.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Students will develop a working knowledge of the materials, practices and technology of Art and Design. They will learn the skills needed to investigate, analyse and experiment using Art and Design media. They will develop their imaginative powers and the skills necessary to express their own ideas, feelings and meanings. Students will gain an understanding of the language and conventions of Art and Design and the place of Art and Design in history and society. During Year 10, students will be introduced to sketchbookkeeping, a range of drawing and painting media, as well as printmaking and sculpture. These skills will then be utilised in a more independent manner for the duration of Year 11.

How will students be assessed in GCSE Art and Design?

Every piece of work produced from day one, in lessons and for homework, can potentially count towards the final personal portfolio mark. However, in real terms, most of the personal portfolio is selected from the main unit completed in the first term of Year 11. The work generated by students will follow a variety of themes; all work will be produced in both sketchbooks and to a large scale, in two and three dimensions. All work must include research, supporting studies and the details showing the development of their ideas leading to final outcomes – usually large scale pieces of work. Work will be assessed throughout the two years in relation to the EDEXCEL assessment objectives (Develop, Refine, Record and Present) to give our students an understanding of their ongoing attainment. Large scale work and supportive book work is marked holistically. Students will present their work for both units in an exhibition at the end of Year 11; this is what the moderator from the UK will see and assess.

Unit Title	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Personal Portfolio 1FA0/01	Internally set, assessed and standardised. Externally moderated.	60%	September in Year 10 to January in Year 11. Preparation period followed by a 10 hour mock examination
Externally set assignment 1FA0/02	Externally set, internally assessed and externally moderated	40%	From January in Year 11. Preparation period followed by examination – 10 hours over 2 days

BUSINESS

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	AQA
Syllabus/Code	Business 8132
For further information, please contact	Mr Mark Gardiner, Head of Business and Enterprise
Subject information video	Business

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Business Studies?

Business Studies is a practical subject related to the real world. As an employee or an entrepreneur, an understanding of business is hugely beneficial.

The aim of GCSE Business Studies is to provide the study of business through class work which provides students with a sound basis for progression to Advanced Levels in Business Studies and Economics. To develop students or employees who have a sound understanding of business and who have the ability to use knowledge, skills and understanding appropriately in the context of the UK and European markets. Finally, Business Studies increases awareness and consideration of the moral, social, ethical and cultural issues within a business environment.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Students will be required to demonstrate specific knowledge and critical understanding of:-

- The issues associated with setting up, and the operation of a business
- Marketing, finance, human resources and operations management
- How and why businesses grow, including organisational development and legal structures

How will students be assessed in GCSE Business Studies?

Real life case studies are an important element in the teaching of Business Studies and emphasis is placed on students developing the ability to apply their business knowledge and make reasoned judgements regarding business decisions.

Paper	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Influences of operations and HRM on business activity	Final Examination (90 marks)	50%	1hr 45mins
Influences of marketing and finance on business activity	Final Examination (90 marks)	50%	1hr 45mins
Each Examination paper contains the following types of questions: Section A has multiple choice questions and short answer questions worth 20 marks. Section B has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 34 marks. Section C has one case study/data response stimuli with questions worth approximately 36 marks.			

COMPUTER SCIENCE

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Cambridge
Syllabus/Code	0984
For further information, please contact	Mr Ebrahim Rawat, Head of ICT and Computer Science
Subject information video	Computer Science

What are the benefits of studying IGCSE Computer Science?

In the ever-changing, fast paced, technology-driven world that we currently live in, much of the future lies in the hands of tomorrow's Computer Scientists. The IGCSE Computer Science course immerses students into the technical world of computers. Students will explore a range of programming languages and learn the fundamentals of writing computer code. Computer Science underpins many other subjects such as the Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering. Students will gain lifelong skills in computational thinking, logical reasoning, innovation and problem solving. Instead of just being users of technology, the Computer Science course offers students the opportunity to become developers of technology.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

The specification includes a balance between Computer Science theory and practical programming skills.

The theoretical side includes:

- Emerging Technologies
- Computer Hardware
- Networking
- Binary, Denary and Hexadecimal Number Systems
- Logic Circuits
- The Internet
- Cyber Security
- Computer Ethics

The practical element includes:

- Building Computers
- Writing Algorithms
- Coding in Python, HTML and CSS
- Using Industry Standard Software

Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills throughout the course:

- Computational Thinking
- Programming
- Problem Solving
- Perseverance
- Creativity
- Innovation
- Project Management

How will students be assessed in IGCSE Computer Science?

Unit Title	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
CS Theory	Paper 1 Examination	50%	1hr 45mins
Programming	Paper 2 Examination	50%	1hr 45mins

DANCE

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	AQA
Syllabus/Code	8236
For further information, please contact	Miss Rachel Aldred, Teacher of Dance
Subject information video	Dance

What can the students do next?

- An A level Computer Science followed by a range of university qualifications.
- Opportunities within the CS industry are varied, endless and continually evolving.

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Dance?

GCSE Dance is a powerful and expressive subject which encourages students to develop their creative, physical, emotional and intellectual capacity. As an art form, Dance requires students to have determination and employ key skills such as problem solving, leadership and creativity. Students are encouraged to interpret issues within society and communicate these non-verbally and in an aesthetically pleasing way. The course also supports students as they choreograph dances based upon a variety of cultural and symbolic events. Students develop an appreciation of dance as a natural form of human expression, whether they arrive at GCSE with formal training or less formal previous experiences. The course will establish an understanding of dance as a performer, choreographer and critic alike.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Performance

Students will perform two solo set phrases in a Contemporary Dance style. Students will also perform a duet/trio in any style of dance they choose.

Choreography

Students will choreograph a solo or group dance based on a stimulus sent by the exam board. This can also be in any style of dance they choose.

Dance Appreciation

Students will sit a 1 hour 30 minutes written exam.

- Section A - Questions about their knowledge and understanding of choreographic processes.
- Section B - Critical appreciation of own work.
- Section C - Students will study six professional dance works titled 'The Anthology' and answer questions relating to these. Students will explore each work practically to understand how themes, motifs and stimuli can be portrayed through movement. Works will cover a range of styles including ballet, urban, contemporary, inclusive dance, dance for camera and cultural dance.

Finally, students will gain an in-depth knowledge of transferable skills that link with a variety of core subjects such as health and fitness while also providing them with the key skills of focus, commitment and leadership.

Unit Title	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Component 1 : Performance and Choreography	Internally Marked Externally Moderated	60%	Over the two year course
Written Examination	Externally Assessed	40%	1hr 30mins

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	AQA
Syllabus/Code	GCSE Design & Technology/8552
For further information, please contact	Mrs Kristen Bishop, Head of Design and Technology
Subject information video	Design & Technology

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Design & Technology?

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will have the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise. Our GCSE allows students to study core technical, designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth. For DESS students, this will be Timber-based materials.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

- Actively engage in the processes of Design and Technology to develop as effective and independent learners
- Make decisions, consider sustainability and combine skills with knowledge and understanding in order to design and make quality products
- Explore ways in which aesthetic, technical, economic, environmental, ethical and social dimensions interact to shape designing and making
- Analyse existing products and produce practical solutions to needs, wants and opportunities, recognising their impact on the quality of life
- Develop decision-making skills through individual and collaborative working
- Understand that designing and making reflect and influence cultures and societies and that products have an impact on lifestyle

How will students be assessed in GCSE Design and Technology?

The exams and non-exam assessment will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives:

- AO1 (10%): Identify, investigate and outline design possibilities to address needs and wants.
- AO2 (30%): Design and make prototypes that are fit for purpose.
- AO3 (20%): Analyse and evaluate:
design decisions and outcomes, including for prototypes made by themselves and others - wider issues in Design and Technology.
- AO4 (40%): Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of:
technical principles
designing and making principles

50% Non-examined assessment: 100 marks

Work will be marked by teachers and moderated by AQA. The NEA project in its entirety should take a maximum of 30–35 hours to complete and consist of a prototype and a concise portfolio of approximately 20 pages of A3 paper, equivalent A4 paper or the digital equivalent.

50% Written exam: 100 marks

Students will sit a 2 hour exam.

Section A - Core Technical Principles (20 marks)

Section B - Specialist Technical Principles (30 marks)

Section C - Designing and Making Principles (50 marks)

DRAMA

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Cambridge
Syllabus/Code	Drama iGCSE0994
For further information, please contact	Ms Sarah Kelly, Director of Performing Arts
Subject information video	Drama

What are the benefits of studying IGCSE Drama?

The IGCSE Drama course provides students with a dynamic learning environment. In Year 10, the course is structured as a foundation year where students experience all aspects of the course to give them the necessary skills for their assessments, which take place at the end of the year and in Year 11. Drama suits students who enjoy working practically and collaboratively with others. Students are given the opportunity to develop their leadership and communication skills as well as working creatively to develop original theatre. Students will gain an understanding of the different roles which exist within the theatre from acting and directing to designing and they will be given the opportunity to develop skills in all of these areas. Students will explore a wide range of practical work including a range of contemporary scripts and practitioners which will influence their own devised work.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

As a student you will:-

- Develop performance skills, both individually and in groups
- Gain an understanding of the role of actor, director and designer in creating a piece of theatre
- Consider ways in which ideas and feelings can be communicated to an audience
- Discover the performance possibilities of plays and other dramatic stimuli
- Devise dramatic material of your own

Students will be expected to attend after-school rehearsals to develop performance work.

How will students be assessed in IGCSE Drama?

The course is essentially practical in nature. The practical examination accounts for 60% of the final grade. There is also a written examination which focuses on directing, designing and acting for the theatre.

Title	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Coursework Monologue Group devised piece Group scripted piece	Internally Marked Externally Moderated	60%	May - February class and homework
Written Examination	Externally Assessed	40%	2hr 30mins

What can students do next?

IGCSE Drama is the ideal preparation for our CAPA (Creative and Performing Arts) vocational course. Those students not wishing to pursue beyond IGCSE will gain many transferable skills which will help in any future career, especially choices which involve communication, collaboration and leadership.

ECONOMICS

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Edexcel iGCSE Economics
Syllabus/Code	4EC1
For further information, please contact	Mr Thomas Pell, Head of Economics
Subject information video	Economics

What are the benefits of studying Edexcel IGCSE Economics?

The IGCSE Economics course equips students with the basic tools to help them understand their place in, and contribution to, the local, national and global economy as consumers, workers and citizens. It develops the students' understanding of economic concepts and theories. Students will investigate a range of contemporary economic issues and analyse the evidence from different perspectives. The course provides students with a foundation for further study at A level Economics and encourages a better understanding of the world in which students live.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

The Edexcel IGCSE Economics syllabus develops an understanding of economic terminology, principles and basic economic theory. Students study the economics of developed and developing nations and how these interrelate. They also learn to handle simple data and undertake economic analysis, evaluate information and discriminate between facts and value judgements in economic issues. Further reading on the UK, EU and worldwide economic issues is an important part of the subject. Therefore, emphasis is placed on students keeping up to date with economic events through reading books, newspapers and watching the news. This will help students apply their understanding of theory to reach reasoned conclusions.

How will students be assessed in IGCSE Economics?

Paper	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
1	Structured Questions on Microeconomics	50%	1hr 30 mins
2	Structured Questions on Macroeconomics	50%	1hr 30mins

FOOD PREPARATION AND NUTRITION

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	AQA
Syllabus/Code	GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition 8585
For further information, please contact	Mrs Nicola Barber, Head of Food & Nutrition
Subject information video	Food Preparation & Nutrition

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition?

This is an exciting and creative course which focuses on practical cooking skills and ensures students develop a thorough understanding of diet, health and nutrition, food provenance and working characteristics of food materials along with food science. At its heart, this qualification focuses on nurturing students' practical cookery skills, which will culminate with students showcasing three dishes during their final practical assessment. The overall course aims to give students a strong understanding of nutrition whilst reinforcing the theoretical elements of the course required to complete NEA assessments.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Food preparation and nutrition is integrated into 5 core topics:

- Food, Nutrition, Diet and Health
- Food Science
- Food Safety
- Food Choice
- Food Provenance

How will students be assessed in GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition?

The exam and two non-exam assessments (NEA) will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation.
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation.
- AO3: Plan, prepare, cook and present dishes, combining appropriate techniques.
- AO4: Analyse and evaluate different aspects of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation including food made by themselves and others.

	Paper 1	NEA	Weight
AO1	20%	0%	20%
AO2	20%	10%	30%
AO3	0%	30%	30%
AO4	10%	10%	20%
Total	50%	50%	100%

FRENCH & SPANISH

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	AQA
Syllabus/Code	French 8652 / Spanish 8692
For further information, please contact	Mr Philippe Delattre, Head of Languages
Subject information video	French & Spanish

What are the benefits of studying GCSE French and/or Spanish?

Improved communications, greater opportunities for travel and the increasingly multilingual and multicultural composition of our society mean that distance and national frontiers are no longer a barrier to contact with a rich diversity of people from different cultural backgrounds. As well as contributing to students' development as citizens, Modern Foreign Languages have the potential to enrich their lives. They develop students' understanding and appreciation of different countries, cultures, people and communities, making students aware that they are citizens of the world, especially in a multicultural city like Dubai. They lay the foundations for the study of other languages later in life, to be used for pleasure or for work.

Being able to communicate in a foreign language can broaden the range and variety of accessible careers, improving employability and facilitating personal mobility. While only a few jobs require specialist expertise in other languages, foreign language skills are desirable and useful in a wide range of careers at different levels. As well as increasing employability, they can really enhance career opportunities and variety. People with foreign language skills tend to have good communication skills, which enhance their employment prospects.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

The GCSE in either French or Spanish builds on the work covered in Key Stage 3 in the four skill areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Three themes are covered: people and lifestyle, popular culture and communication and the world around us.

It is hoped that an exchange programme or a residential visit will be arranged to provide an opportunity for students to experience at first hand the language and culture of their chosen specialism.

How will students be assessed in GCSE French and Spanish?

Paper	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Listening	Written Exam	25%	Foundation: 35mins Higher: 45mins
Speaking	Non-exam assessment (NEA)	25%	Foundation: 7-9mins Higher: 10-12mins Preparation time: 15mins
Reading	Written Exam	25%	Foundation: 45mins Higher: 1hr
Writing	Written Exam	25%	Foundation: 1hr 10mins Higher: 1hr 15mins

GEOGRAPHY

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Edexcel
Syllabus/Code	Geography A/GE01
For further information, please contact	Mrs Karen Lee, Head of Geography
Subject information video	Geography

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Geography?

When a geographer stands on top of the mountain, they see the landscape stretching out before them and the view sharpens into focus. They see the rock type below the surface by the way it affects the land use above it. The geographer detects how the landscape has been used over the generations and how this has left its mark on the land. Geographers draw on other disciplines such as Biology, Chemistry, Maths and, even History to make conclusions about the world, but they go further than simply bringing them together. They do something unique in using these as tools to examine the relationships between seemingly separate disciplines to make sense of what they see. This is what we mean by “thinking like a Geographer”.

The world can be a confusing place, but Geography helps students to make sense of it. How else can we understand the debates over inequality within and between countries? How can we see the impact of our actions on the environment? Or how can we really understand how energy resources should best be managed? A geographical education is important because it takes all that humans have discovered about the planet we call home and passes it on to the next generation and then challenges them to add to this body of knowledge themselves. Geography is their inheritance as well as their instruction manual.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Students will examine many of the major contemporary themes facing the world, including environmental, economic, social and political issues. The course will allow students to make informed judgements about many of the geographical issues that are facing the world today. They will be encouraged to make decisions about complex issues using a variety of sources.

Students will be required to handle data using ICT, as well as written sources. They will collect data during fieldtrips within Dubai, as well as rural areas within the Emirate. They will then present and evaluate their findings. They will develop their overall Geographical skills, organise themselves within groups, as well as work independently.

The main 3 units of work that will be covered include:

Unit 1: The Changing Landscape of the UK; Glaciers; Coasts; Weather Hazards and Climate Change; and Ecosystems, Biodiversity and Management

Unit 2: Changing Cities; Global Development; and Resource Management

Unit 3: Physical (Coasts) and Urban (Changing Cities) Fieldwork; and UK Challenges

How will students be assessed in GCSE Geography?

Unit	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
The Physical Environment	Examination	37.5%	1hr 30mins
The Human Environment	Examination	37.5%	1hr 30mins
Geographical Investigations: Fieldwork and UK Challenges	Examination	25%	1hr 30mins

HISTORY

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Edexcel
Syllabus/Code	1H10
For further information, please contact	Ms Rachael Byrne, Head of History
Subject information video	History

What are the benefits of studying GCSE History?

History encourages an understanding of how our present world has been shaped by past events and of the key stages in the development of human civilisation. GCSE History develops a wealth of important skills such as identifying and evaluating sources, discursive writing, developing and presenting arguments and communicating ideas. Top universities such as Oxford and Cambridge see it as one of the most valuable and academically rigorous subjects. It prepares students for a range of careers including journalism, law, Business, academia, teaching and research. History is an umbrella discipline through which students encounter many other disciplines: Economics, Geography, Ethics, Political Philosophy, Psychology and Art. That is why historians always do so well in general knowledge quizzes! The study of History can enrich in other ways: by fostering empathy, kindling the imagination, encouraging the development of judgements and giving perhaps more scope for debate than any other school subject. It is intellectually rewarding but it is also exciting!

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Students will study the following during their history course:

Year 10

- Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000–present and Whitechapel, c1870- c1900: crime, policing and the inner city
- Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

Year 11

- Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91
- Early Elizabethan England, 1555-88

How will students be assessed in GCSE History?

Paper	Content	Weighting	Time
1	Crime and punishment in Britain, c1000– present and Whitechapel, c1870-c1900: crime, policing and the inner city	37.5%	1hr 15mins
2	Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941–91 Early Elizabethan England, 1555-88	37.5%	1hr 45mins
3	Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918–39	25%	1hr 20mins

What makes History so important?

It has never been so crucial for us to understand the world in which we live. Political uncertainty over Brexit, the shifting political landscape towards populism and alternative ideologies demonstrates that learning about the past is central to how we will act as societies in the future.

GCSE History is held in enormously high regard by higher education institutions and employers alike.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Cambridge
Syllabus/Code	0983
For further information, please contact	Mr Ebrahim Rawat, Head of ICT and Computer Science
Subject information video	ICT

What are the benefits of studying IGCSE ICT?

The IGCSE ICT course gives students the opportunity to examine a range of past, current and future technologies along with their impact on our everyday lives. ICT has and will continue to have a huge impact on the future of Business, Education, Healthcare, Leisure, Politics and the Environment. Alongside developing students' knowledge and understanding of ICT, the IGCSE ICT course develops students' practical ICT skills with students exploring a range of up to date, industry standard software. The course allows students to develop a range of ICT skills that are valuable in other subjects and future employment.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

This new and innovative IGCSE course is a hands on and engaging course. It allows students to learn new skills and maintain an interest in this ever-changing and evolving subject. It will build on young people's knowledge and use of digital devices and explores how technology impacts on every aspect of the world that we live in. Students who take this course will understand the benefits of using technology and know how to use ICT safely, conscientiously and responsibly. The course comprises of one theoretical examination and two practical controlled assessments.

During the ICT course, students will study the following areas:

- Digital Citizenship
- Digital Devices
- Connectivity
- Operating Online
- IT and the Law
- Practical Software Skills
- Data Security and Ethics
- ICT in Business, Healthcare, Government, Politics and the Environment

Students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills throughout the course:

- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills
- Innovation
- E-Commerce
- Collaboration
- Marketing
- Project Management

How will students be assessed in GCSE ICT?

Unit Title	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Theory	Written Paper	40%	1hr 30mins
Practical	Document Production, Databases, Presentations	30%	2hr 15mins
Practical	Spreadsheets, Web Design	30%	2hr 15mins

What can students do next?

An A level IT followed by a range of university qualifications. The course compliments a range of other subjects and careers paths including Media, Business, Psychology, Finance, Engineering and Law to name a few.

MEDIA STUDIES

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Oxford AQA
Syllabus/Code	Media Studies 9257
For further information, please contact	Mr Mathew Llewellyn, Head of Media Studies
Subject information video	Media Studies

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Media Studies?

Do you ever question what you read online? Do you trust newspapers and magazines? To what extent is your life controlled by social networking? How do messages in the media impact on society? Media is everywhere, influencing and shaping our perceptions, attitudes, desires and behaviour. The rise of the creative economy has resulted in more opportunities than ever before. This dynamic course is designed to make learning interesting, challenging, creative and fun. It offers students the opportunity to study all aspects of the Media (print, broadcasting and e-media) that are of key importance to their understanding and experiences of the world.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

- Practical production work which integrates media theories and concepts
- Assignments for real audiences and uses
- The chance to study across a range of different media
- Opportunities to learn about real media products and industries
- Extensive and meaningful coverage of media theory and practice

Course content:

Students will explore all of the different media forms (advertising, music, video, film, TV, radio, online, news, gaming, magazines and newspapers) in order to understanding the key concepts in media:

Media Language: how meaning is created in media products using techniques such as camerawork, editing, sound, costume, lighting etc and setting.

Media Industries: the companies that produce and distribute our media. Who are they? Who owns them? Why does this matter? We will also explore issues such as censorship and regulation and the impact of new technologies on the industry.

Media Audiences: how do these industries target audiences and how are these audiences affected by the media?

Media Representations: how are people, places and events represented in the media? How close to reality is it? What role do stereotypes play? Students will then use this knowledge to explore media texts from a variety of media texts and platforms.

Students will also have the opportunity to develop their skills in filming, photography, photo and video editing, graphics and page design.

It is required that students opting for Media Studies GCSE have access to a laptop for the completion of the Non-exam Assessment.

How will students be assessed in GCSE Media Studies?

Unit	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Paper 1	Examination 100 marks	50%	2hrs
Non-exam assessment	Coursework production 60 marks	50%	N/A

MUSPRA – Level 2 Extended Certificate in Music Practitioners

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	RSL Rockscool London
Syllabus/Code	Level 2 MUSPRA
For further information, please contact	Mrs. Sam Wormald, Head of Performing Arts Curriculum
Subject information video	MUSPRA

What are the benefits of studying Level 2 MUSPRA?

Students do not need any theoretical understanding of music or a Grade on an instrument to succeed in the Level 2 Extended Certificate in Music Practitioners course. This course is almost entirely practical and designed to be bespoke to each learner, offering experiences in a wide variety of practical industry-based units, co-designed by Ed Sheeran and Jess Glynn. The choice of units is vast, and students are encouraged to explore recording music, mixing, and producing music and will be given numerous performance opportunities throughout the course. There are opportunities for students who prefer music technology, such as DJing, podcasts or event management. There are options for those who prefer to perform or compose music using Logic Pro X in our state-of-the-art recording studio. Students will gain skills that will expose them to the modern, fast paced music industry.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Students will have the opportunity to record industry standard tracks, in a professional recording studio. They will learn how to master Logic Pro X, if their preference is recording, composing or mixing music. Listening to a wide variety of styles of music is encouraged, such as Rock Music, Pop, Rap, Hip-Hop, Jazz and Atmospheric Music to name a few. Students will be encouraged to regularly explore and develop their musicianship skills if they are performers, forming bands and rehearsing regularly for performance opportunities.

Students who have enjoyed the Musical Futures programme within Year 9 will be able to expand on the skills they have gained and can enjoy learning new instruments or skills in composing. Having recently been awarded the title of an International Centre of Excellence for the delivery of RSL courses, DESS COLLEGE now has a partnership with RSL London, where specialist musicians will visit and deliver masterclasses throughout the academic year.

How will students be assessed in Level 2 Extended Certificate in Music Practitioners?

There are 3 units to be completed throughout the 2-year course. These are selected based on the students' strengths and interests, within their chosen pathway. Assessment is in the form of video and audio evidence, as well as blogs, vlogs and a supporting Unit based PowerPoints with rehearsal logs, tutor and peer feedback and personal evaluations of their successes and areas to develop. The current track record of results for our RSL courses at DESS COLLEGE is 100% Distinction pass rate.

Unit	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Unit 1 (Core) within your chosen pathway of wither performing / composing / music technology	Internally Assessed but sent off to RSL for external approval	10 credits	60 GLH (Guided learning hours)
Unit 2	Internal Assessment	10 credits	60 GLH
Unit 3	Internal Assessment	10 credits	60 GLH

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	Edexcel
Syllabus/Code	Physical Education (IPE0)
For further information, please contact	Mrs Ellie Stollery, Head of Physical Education
Subject information video	PE

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Physical Education?

The course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established in Key Stage 3 Physical Education. It provides students with opportunities to apply their theoretical knowledge to a range of sporting scenarios.

The course promotes and emphasises the importance of a lifelong healthy active lifestyle.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

The course is structured as follows:

The theory element is split into six topics. These are as follows:

- Applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis, physical training, health fitness and wellbeing, sport psychology, socio-cultural influences.
- The practical element assesses performance in three sports. The three sports must include one team activity and one individual activity, from the list published by the exam board (Edexcel). Students may showcase out of school activities by providing video evidence. Students will be expected to have a keen interest in a number of activities and practise outside of lesson time to improve their attainment.

How will students be assessed in GCSE Physical Education?

Unit	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Practical	Controlled Assessment	30%	
Theory	Final Examinations	60%	2 Exam Papers Paper1: 1hr 45mins Paper2: 1hr 15mins
	Coursework (Personal Exercise Programme)	10%	

What can students do next?

A good grade at GCSE will help students to study A Level Physical Education/BTEC Sport. The course develops the transferable skills and key skills that employers are looking for and can lead to a wide variety of employment opportunities. This can include further training in such areas as recreational management, leisure activities, coaching, officiating, the fitness industry, the Armed Forces and the Civil Service.

Students may also wish to follow this course for their own sake because they are interested in fitness and health and enjoy being physically active.

PSYCHOLOGY

KEY FACTS	
Examining Board	AQA
Syllabus/Code	Psychology 8182
For further information, please contact	Ms Leann Collingwood, Head of Psychology
Subject information video	Psychology

What are the benefits of studying GCSE Psychology?

Psychology is the science of the mind; the study of, among other things, how our thought processes work, why we behave the way we do and how we learn. This course will help students to better understand both themselves and others and provides a great introduction for those interested in studying Psychology at a higher level.

The course is designed to encourage students to engage in the process of psychological enquiry to develop as effective and independent learners, as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds. Throughout the course students will develop an awareness of why Psychology matters, acquiring knowledge and understanding of how Psychology works and its essential role in society.

Students will also develop an understanding of the relationship between Psychology and social, cultural, scientific and contemporary issues contributing to individual, social and cultural diversity.

What will students have the opportunity to study?

Year 10 - Cognition & Behaviour

- Memory
- Perception
- Development
- Research Methods

Year 11 - Social Context & Behaviour

- Social Influence
- Language, Thought & Communication
- Brain & Neuropsychology
- Psychological Problems

How will students be assessed in GCSE Psychology?

Unit	Mode of Assessment	Weighting	Time
Cognition & Behaviour	Examination - 100 marks	50%	1hr 45mins
Social Context & Behaviour	Examination - 100 marks	50%	1hr 45mins



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