



Soar Valley College

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Curriculum Information

KEY STAGE 4

2026—2028



ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE



Options Process

The options process is a very important time in a student's secondary school journey. Making the correct choices can lead to higher levels of achievement and enjoyment during Key Stage 4, and provide students with the right knowledge and skills to fulfil their future ambitions. For this reason it is essential that students and parents are well informed and think long and hard about which choices to make. This Options Booklet provides information about the different courses on offer and the way they are assessed so that students are able to think about what might be most suitable options for them. The courses are presented in two sections:

- **Core Curriculum Courses**—The subjects that all students will study.
- **Option Courses**—Students will study three of the courses listed **one of which must come from the Academic Breadth list**.

The information provided needs to be read very carefully; it will provide the answers to many of the questions you may have.

Please contact Mr Cumming (Vice Principal) at the college with any further queries.

Important Dates and Deadline:



Date	Details
Thursday 5th February Curriculum Booklet	This contains detailed information about the options process and each of the courses offered.
Wednesday 11th February Options Hour	Students begin to look at courses that interest them and meet other students currently studying the different GCSE courses.
Thursday 12th February Options Evening	Including a talk about the options process and the chance to speak to staff about the courses on offer.
13th March Deadline	The final deadline for submitting the completed form.
After 13th March	Where required students will have a one-to-one interview with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss their choices.



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Introduction

In Year 10 and 11 some subjects are compulsory. These are as follows:

English	For the majority of students this will lead to two GCSEs, one in English Language and one in English Literature.
Maths	All students will sit GCSE examinations in Year 11.
Science	Students will gain either two or three GCSEs in Science. They will either complete the Combined Science route, which includes the study of all three sciences and leads to two GCSEs, or Separate Sciences where they will achieve GCSEs in <i>Biology, Chemistry and Physics as 3 separate qualifications.</i>
One Academic Breadth Subject	Due to the many future advantages of studying a Modern Foreign Language, many students will continue to study French so that their curriculum has sufficient academic breadth. Students for whom a Modern Foreign Language is not appropriate will need to choose History, Geography or Computer Science as their Academic Breadth subject. It is possible to do more than one Academic Breadth subject through the options.
RE	Started in Year 9, most students will attain a full GCSE.
PE	A non-GCSE course to promote healthy lifestyles throughout life. Students may choose to undertake an examined course in PE as an option.
Personal Development	A non-GCSE course in Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education which covers many key areas and skills.

Academic Breadth

We want our students to choose subjects that they enjoy, but it is crucial that these subjects open doors to opportunities in the future. With this in mind, we ask all students to pick an Academic Breadth subject to sit alongside the core of English, Maths and Science. Academic Breadth subjects are those that lead to further study at Key Stage 5 in areas that will support applications to competitive universities.

Fischer Family Trust Estimated Grades

The FFT, an educational charity, collects and analyses the scores students get at Year 6 and Year 11. They are able to estimate the most likely GCSE grade individual students may achieve in each subject based on this analysis. This data will guide you as to which subjects are most appropriate for you. You will have a chance to discuss this with a member of the Senior Leadership Team.



Where Could Your Options Take You?

Making choices for Key Stage 4 can be stressful and confusing. There may be career ideas at this stage, but there may not, and that is not a problem. The most important part of the process is that students consider what they enjoy and what they are good at.

The websites listed on this page have been chosen so that students and adults can undertake some research into possible careers and should help them to make informed options choices. Researching Labour Market Information, possible careers and options for study beyond Soar Valley College is a very useful step in the decision making process and we would recommend this step to everyone.

Useful Websites

Labour Market Information:

www.lmiforall.org.uk/ National labour market information

www.llep.org.uk Local labour market information.

Useful Research Tools:

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk> National Careers Service

<https://www.unifrog.org> Online careers job match

www.prospects.ac.uk Prospects for future planning

Future Study:

www.ucas.co.uk Every university and course in the country

<https://www.ps16.co.uk/> Every college and course in the county

www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide Apprenticeship information

www.tlevels.gov.uk (information about T Levels)

Local Colleges:

www.wqe.ac.uk Wyggeston & Queen Elizabeth I College

www.gateway.ac.uk Gateway College

<https://leicestercollege.ac.uk> Leicester College

www.loucoll.ac.uk Loughborough College

www.beauchamp.org.uk Beauchamp College (Oadby)

www.beauchampcity.org.uk Beauchamp City Sixth Form

Local Universities:

<https://le.ac.uk> Leicester University

www.dmu.ac.uk De Montfort University

www.lboro.ac.uk Loughborough University

For further careers information in school;

Careers Office – F66/F67

Careers Leader – Ms Houlton

Careers Advisor – Mrs Patel

careers@soarvalley.leicester.sch.uk



Soar Valley College

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Core Curriculum Courses

KEY STAGE 4

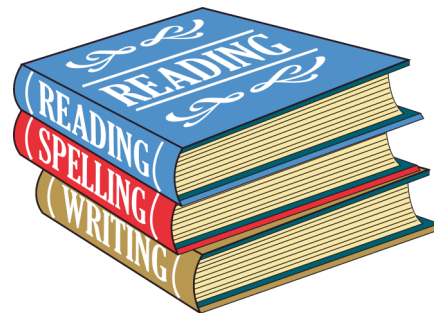
2026—2028



ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

English (2 GCSEs)

EDUQAS C700QS & C720QS



Assessment Style:	English Language	100% Examination
	English Literature	100% Examination

Course Overview:

All students will follow a combined course in both English Language and English Literature which, for most students, will result in two GCSEs at the end of the course. Students will benefit from mixed ability teaching throughout Key Stage 4, allowing teachers to address their individual needs and, as there are no tiers of entry for either paper, this will allow access to the full range of grades in the final exam.

During the course learners will need to read, talk and write about a range of texts, including non-fiction and fiction texts, past and present. Literary texts, including novels, plays and poetry, will be taken from the past, as well as from the present. Students will build upon the reading skills that they have developed in Years 7 to 9, to understand and comment on how writers achieve their effects.

Reading for enjoyment and pleasure continues to be important at GCSE and students will be encouraged to read widely in their own time. It has been shown that students who read more achieve more highly in examinations.

Assessment Overview:

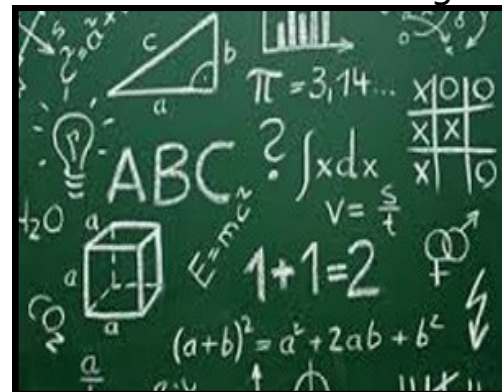
Both English Language and Literature are 100% terminal examination; there are no controlled assessments or coursework tasks to complete. All examinations will be completed at the end of Year 11, and there will be two exams for each qualification. To help prepare for this, there will be mock exams at key points throughout the course, in both Year 10 and 11.

Technical accuracy and language skills developed at Key Stage 3 will continue to be developed as they are important for both the exams and life beyond Soar Valley. Spoken English is an important aspect of English at Key Stage 4 and, although it does not count towards the final English Language grade, there will be a separate grade for this on GCSE certificates, awarded at pass, merit or distinction.

For further details, please contact Mrs Ost, Head of English, via email on rost@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk



Mathematics



Assessment Style: 100% Examination

Course Overview:

Mathematics is studied by all students. Our GCSE course is intended to allow students to:

- ♦ develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the mathematical concepts that allow students to become numerate and resilient problem solvers;
- ♦ understand the links between key mathematical concepts and see how they are used in a variety of interesting and useful contexts;
- ♦ realise the power that mathematics has to help us communicate effectively in a technological world;
- ♦ appreciate the intrinsic and aesthetic qualities of mathematical shapes, proofs and patterns;
- ♦ realise the thrill and fulfilment of tackling a problem or a puzzle and to recognise that good mathematicians are usually stuck but there is fun to be had when you try to get out of the maze!

The GCSE course is full of challenge which students will be encouraged to embrace with confidence and perseverance. There will be a focus on how relevant mathematics is to the modern world, encouraging students to see how it can be applied to other subjects and in future occupations. Students will learn that the development of mathematical ability can open up exciting opportunities in a range of studies and careers.

The teaching uses a variety of approaches including the extensive use of technologies to help maximise progress. There is a huge number of resources to encourage independent learning. We will help students to pick out the best of these to consolidate their understanding and sustain progress. There is also a range of events and activities to enrich our curriculum, including trips, challenges, competitions, study support, revision classes and other activities to develop interest and involvement.

For the very able there is also an opportunity to study for a Level 2 course in Further Maths. This is designed to help those who excel at GCSE and provides great preparation for Advanced Level. For further details, please see Mr Holyland.

Assessment Overview:

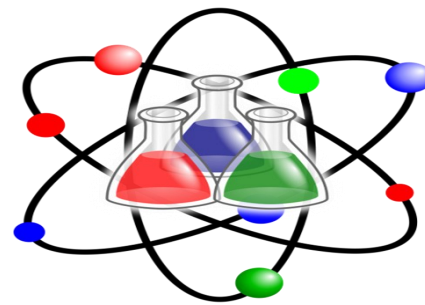
The GCSE is assessed by three final examinations which take place at the end of Year 11. To encourage numeracy students are not allowed to use a calculator in the first paper. A calculator can be used in the other two.

There are two possible levels of entry for Maths: Foundation (covering Grades 1 to 5) and Higher (covering Grades 4 to 9). Regular assessment and feedback will guide the level of exam entry that is most appropriate. Teachers will provide additional support to ensure that, whatever the ability, students can achieve their best.

For further information, please contact Mr Holyland, Head of Mathematics, via email on gholyland@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Combined Science

AQA Trilogy 8464



Science

Assessment Style: 100 % Examination

Course Overview:

From atoms to astronomy, DNA to dinosaurs, science is a subject that allows you to develop your sense of enquiry and natural wonder about the world we live in and beyond. Science attempts to explain the world in which we live. It provides the technologies that have such a huge impact on our society and environment. Scientists try to explain phenomena and solve the big questions using evidence and reasoning.

The Combined Science course is divided into Biology, Chemistry and Physics units which will be taught across Year 10 and 11.

The course inspires students by linking the science to everyday phenomena: cell biology to infections and response, and inheritance: atmospheric chemistry to electricity and energy etc. The science course will also include the aspects of health and sex education that relate to the science modules. This work is part of the overall Soar Valley College PSHE programme.

Practical activities can be the most engaging part of Science education and are essential for the understanding of scientific theory. Students will complete a series of required practical activities, which will be tested in each of the exam papers. Students will need to evidence these experiments by keeping a log book which should be used as preparation for their exams.

Science has many transferable skills such as critical and evaluative thinking; data interpretation; communication; problem solving; inferring and predicting. All of these skills are required for future employment.

Assessment Overview:

Students will sit six exam papers: two Biology, two Chemistry and two Physics. Each will assess different topics and the papers will each be 1 hour and 15 minutes. Each paper has 70 marks.

There will be Higher and Foundation Tier exams which student will be directed to complete based on their ongoing classroom assessments. There will be internal mock examinations and required practicals throughout the course testing skills and knowledge to ensure students are fully prepared for their terminal exams.

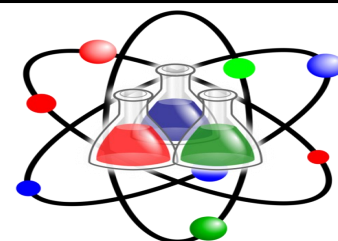
For further details, please contact Mrs Yadav, Head of Science, at byadav@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

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Separate Sciences

AQA 4401 4402 4403

Assessment Style: 100% Examination



Science

Students in Set 1 or Set 2 in science will follow the Separate Sciences route

Course Overview:

The list of career opportunities where good science qualifications are an advantage is almost endless, but includes everything from careers in the medical profession to engineering.

The Separate Sciences route is most suitable for those students who have proven ability in the subject and a healthy curiosity of the scientific world, and for those that are potentially considering a university course or career in the sciences in the future. It leads to students obtaining three separate GCSE grades in Biology, Chemistry and Physics and the additional content makes it ideal preparation for A Level study.

Students will study an additional 2 hours per week of science after school, on top of the 9 hours of science which all students study in the curriculum. Failure to attend these sessions will lead to forfeiting a place on this route.

The study of the Separate Sciences goes beyond the content of the Combined Science course and allows you to study topics in greater breadth and depth. Additional topics covered in Separate Sciences are:

Biology	Chemistry	Physics
Evolution Microbiology Eco systems & Biodiversity Genetics The Brain The Eye	Nanotechnology Volumetric Calculations Organic Chemistry Polymers Using our resources	Moments & Levers Force & Pressure Lenses Space Sound Waves

Assessment Overview:

Practical skills and the analysis of data will be an integral part of the Separate Sciences route, these will be tested by completing a series of required experiments which will be tested in each of the exam papers. Students will be required to keep a log book to evidence these experiments and use as a part of the preparation for their exams.

There are no controlled assessments in this science qualification however the questions assessing students use of mathematical skills will make up 15% of the assessments. There will be two exam papers (1 hour 45minutes per exam) for each subject. Each paper is worth 50% of the overall grade and has 100 marks available.

For further details, please contact Mrs Yadav on byadav@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

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Religious Studies

AQA 8062



Assessment Style: 100% Examination

Course Overview:

The Religious Studies course is split into two main components:

- **Religious beliefs and practices.** Christianity and Islam are studied in detail for this component.
- **Thematic studies** and how religions relate to them. This component involves study of religious views on the following topics:
 - Families and relationships;
 - Life Issues (creation and the environment; animal rights; abortion, euthanasia);
 - Peace and conflict around the world;
 - Human rights and social justice.

A range of religions is used in the study of themes, but mainly Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism.

Students are taught to critically consider religious and non-religious views, to express their own opinions and beliefs, and to evaluate those of others. Students learn how to make links between beliefs and practices, and to explain the impact of religious beliefs and choices. Students learn how to debate and argue effectively and to write detailed explanations to support their points.

These skills are used across the curriculum in other subjects such as English and History, and are vital for anyone continuing to A-Level study. Students who appreciate the study of religions at GCSE often go on to study Philosophy and Ethics, Theology and Sociology, many of which are offered by local colleges.

Religious Studies is a subject that will impact all learners throughout their lives, especially in such a culturally diverse city as Leicester. Every student at Soar Valley is already sharing life with people from a variety of faith traditions, and as they continue to do so into adult life, understanding and appreciating these traditions strengthens local communities and society as a whole.

Assessment Overview:

This course has already started in Year 9 and continues in Key Stage 4 in preparation for the AQA Specification A GCSE Full Course at the end of Year 11.

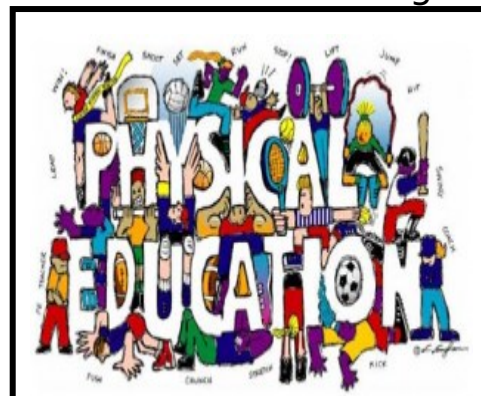
Students sit two exams at the end of the course, for the two components mentioned above (**Religions** and **Themes**), and the course is assessed through 100% written examination.

For further details, please contact Mr Thomas, Head of RE, via email on mthomas@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk



Physical Education

Core Non-GCSE



Course Overview:

All students attend one PE lesson a week in Years 10 and 11. They will have the opportunity to experience a varied programme of sporting activities. The main aim of Key Stage 4 Core Physical Education is to improve our students physical , mental and social wellbeing through exercise and sport. The Core PE course is also used to introduce students to a wide variety of sporting activities in the hope that they will find an activity that suits their interests and needs and continue to participate in sport once they have left school.

Topics may include the following:

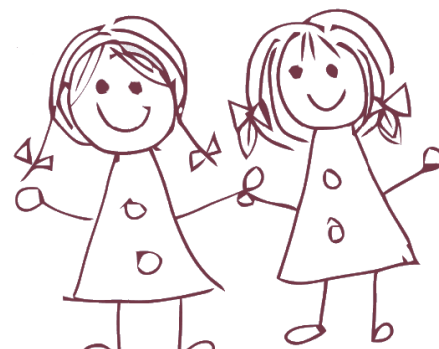
Year 10	Year 11
Basketball	Badminton
First Aid	Basketball
Football	Boxercise
Health & Fitness	Circuit Training
Netball	Dance
Outdoor Adventurous Activities	Fitness Suite
Rounders	Football
Rugby	Frisbee
Short Tennis	Kettle Bells
Softball	Netball
	Rugby
	Table Tennis
	Weight Training

For further details contact Mr Cherrington, Head of PE, on jcherrington@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk



Personal Development

Core Non-GCSE



Course Overview:

Soar Valley College is committed to ensuring that students leave us as well-rounded individuals who are able to make reasoned and well informed decisions. It is therefore compulsory for all students to learn about Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education at Soar Valley College.

Students in years 10 and 11 will explore a wide range of areas that will help to prepare them for the daily choices they will face in their future lives. Some examples of these topics include:

- Relationships: abuse, parenting and teenage pregnancy
- Britishness: extremism, propaganda and stereotypes
- Freedoms & Liberties
- Personal Finance: income, expenditure and savings
- Personal career planning
- Body Image, Eating Disorders & Emotional Wellbeing
- Crime, Punishment, Law & Order
- Revision techniques.

Life in modern Britain is increasingly challenging and fast paced, with young adults facing a huge number of important decisions on an almost daily basis. We believe that students should be exposed to these important areas so that they learn to discuss them in an open and mature way, in a safe and supportive environment. It is important that students come to these lessons with an open mind ready to discuss their opinions and further understand their behaviours and choices.

Assessment Overview:

This course does not lead to a formal qualification for students.

However, while work completed within these lessons will not lead to students gaining a GCSE, valuable skills needed in adult life will be developed and students will be encouraged to develop their understanding and improve their decision making in class.

For further details, please contact Mrs Raja, Head of Personal Development, via email on sraja@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk



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Option Subjects

KEY STAGE 4

2026—2028



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Option Subjects

Alongside the core GCSE offer of English, Maths, Science and Religious Studies students will undertake courses in Physical Education and Personal Development, both non-exam subjects. The remaining time will be spent studying three courses that they have opted for. All students have to study at least one option from the Academic Breadth subjects, and the electronic options form ensures that this happens.

The option subjects are chosen from the list below:

Art—Fine Art		Food Prep & Nutrition		Music	
Art—Graphics		French		Physical Education	
Art—Photography		Geography			
Citizenship		History			
Computer Science		ICT			
Design Technology		Media Production			

Selecting the Courses

Students need to do the following by Friday 13th March at the latest:

- 1st. Select one Academic Breadth subject. These are shown on the Options Planning Form at the end of this booklet.
- 2nd. Select and rank order four other courses they wish to study from the 'open options'. The subject they wish to study the most should be number 1, down to number 4. **All four** should be subjects students would be prepared to take at Key Stage 4.
- 3rd. Fill in the Options Planning Form in this booklet as a trial run.
- 4th. Once confident about the options selected, the final form can be completed online. Details of this will follow. The form should only be completed once; if students wish to amend their choices they should speak to Mr Cumming.

Helping Students Make their Choices

Students will take part in a number of activities to help them decide their choices, but there are some key things that parents/carers can do:

- Take time to discuss everything about option choices with your child and read the information booklet carefully.
- Remind students not to make choices based on what their friends are doing or what teachers they have this year.
- Talk through with your child which subjects they most enjoy and think they are best at.
- If they have a particular career in mind, look online for the qualifications they might need.

Art and Design

Three separate subjects

Assessment:

40% Practical Examination 60% Portfolio



Courses Overview:

Fine Art, Graphic Communication and Photography are three separate GCSE subjects. Students require open mindedness, hard work and dedication, as well as a real passion for the visual world and curiosity for art and the work of artists from different movements. We will encourage you to think creatively and work independently, exploring a range of media, skills and techniques to create exciting final realisations.

FINE ART – AQA 8202

This course is about expressing ideas and to evoke feelings in a visually exciting piece of art. You will be introduced to a variety of experiences exploring a range of Fine Art media such as drawing, painting, collage, mixed-media, print-making and sculpture.

GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION – AQA 8203

This will encourage you to create art work for a graphics product. You will be working towards briefs that involve tasks such as poster design, book illustration, album covers, logos and typography. Students will continue to develop traditional skills and techniques such as drawing, painting, mixed media and printmaking as well as making professional work digitally using Photoshop.

PHOTOGRAPHY – AQA 8206

Photography will encourage you to capture images in interesting and creative ways. Students will be taught how to take photographs, use digital SLR cameras and how to create exciting artistic effects, both by hand and using Photoshop.

Studying an art-based GCSE can lead to A-level courses or BTEC level 3, and a career within the creative industries e.g., design, advertising, marketing etc.

Assessment Overview:

The main requirement of the GCSEs in Fine Art, Graphics Communication and Photography is a coursework portfolio consisting of various themed projects that will count as one whole unit of work over the course of two years. This accounts for 60% of the overall marks. The externally set task will account for 40% of the overall mark. This exam paper will be set by the exam board in Year 11, and students will have 9—10 weeks of preparation time to respond to one of the seven set themes. The exam is in the Art Department for 10 hours, over 2 days, for the final realisation.

AO1: Develop ideas through investigations, demonstrating critical understanding of sources.

AO2: Refine work by exploring ideas, selecting and experimenting with appropriate media, materials, techniques and processes.

AO3: Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions as work progresses.

AO4: Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and demonstrates understanding of visual language.

For further details, please contact Ms Kaur on mkaur@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?



Citizenship

AQA 8100



Assessment: 100% Examination

Course Overview:

Citizenship has the power to motivate and enable young people to become thoughtful and active citizens. Students gain a deeper knowledge of democracy, government and law, and develop skills to create sustained and reasoned arguments, present various viewpoints and plan practical citizenship actions that benefit society.

Citizenship is a thought provoking and engaging course, it teaches young people to take responsibility for their own lives, the communities they belong to and make informed decisions. Citizenship aims to make our young people politically literate and confident in engaging in the democratic society in which we live. Furthermore, Citizenship opens students' minds to the interdependent global community of which we are part, so that they understand the international challenges that we face. Students will be aware of current affairs and the impact they have on our lives.

Assessment Overview:

Students will sit two exams at the end of the course.

Paper 1: 50% of the GCSE

Section A: Active Citizenship. This theme is made up of students taking citizenship action and assessing the actions of others.

Section B: Politics & Participation. This theme aims to give the student, through an understanding of the political process, the knowledge and skills necessary to understand how to resolve issues, bring about change, and how the empowered citizen is at the heart of our society.

Paper 2: 50% of the GCSE

Section A: Life in modern Britain. This theme looks at the makeup and dynamics of contemporary society, what it means to be British, as well as the role of the media and the UK's role on the world stage.

Section B: Rights & Responsibilities. This theme looks at the nature of laws, rights and responsibilities within the UK and has a global aspect due to the nature of international laws, treaties and agreements by which the UK abides.

For further details, please contact Mrs raja on sraja@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?

Computer Science

OCR J277



Assessment: 100% Examination

Course Overview:

This course gives students a real, in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It will give a fascinating insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming.

The course provides excellent preparation for higher study and employment in the field of computer science. The course will develop computational 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 even applied in day-to-day life. In this respect, the course provides excellent preparation for students, who want to study or work in areas that rely on these skills, especially where they are applied to technical problems.

Assessment Overview:

The course is broken down as follows:

Computer systems Written paper 50% 80 marks 1hr 30 min exam	Computational thinking, algorithms and programming Written paper 50% 80 marks 1hr 30 min exam	Practical Programming Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems architecture • Memory and storage • Computer networks, connections and protocols • Network security • System software • Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algorithms • Programming techniques • Producing robust programs • Boolean logic • Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students will be given the opportunity to undertake programming tasks during their course of study. • The task(s) will allow students to develop skills needed to design, write, test and refine a programming project.

For further details, please contact Mr Osborne on mosborne@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?

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Design and Technology

AQA 8552



Assessment:

50% Examination 50% NEA (Coursework)

Course Overview:

The GCSE Design & Technology has been created to meet the needs of our fast-paced technological society and our ever-changing world. This course develops the knowledge and skills gained in Key Stage 3 projects. Students will cover core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials, techniques and equipment. After learning about the five core material areas: paper and board, textiles, timbers, metals and polymers, students will study specialist technical principles in greater depth.

Students will work as designers and manufacturers, researching, experimenting, problem solving and decision making, all helping them understand the world and the impact of their choices. Many transferable skills are developed through using initiative, being organised, having good communication skills and being innovative.

The start of the GCSE course will primarily focus on the theory content needed for the examination at the end of Year 11 along with focussed practical tasks. This will then lead into a mock NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) project. From June of Year 10 onwards, the major NEA project begins.

You could take this subject further by studying an A Level, BTEC or doing an apprenticeship. Some possible courses available include Product Design, Engineering, Construction, Fashion and Textiles, Motor Vehicle Maintenance and many more, leading to lots of exciting career opportunities.

Assessment Overview:

www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/design-and-technology/gcse

Non Examined Assessment (NEA) - 50% of the total marks

Students will produce a portfolio of evidence and a working prototype using their selected material area.

Written Paper - 50% of the total marks

Section A – Core technical principles - A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.

Section B – Specialist technical principles - Several short answer questions and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.

Section C – Designing and making principles - A mixture of short answer and extended response questions.

For further details, please contact Mr Khushalbhai on nkhushalbhai@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?

Food Preparation and Nutrition

AQA 8585



Assessment:

50 % Examination 50% NEA (Coursework)

Course Overview:

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is an exciting and inspiring course which focuses on practical cooking skills to ensure students develop a thorough understanding of food preparation, nutrition and the working characteristics of food ingredients and processes. The course will involve students carrying out scientific investigations into the functions of ingredients to give them an understanding of nutrition. During this course there will be a strong emphasis placed on gaining the required skills and knowledge through practical work so it will be appropriate for students who enjoy learning by a 'hands-on' approach.

Food preparation and nutrition skills are integrated into five core knowledge topics:

Food, nutrition and health; food science; food safety; food choice; food provenance.

You will learn about food preparation and nutrition by:

- Research and investigation - understanding food choices and preferences.
- Team work activities - investigating different ingredients and their functional properties.
- Practical preparation tasks - learning new skills with fortnightly practical lessons. It is essential that you are prepared to bring ingredients in every fortnight.
- Visiting speakers/visits to food establishments - giving a 'real-world' perspective to the course requirements.

Food is one of the fastest growing industries in the UK with many varied jobs on offer alongside the traditional role of chef, e.g. sports scientist, dietician, events manager and buyer. This qualification also develops students' skills in creativity, independence, team building and evaluation which are invaluable within the food industry.

Assessment Overview:

WRITTEN EXAM 1 hour 45 minutes (50%)

The paper will be made up of 20 multiple choice questions worth 20 marks and 5 questions each with a number of sub questions worth 80 marks.

NON- EXAM ASSESSMENT (NEA1) Task 1 Food investigation (15%)

Assesses understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Students are required to submit a written report for this task.

NON- EXAM ASSESSMENT (NEA2) Task 2 Food preparation assessment (35%)

Focusses on knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task. Students will produce a written presentation project as well as prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a three hour practical exam.

For further details please contact either Ms Kilburn on nkilburn@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk or Miss Hope on fhope1@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE



Geography

OCR Specification B J384

Assessment: 100% Examination



Course Overview:

This GCSE will help you understand and learn even more about the world around you. Studying this course will help you to see and think about the world geographically. You will become increasingly able to identify the links between ideas, people and places across the globe. You will also develop the skills you practiced at KS3 such as map work, enquiry and analysis through fieldwork, research skills and the use of new technologies. GCSE geography is accessible to any Soar Valley student.

In terms of supporting your future career, recent statistics show that geography graduates are among the most employable in many fields including management, administration, marketing, and finance. GCSE geography is an enjoyable subject that will allow you to develop a core of transferable skills such as analysing, drawing conclusions and having a reasoned opinion about a specific topic. GCSE Geography at Soar Valley follows the OCR B specification and the GCSE is full of relevant, contemporary and exciting geography.

This geography specification is divided into three main areas:

- **Our Natural World** which covers such areas as hazards (tectonic and climatic), ecosystems, climate change and rivers and coasts.
- **People and Society** covers aspects of urban growth, resource reliance, the UK in the 21st century, and looks at how and why countries develop and what limits their growth.
- **Geographical Exploration** which will push you to develop your abilities to question, investigate and analyse in order to answer questions and become a critical thinker. This paper draws on the application of your understanding from across the course.

Additionally there will be both physical and human geography fieldwork that enable you to apply your knowledge to real world geographical situations.

Assessment Overview:

Examination 1: Our Natural World (1 hour 30 minutes) - 35% of final grade.

Examination 2: People and Society (1 hour 30 minutes) - 35% of final grade.

Examination 3: Geographical Exploration (1 hour 30 minutes) - 30% of final grade.

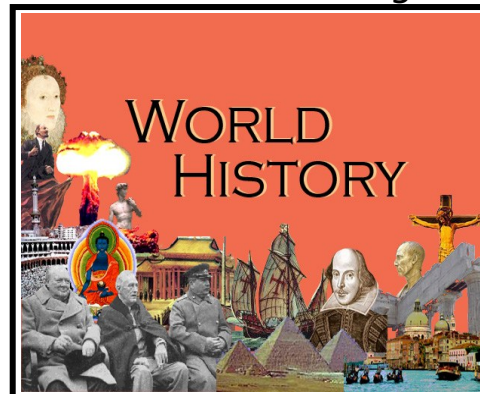
For further details please contact Mrs Pedrola on rpedrola@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?



History

AQA 8415FC



Assessment:

100% examination, 4 topics assessed in 2 exams

Course Overview:

History is a subject that will help you to think, make you more aware, make you ask questions and equip you to find the answers.

This course will bring students right up-to-date in their studies of world history and will explain why the modern world is the way that it is today. Studying our past helps to explain our present and understand our world.

Assessment Overview:

For the first time ever, we are able to bring together the study of four extremely popular topics in one GCSE. These are tested across two examinations.

The Elizabethan Age 1568—1603

An in-depth look at the reign of Elizabeth I from the problems of how to control a country opposed to her due to her sex and religion, who to marry, and how to avoid Catholic assassination attempts and the threat from foreign powers.

Germany 1895—1945

The story of Germany over three eras. This course takes us from the time of the last Emperor, to the first ever German democracy, before it is crushed by the looming threat of Hitler and the Nazis.

The First World War 1894—1918

A comprehensive look at the Great War. Drawing on previous learning from year 9, this topic examines the causes, fighting and consequences of one of the biggest events in human history.

The History of Medicine c.1000 to present day

The oldest, greatest struggle of the human race, the fight to understand our worst diseases and how we can defeat them. Centuries of human history in one course!

For further details please contact Mr Flynn on sflynn@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?



Information Technology (IT)

Cambridge National in Information Technologies J836



Assessment Style:

2 internal and 1 external assessment

Course Overview:

What will this qualification teach the learner?

This qualification will enable you to learn about the different design tools that can be used, the principles of human computer interfaces and the use of data and testing when creating IT solutions or products. You will also understand the uses of Internet of Everything and the application of this in everyday life.

You will develop the skills to plan and design a spreadsheet solution to meet a client's requirements. You will be able to use a range of tools and techniques to create the spreadsheet solution which will be tested, and you will learn to evaluate your spreadsheet solution.

Finally, you will develop the knowledge and skills relating to the purpose, use and types of Augmented Reality (AR) in different contexts and how it is used on different digital devices.

You will study three mandatory units:

R050: IT in the digital world

- Design Tools
- Human Computer Interface (HCI) in everyday life
- Data and testing
- Cyber-security and legislation
- Digital Communications
- Internet of Everything (IoE).

R060: Data manipulation using spreadsheets

- Planning and designing the spreadsheet solution
- Creating the spreadsheet solution
- Testing the spreadsheet solution
- Evaluating the spreadsheet solution.

R070: Using Augmented Reality to present information

- Augmented Reality (AR)
- Designing an Augmented Reality (AR) model prototype
- Creating an Augmented Reality (AR) model prototype
- Testing and reviewing.

Assessment Overview:

There are three units that students will be assessed on. Teaching prior to these units prepares students to produce work of the highest standards.

- **Unit R050:** IT in the digital world- 1 hours and 30 minutes **examination** (70 marks)
- **Unit R060:** Data manipulation using spreadsheets **project** (60 marks)
- **Unit R070:** Using Augmented Reality to present information **project** (60 marks)
- **Projects are 12 hours independent work to be carried out within lessons (each worth 60 marks)**

For further details please contact Mr Osborne on mosborne@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?

Creative Media Production

BTEC



Assessment Style:

2 Internal and 1 External assessment in controlled conditions

Course Overview:

Media is a subject that encourages students to develop their creative, analytical, research, and communication skills, through exploring a range of media forms and perspectives. You will consider the impact of the media on modern society and popular culture. This course is suitable for creative, analytical minds; you will study and analyse existing media and how they work, and create your own media products. The idea is to work as you would in a creative media business with all tasks linked to an industry style brief, as this is a vocational course.

Although not essential, good graphics and ICT skills are useful in this course. All students must have access to television, and ideally, the internet. Homework and independent study is essential in Media Studies. The more time you spend on your projects, the better they will be. As such, regular weekly homework is set to help you reach your potential.

Media students are in demand in a wide range of professions. Many media students go on to further academic study, as the skills acquired during their BTEC course are useful in a wide range of higher level courses, including Level 3 (A Level equivalent) in this subject, if they wish to pursue it. This offers students links with: public relations, marketing, business management, advertising, teaching and a range of careers offered through TV, newspapers and the web. Collectively, the creative sector in the UK contributed nearly £125 billion to the economy in 2024 and has seen growth of 6% since 2019, accounting for 5.7% of UK gross value added.

Assessment Overview:

Assessment 1: internal assessment. 30% of BTEC final grade. 10 assessment hours given

- You will study 3 areas of media: audio-visual (TV, film, radio) publishing (newspapers, magazines) and interactive (websites, apps, games). You will explore the content and conventions and how they appeal to audiences. You will also look at production of these media, the industry behind them, and how they define and target audiences.

Assessment 2: internal assessment. 30% of BTEC final grade. 10 assessment hours given

- You will develop technical skills and techniques in a chosen media. You will experiment with different techniques and apply the skills you learn by creating your own media product, before evaluating your work.

Assessment 3: external assessment 40% of BTEC of final grade. 10 assessment hours given

- You will apply your digital skills and techniques, with your knowledge of existing products and how they appeal to target audiences, to create a media product in response to a brief sent by the exam board. You will plan it, make it, justify your choices and evaluate it. This is done at the end of the course in Year 11.

For further details, please contact Mrs Holyland at cholyland@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE

Modern Languages

AQA French 8652



Assessment Style: 100% EXAMINATION

Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking will be equally weighted, each worth 25% of the final mark.

Course Overview:

Languages will be studied by many students at Key Stage 4. Students will continue with the language that they have studied at Key Stage 3. At Soar Valley College, we value language learning as a core skill that is valuable for jobs in many areas ranging from business, scientific research, medicine, travel, law, publishing, and information technology. We live in a global economy, and whatever your interests, the ability to communicate clearly and concisely, to interpret information, to look for linguistic and visual clues as well as to understand other cultures, are important interpersonal and employable skills.

Students will be learning their chosen language in a varied, fun and innovative way, which will reflect their needs with regard to interest and ability. With access to native speakers and technology, and trips to see language learning come alive, students will thrive in a creative linguistic environment.

Students at Soar Valley are good linguists and we are extremely proud of the results our students achieve, which are consistently very high.

In the GCSE course, students will study 3 main areas with various subtopics per area:

- People and Lifestyle
- Popular Culture
- Communication and the World Around Us

We have already touched upon some of these topics in Key Stage 3, and this will allow students to make rapid progress in extending the range and quality of language that they are able to use but in a much more confident, mature way which befits their age.

Assessment Overview:

Teachers will regularly set varied tasks to ensure that students are carrying their language learning forward and that language manipulation skills are constantly being developed and refined as the course progresses, and so ensuring that they are ready to meet the requirements of the final exam. The GCSE exams in all four language skills will be examined formally at the end of the two year course.

For further details please contact Mrs Bonnell on rbonnell@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE



Music

Eduqas GCSE Music



Assessment Style: 60% Coursework 40% Exam

Course Overview:

Over the two years Eduqas GCSE Music will have an enormous impact on your development as a **performer**, **composer** and **producer**.

GCSE Music encourages an integrated approach to the three distinct disciplines of **performing**, **composing** and **appraising** through four interrelated areas of study. The four areas of study are designed to develop knowledge and understanding of music through the study of a variety of genres and styles in a wider context. The Western Classical Tradition forms the basis of **Musical Forms and Devices** (area of study 1), and learners should take the opportunity to explore these forms and devices further in the other three areas of study. **Music for Ensemble** (area of study 2) allows learners to look more closely at texture and sonority. **Film Music** (area of study 3) and **Popular Music** (area of study 4) provide an opportunity to look at contrasting styles and genres of music.

If you decide to go on to study music further, the best option for you will depend on what you enjoy doing. You could progress to BTEC Level 3, A Level Music and beyond to University.

Music is an integral part of life across the globe. As a universal language it has been shown to activate some of the broadest and most diverse networks of the brain and it's benefits are vast; from improving memory and coordination to increased academic success.

Assessment Overview:

Component 1: Performing Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes. Internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification.

A minimum of two pieces, one solo piece and one ensemble performance of at least one minute duration. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice.

Component 2: Composing Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes. Internally assessed, externally moderated 30% of qualification.

Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will choose one **brief** from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The briefs will be released during the first week of September in Year 11. The second composition is a **free** composition for which learners set their own brief.

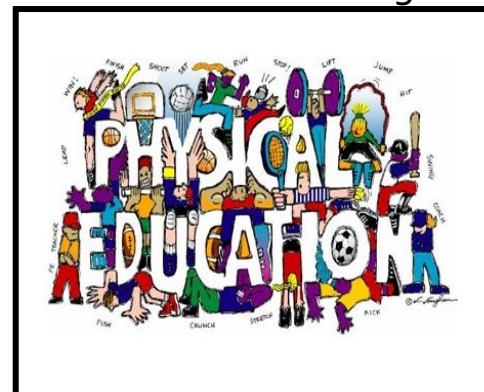
Component 3: Appraising Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes (approximately) 40% of qualification This component is assessed via a **listening examination**. **Eight questions in total**, two on each of the four areas of study. Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble Area of study 3: Film Music Area of study 4: Popular Music Two of the eight questions are based on extracts set by WJEC

If you require any more information contact Mr Piper at apiper@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option

Physical Education

Edexcel 1827



Assessment Style:

Examination 60% Controlled Assessment: 40%

Course Overview:

The course is aimed at students who have a passion for PE and have a keen interest in learning about the science behind how the body adapts to physical activity and exercise. Students choosing to study GCSE PE should already be performing to a high standard in practical PE lessons and would ideally have an interest in Science. Over the course of two weeks you will spend 4 hours studying theory and 2 hours in practical.

In terms of supporting your future career, former GCSE PE students have found employment in the following areas: Clinical Exercise Physiology, Psychology, Sports Development and Management, Physiotherapy, Business Management, Diet and Nutrition, GP Referral Exercise Consultancy, Teaching and Sports Coaching.

GCSE Physical Education is a fun and challenging subject that will provide you with transferable skills that will suit whatever future career path you choose.

Assessment Overview:

Component 1: 1 hour 15 minute written exam worth 30% taken at the end of the course.

- Anatomy & Physiology (bones, muscles, circulatory & respiratory systems), Biomechanics, Physical Training and Data Analysis.

Component 2: 1 hour 15 minute written exam worth 30% taken at the end of the course.

- Sports Psychology, Sociocultural Influences and Health and Wellbeing and Data Analysis.

Component 3: Controlled Coursework: 30% Practical and 10% Written Coursework

- Students will be assessed on their ability to perform 3 sports, of which one **MUST** be an individual sport (selected from a set list). Handball and Badminton will be taught in depth and it is an expectation that students attend an extra curricular badminton and handball. It is also an advantage if students play competitive sport outside of school.
- Students will complete a written assessment that focusses on their strengths and weaknesses in one of their sports.

For further details please contact either Mrs Whibley on cwhibley@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk or Mr Cherrington on jcherrington@soarvalley.aspirelp.uk

Possible
Option
Choice?



Soar Valley

Options Planning Form 2026

Use this form to keep a record of your choices.

Name..... Tutor Group.....

Progress Check 2 Grades					
English		Science		History	
Maths		French		Geography	

Academic Breadth Subject: You must choose ONE. Please tick the subject that you wish to study.

Computer Science		French	
Geography		History	

You may of course select other Academic Breadth subjects in the Open Option section if you wish to study more than one.

You will be able to study two of the subjects listed below but we cannot guarantee you will be able to study your top two choices. **You need to rank order your top FOUR choices.** Put a 1, 2, 3 and 4 against the subjects you wish to study. Put the number 1 by the subject you wish to do most, 2 by the next, etc.

Open Option Choices:

Art—Fine Art		Food Prep & Nutrition		Music	
Art—Graphics		French		Physical Education	
Art—Photography		Geography			
Citizenship		History			
Computer Science		ICT			
Design Technology		Media Production			

Remember, you must be prepared to do any of the four that you choose.

Final option choices should be submitted no later than Friday 13th March

ASPIRE ENJOY ACHIEVE