

The student guide to Key Stage 4 courses



2026

Examination Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Aims

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

Assessment

Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing

What is assessed?

- Section A – One literature fiction text
- Section B – Descriptive or narrative writing

How is it assessed?

- Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives

What is assessed?

- Section A – One non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text
- Section B – Writing to present a viewpoint

How is it assessed?

- Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 80 marks
- 50% of GCSE

Spoken Language

The preparation and assessment of spoken language is a compulsory requirement of this course of study. It will appear on students' certificates as a separately reported grade, alongside the overall grade issued for

English Language. Students will be assessed on presenting, responding to questions and feedback as well as their use of Standard English.

Extra-curricular Opportunities

The department frequently offers students the chance to attend trips to workshops and lectures in order to enhance students' learning experiences. Developing their debating skills will also prove immensely beneficial to students during the Spoken Language element of this course.

English Literature

Examination Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Note: Although closely linked to English language, English literature is a separate qualification.

Aims

The course encourages students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking. Through the study of literature, students have the chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written. Studying GCSE English Literature encourages students to read widely for pleasure and prepares them for studying literature and other text-based subjects at a higher level.

Assessment

Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

What is assessed?

- Shakespeare
- The 19th-century novel

How is it assessed?

- Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes
- 64 marks
- 40% of GCSE

Section A Shakespeare: students will answer one question on 'Macbeth'; they will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.

Section B The 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on 'The Strange case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde'; they will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.

Paper 2: Modern texts and poetry

What is assessed?

- Modern texts
- Poetry
- Unseen poetry

How is it assessed?

- Written examination: 2 hour 15 minutes
- 96 marks

- 60% of GCSE

Section A Modern text: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on 'An Inspector Calls'

Section B Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster which is 'Worlds and Lives'

Section C Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.

Extra-curricular Opportunities

The department frequently offers students the chance to attend trips to the theatre, workshops, and lectures in order to enhance students' learning experiences.

Mathematics

Examination Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Mathematics is a creative and highly inter-connected discipline that has been developed over centuries providing the solution to some of history's most intriguing problems. It is essential to everyday life, critical to science, technology and engineering and necessary in most forms of employment.

At Nishkam High School we aim to help students understand the importance of this subject and to equip them for life beyond school by allowing them to develop the skills required and achieve a good level of qualification at GCSE.

We will be following the EdExcel (1MA1) specification which is the new GCSE qualification awarding grades 9 to 1 rather than the traditional A*-G. Grade 9 is the highest grade.

Aims

EdExcel state the aims of the course as enabling students to:

- Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts.
- Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems.
- Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences, and draw conclusions
- Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

Course Content

The course content is divided into five broad areas of study:

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

The Key Stage 3 course has already covered much of the subject matter in all of these areas and the GCSE course is an extension of what students have already learnt.

Assessment

This course is assessed by three written examinations, each 1 ½ hours long at the end of the course. There are two tiers of examination:

- **Higher Tier** offers grades 9 to 4
- **Foundation Tier** offers grades 1 to 5

Students will be entered for the tier most suited to their ability.

The use of calculators is required on two of the papers but for one paper students are expected to work without a calculator. This is to ensure that they have a good understanding of the basic skills. Students will be encouraged to continue developing their mental skills as well as using technology to help when this is appropriate.

Science

Examination Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Aims

- Deliver high quality education in science through challenging and stimulating lessons.
- Develop informed students who can express opinions with reasoned arguments.
- For our students to develop an enquiring mind with the ability to access learning independently.
- Promote awareness, knowledge and understanding of Scientific issues beyond the classroom.
- Encourage students to question and analyse various scientific issues that appear in the news.
- Inform students of the purpose of, and necessity for, Science in their school and future lives.

Curriculum

Students will follow one of two pathways, these are:

- Triple Science, this leads to 3 individual GCSEs; Biology, Chemistry and Physics.
 - Students must take all 3 sciences and will have the option of Higher Tier (Grades 9-5) or Foundation Tier (Grades 5-1) in each of the three sciences. The final decision for which tier will be made in the April during Year 11.
- Combined Science Trilogy, this leads to 2 GCSEs in Combined Science.
 - All 3 sciences will be taught and examined with 1/3rd less content than Triple Science. However, the grades from all three will be merged to produce 2 GCSE grades. Students will have the option of Higher (Grades 9-5) or Foundation (Grades 5-1) but this must be taken in all three sciences at once. It is not possible to complete a higher paper in one science and foundation in another. The final decision for which tier will be made in the April during Year 11.

Assessment

All Science GCSE students are assessed by external exams; the external exams which take place at the end of Year 11.

The examination have three assessment objectives (AOs):

- AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: scientific ideas; scientific techniques and procedures.
- AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of: scientific ideas; scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.
- AO3: Analyse information and ideas to: interpret and evaluate; make judgements and draw conclusions; develop and improve experimental procedures.

How Separate Sciences is Assessed

Per Subject: Two Written exams: 1 hour 45 minutes **(6 examinations in total)**

Foundation and Higher Tier

Each Paper is 100 marks making 50% of the GCSE

Question Style; Multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.

How Combined Science is Assessed

Per subject: Two Written exams: 1 hour 15 minutes **(6 examinations in total)**

Foundation and Higher tier

Each Paper is 70 marks making 16.7% of the two GCSE's Question Style; Multiple choice, structured, closed short answer and open response.

Biology

GCSE Biology is a fascinating subject where students learn more about living organisms, so is therefore highly relevant to everyday life. Students will develop a range of valuable skills, such as:

- how to carry out their own scientific investigations,
- collect data, and evaluate it and
- research facts and theories of living processes.

Biology is a great choice of subject for people who want to pursue a career in health and clinical professions, such as: medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, physiotherapy, pharmacy, optometry, nursing, zoology, marine biology or forensic science.

Paper One

Topic 1. Cell Biology

Topic 2. Organisation of plant and animal systems

Topic 3. Infection and response

Topic 4. Bioenergetics

Paper Two

Topic 5. Homeostasis and response

Topic 6. Inheritance, variation and evolution

Topic 7. Ecology

Assessments

Each paper will be a written exam of 1 hour and 45 minutes. With 100 marks in each paper and each paper being worth 50% of the grade.

Chemistry

GCSE Chemistry

Chemists are interested in the way materials behave and react under different conditions, and the ways in which we can use these materials to benefit society. In this course you will be introduced to many of the ideas and theories which attempt to explain the behaviour and reactions of different materials and you will learn about some of the ways in which chemistry is important in the modern world.

Chemistry is an essential choice for many careers including medicine and veterinary science. It also provides the theoretical basis for all biological sciences and strongly supports students wishing to pursue these courses to a higher level. Other career routes include forensic science, for which a chemistry degree provides by far the best entry route. If you choose chemistry and go on to study for a chemistry degree, you will end up being one of the most highly sought after graduates out there!

Paper one

- Topic 1.** Atomic structure and the periodic table
- Topic 2.** Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter
- Topic 3.** Quantitative chemistry
- Topic 4.** Chemical changes
- Topic 5.** Energy changes

Paper Two

- Topic 6.** The rate and extent of chemical change
- Topic 7.** Organic chemistry
- Topic 8.** Chemical analysis
- Topic 9.** Chemistry of the atmosphere
- Topic 10.** Using resources

Assessments

Each paper will be a written exam of 1 hour and 45 minutes. With 100 marks in each paper and each paper being worth 50% of the grade.

Physics

GCSE Physics

People who have studied **physics** are valued not just because they know something about how the universe works but also because they can solve problems by thinking in original ways. If you take this course you will have an experience that combines theoretical and practical physics. We hope that you will develop a knowledge and understanding of physics and the skills you need to work successfully in new and changing situations.

Our course will cover some of the most fundamental principals, such as Newton's laws of motion, that have been known for hundreds of years, as well as contemporary issues around energy resources and nuclear physics. Physics is a great choice of subject for people who want to pursue a career in engineering, optometry and architecture as well as jobs which require mathematical competence and problem solving skills.

Paper One

Topic 1. Energy

Topic 2. Electricity

Topic 3. Particle model of matter

Topic 4. Atomic structure

Paper Two

Topic 6. Forces

Topic 7. Waves

Topic 8. Magnetism and electromagnetism

Topic 9. Space physics

Assessments

Each paper will be a written exam of 1 hour and 45 minutes. With 100 marks in each paper and each paper being worth 50% of the grade.

Combined sciences

Combined Science combines all the aspects of the 3 sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) but in a more condensed format with 33% less content than if all three were taken separately.

Combined Science is the sensible choice if a student wishes to take an additional GCSE option that they otherwise wouldn't be able to take if they were completing separate sciences. Students will receive 2 lessons per week in each subject area (instead of 3 as would be the case in separate sciences).

Biology Paper One

Topic 1. Cell Biology

Topic 2. Organisation of plant and animal systems

Topic 3. Infection and response

Topic 4. Biogenetics

Biology Paper Two

Topic 5. Homeostasis and response

Topic 6. Inheritance, variation and evolution

Topic 7. Ecology

Chemistry Paper one

Topic 8. Atomic structure and the periodic table

Topic 9. Bonding, structure, and the properties of matter

Topic 10. Quantitative chemistry

Topic 11. Chemical changes

Topic 12. Energy changes

Chemistry Paper Two

Topic 13. The rate and extent of chemical change

Topic 14. Organic chemistry

Topic 15. Chemical analysis

Topic 16. Chemistry of the atmosphere

Topic 17. Using resources

Physics Paper One

Topic 18. Energy

Topic 19. Electricity

Topic 20. Particle model of matter

Topic 21. Atomic structure

Physics Paper Two

Topic 22. Forces

Topic 23. Waves

Topic 24. Magnetism and electromagnetism

Assessments

Each paper will be a written exam of 1 hour and 15 minutes. With 70 marks in each paper and each paper being worth 16.7% of their 'combined' grade.

The grades achievable are on the following scale:

1,1 2,1 2,2 3,2 3,3 4,3 4,4 5,4 5,5 6,5 6,6 7,6 7,7 8,7 8,8 9,8 9,9

French

The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to all four question papers. Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/ communities where French is spoken.

Theme 1: People and lifestyle

Theme 1 covers the following three topics:

- Topic 1: Identity and relationships with others
- Topic 2: Healthy living and lifestyle
- Topic 3: Education and work

Theme 2: Popular culture

Theme 2 covers the following three topics:

- Topic 1: Free-time activities
- Topic 2: Customs, festivals and celebrations
- Topic 3: Celebrity culture

Theme 3: Communication and the world around us

Theme 3 covers the following three topics:

- Topic 1: Travel and tourism, including places of interest
- Topic 2: Media and technology
- Topic 3: The environment and where people live

Exams

The final exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Listening – understand and respond to different types of spoken language.
- AO2: Speaking – communicate and interact effectively in speech.
- AO3: Reading – understand and respond to different types of written language.
- AO4: Writing – communicate in writing.

The papers are all worth 25% of the final grade. Please be aware, that we have Foundation and Higher tiers; students must complete all 4 papers from the same tier.

Punjabi

The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to all four question papers. Students are expected to understand and provide information and opinions about these themes relating to their own experiences and those of other people, including people in countries/ communities where Punjabi is spoken.

Theme 1: Identity and culture covers the following four topics with related sub-topics shown as bullet points:

Topic 1: Me, my family and friends • Relationships with family and friends • Marriage/partnership

Topic 2: Technology in everyday life • Social media • Mobile technology

Topic 3: Free-time activities • Music • Cinema and TV • Food and eating out • Sport

Topic 4: Customs and festivals in Punjabi-speaking countries/communities

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest covers the following four topics with related sub-topics shown as bullet points:

Topic 1: Home, town, neighbourhood and region

Topic 2: Social issues • Charity/voluntary work • Healthy/unhealthy living

Topic 3: Global issues • The environment • Poverty/homelessness

Topic 4: Travel and tourism

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment covers the following four topics:

Topic 1: My studies

Topic 2: Life at school/college

Topic 3: Education post-16

Topic 4: Jobs, career choices and ambitions

Exams

The final exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

- AO1: Listening – understand and respond to different types of spoken language.
- AO2: Speaking – communicate and interact effectively in speech.
- AO3: Reading – understand and respond to different types of written language.
- AO4: Writing – communicate in writing.

The papers are all worth 25% of the final grade. Please be aware, that we have Foundation and Higher tiers; students must complete all 4 papers from the same tier.

Physical Education (Core)

Physical Education is a compulsory requirement of the National Curriculum for all students. All students will be involved in Physical Education lessons throughout years 10 and 11.

Aims

The aim of the Physical Education curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is to give the students an opportunity to experience a range of skills and techniques appropriate for different sports. Worthwhile and enjoyable experiences will be provided, which encourage a positive attitude towards physical activity. As a result, students will hopefully continue with sport during their adult life.

Students will be given a clear understanding of the need for physical fitness and their awareness will be raised about various factors which influence health, fitness and performance. Pupils will also be given opportunities to develop and use their leadership skills through various sports activities.

Curriculum

A broad and balanced curriculum will enable students to participate in a range of sports and build upon their skills and knowledge from years 7, 8 and 9. Students will be challenged to maximise their potential and have the continued opportunity to represent the school in competitive sport. Extra-curricular provision will allow students opportunities to further participate in sport and physical activity. Pupils will be given more choice into which sports they study during the key stage.

Extra-curricular opportunities

Pupils will be given opportunities to participate in various after school activities in order to develop their skills, leadership and fitness. Activities range from netball, football, table tennis, basketball, badminton, cricket and rounders.

Religious Studies

Examination board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

Introduction

Religious Studies (RS) at Nishkam High School is a key subject in the holistic development of students, helping to prepare them for further study, work and meeting the challenges of life. In Years 7 and 8 students study key principles across all faiths.

All students are encouraged to study GCSE RS as part of their core subjects. This is a two-year course which begins in Year 9, providing students with the opportunity to maximise their full potential by developing a broad range of skills in knowledge, understanding and evaluation at an early stage.

The GCSE course itself provides an in-depth study of two religions within the context of wider British society. The course allows students to understand and articulate their own and others' beliefs, values and commitments and will allow students the opportunity to develop an appreciation of religious thought and its contribution to individuals, communities and societies.

Key aims, objectives and purpose of the course

- Develop students' knowledge and understanding of religions and non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism
- Develop students' knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs, teachings, and sources of wisdom and authority, including through their reading of key religious texts, other texts, and scriptures of the religions they are studying
- Develop students' ability to construct well-informed, balanced and structured written arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of the subject
- Provide opportunities for students to engage with questions of belief, value, meaning, purpose, truth, and their influence on human life
- Challenge students to reflect on and develop their own values, beliefs and attitudes in the light of what they have learnt and contribute to their preparation for adult life in a pluralistic society and global community

Course structure and assessment (available on next page)

Paper 1: Area of Study 1 – Religion and Ethics
Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes
50% of the qualification
118 marks

Content overview

Students must study all four content sections based upon the **Sikh Faith**

- Beliefs
- Marriage and the Family – of the chosen religion
- Living the Religious Life
- Matters of Life and Death

Assessment overview

- Students must answer all questions.
- The assessment consists of four questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and will contribute a maximum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.

Paper 2: Area of Study 3 – Religion, Philosophy and Social Justice

Written examination: 1 hour and 45 minutes

50% of the qualification

118 marks

Content overview

Students must study all four content sections based upon the **Christian Faith**

- Beliefs
- Religious Experience
- Living the Religious Life (Christianity)
- Equality

Assessment overview

- Students must answer all questions.
- The assessment consists of four questions.
- The paper may include short open, open response and extended writing questions.
- The paper will assess spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) and use of specialist terminology and will contribute a maximum of 5% of marks towards the overall weighting for this paper.

Art, Craft & Design

Examination Board: OCR

Qualification: GCSE Art, Craft and Design

Why study GCSE Art and Design?

Learning about the arts enriches the experience of studying while at school, as well as preparing you for life after school. Arts subjects encourage self-expression and creativity and can build confidence as well as a sense of individual identity. Studying arts subjects also helps to develop critical thinking and the ability to interpret the world around us. The leading people in any field are those who can think creatively and innovatively – these are skills that all employers value alongside qualifications. Making and participating in the arts aids the development of these skills and you learn to work both independently and collaboratively, as well as gaining experience in time management. Studying the arts teaches determination and resilience; qualities useful to any career. Art teaches us that it is okay to fail, to not get things totally right the first time and to have the courage to start again. The arts develop the broader dimensions of the human being; mind, body and soul. The arts can express the inexpressible and make sense of things that otherwise do not seem to. This can be very fulfilling and helps us function as human beings; which can only be good for society as a whole.

The creative industries have moved into first place to be the fastest growing economic sector in the UK1, responsible for 5.6% of jobs, and worth £76.9bn to the UK economy. • Arts in school are a crucial ingredient in the making of UK's creative life – one of the nation's USPs. But artists, musicians, writers and actors are not born skilled.

How is the course designed?

The course is designed to provide an opportunity for you to develop your interest in Art and Design, as well as opportunities in the wider art and technology fields. It is designed to develop and build your knowledge, skills and understanding along with your creativity and imagination. You will show this through your responses to a range of written and visual stimuli. The Nishkam Art Department offers drawing, painting, mixed-media, printmaking and 3-Dimensional work.

Part One: Portfolio (60%)

The Portfolio is made up of practical work, which explores the technical skills, knowledge and understanding of fine art and artists based on a set theme. This is delivered and completed in year 10.

Part Two: Externally Set Assessment (40%)

The Externally Set Assessment gives you an opportunity to provide an extended practical response(s). This will allow you to demonstrate your ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning which is of sufficient length to be coherent, relevant, substantiated and logically constructed. This is delivered and completed in year 11.

Core Skills

All learners engaging with GCSE specifications will develop the ability to demonstrate:

- develop their ideas through investigations informed by selecting and critically analysing sources
- apply an understanding of relevant practices in the creative and cultural industries

to their work

- refine their ideas as work progresses through experimenting with media, materials, techniques and processes
- record their ideas, observations, insights and independent judgements, visually and through written annotation, using appropriate specialist vocabulary, as work progresses
- use visual language critically as appropriate to their own creative intentions and chosen area(s) of study through effective and safe use of:
 - ◇ media
 - ◇ materials
 - ◇ techniques
 - ◇ processes
 - ◇ technologies
- use drawing skills for different needs and purposes, appropriate to the context in which it is used
- realise personal intentions through the sustained application of the creative process.

Assessment Objectives	
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.

This course will suit pupils who:

- Are highly motivated as the specification is coursework based.
- Have a passion for Fine Art, Craft and Design.
- Have a willingness to experiment and take risks.
- Want to acquire technical skills in a broad range of media and materials.
- Want to develop a knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures.
- Become critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds.

What could I do next with GCSE Art?

This specification lays an appropriate foundation for further study of Art and Design or related subjects at A –level. It provides an opportunity for students to gain experience of the work practices of individuals, organisations and creative industries. Having a good Art GCSE demonstrates the virtues of determination, diligence, awe, contemplation, enthusiasm, self-discipline, resilience, discernment and of course, creativity.

Business studies

Examination board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

About the subject: - Business is an exciting course, in which you will be academically challenged and encouraged to develop entrepreneurial skill. You will learn about how businesses operate within the business environment, and about their strategies for success. You will explore all elements of business, from finance and human resources, to marketing and production. You will apply your knowledge to different businesses throughout the course to develop an excellent understanding of businesses we engage with every day.

The content of the course is as follows.

<p>Theme 1 – Investigating a small business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Topic 1.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship ➤ Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity ➤ Topic 1.3 Putting a business idea into practice ➤ Topic 1.4 Making the business effective ➤ Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences on business 	<p>You will investigate all the decisions a person will make when setting up a business. You will look at marketing, finance, people in business and operations management.</p>
<p>Theme 2 – Building a business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Topic 2.1 Growing the business ➤ Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions ➤ Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions ➤ Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions ➤ Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions 	<p>In this unit, you will develop further the knowledge that you gained from the previous year (theme 1) and explore how businesses grow to achieve their aims and objectives.</p>

Course structure and Assessment:

There are two units to this course assessed through external exams at the end of Year 11

Theme 1 – Investigating a small business – 50%	Written exam – 50% of course
Theme 2 – Building a business – 50%	Written exam – 50% of course

A Level Progression links:

Students who study Business at GCSE level may decide to do the following:

- A-Level Business
- A-Level Economics
- Accounting and finance

Careers: There are a wide range of employment opportunities for students that have knowledge of business. You could set up a business of your own or work within one of the following areas:

- Accounting
- Consulting
- Event Planning / hospitality
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Leadership development Programs
- Marketing
- Real estate
- Retail
- Social Entrepreneurship / Corporate responsibility
- Sustainability

BTEC Enterprise Level 1-2

Examination board: Pearson

Qualification: BTEC Level 1-2 Tech Award in Enterprise

About the subject: - Enterprise is a practical and engaging course designed for students who are interested in how businesses are created and how entrepreneurs turn ideas into successful products or services. The course encourages creativity, problem-solving, teamwork and communication skills while developing a strong understanding of how businesses operate in the real world.

This course **combines practical coursework with an external assessment**, making it suitable for students who enjoy applying their knowledge through projects, presentations and written work rather than relying only on final examinations.

The content of the course is as follows.

<p>Component 1 – Exploring enterprise (Year 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Characteristics and skills of successful entrepreneurs ➤ Types of enterprises and business ownership ➤ The importance of innovation and creativity ➤ How businesses respond to customer needs ➤ The role of market research 	<p>Three-part assignment/Internal coursework: You will investigate different types of businesses and entrepreneurs and explore how enterprises succeed. You will also examine real businesses and consider how entrepreneurial skills contribute to business success.</p>
<p>Component 2 – Planning for and Pitching an Enterprise Activity (Year 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Generate and select a business idea ➤ Conduct market research ➤ Plan an enterprise activity ➤ Create a promotional plan ➤ Present and pitch their idea 	<p>Three-part assignment/Internal coursework: In this component, you will develop their own enterprise idea. You will also develop their communication skills by presenting their business ideas and explaining how their enterprise could succeed.</p>
<p>Component 3 – Promotion and Finance for Enterprise (Year 11)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Marketing and promotion methods ➤ Identifying target markets ➤ Pricing strategies ➤ Financial documents such as costs and revenue ➤ Calculating profit and understanding financial performance 	<p>External exam at the end of year-11: You will explore how businesses promote their products and manage their finances to achieve success.</p>

Course structure and Assessment:

The course is assessed through a mixture of coursework and external assessment.

Component 1 – Exploring enterprise – 30%	Three-part assignment, internally set and marked by school staff, with a selection moderated by the exam board – 30%
Component 2 – Planning for and Pitching an Enterprise Activity – 30%	Three-part assignment, internally set and marked by school staff, with a selection moderated by the exam board – 30%
Component 3 – Promotion and Finance for Enterprise – 40%	External written exam – 40% of the course

Coursework is completed during lessons and assessed by teachers, allowing students to demonstrate their understanding through practical tasks and projects

Progression links:

Students who study Enterprise at Key Stage 4 may progress to:

- BTEC Business Level 3
- A-Level Business
- A-Level Economics
- Apprenticeships in business-related fields
- Further vocational courses in enterprise, marketing or finance

Careers: Studying Enterprise helps students develop valuable skills such as teamwork, communication, problem solving and financial awareness. These skills are highly valued by employers and can lead to a wide range of career opportunities. Possible career pathways include:

- Entrepreneurship / starting a business
- Marketing and advertising
- Retail management
- Event planning and hospitality
- Business administration
- Finance and banking
- Sales and customer relations
- Social enterprise and sustainability initiatives

Computer Science

Why Study Computer Science?

Computer Science encourages learners to: Understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms, and data representation

- analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs to do so
- think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically
- understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems
- understand the impacts of digital technology to the individual and to wider society
- apply mathematical skills relevant to computer science.

Computers are widely used in all aspects of business, industry, government, education, leisure and the home. In this technological age, a study of computer science, and particularly how computers are used in the solution of a variety of problems, is essential to learners.

Computer science integrates well with subjects across the curriculum. It demands both logical discipline and imaginative creativity in the selection and design of algorithms and the writing, testing and debugging of programs; it relies on an understanding of the rules of language at a fundamental level; it encourages an awareness of the management and organisation of computer systems; it extends learners' horizons beyond the school or college environment in the appreciation of the effects of computer science on society and individuals.

The outline for GCSE Computer Science is as follows:

Component 1: Understanding Computer Science

Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes 50% of the qualification

This component investigates hardware, logical operations, communication, data representation and data types, operating systems, principles of programming, software engineering, program construction, security, authentication and data management and the impacts of digital technology on wider society as well as algorithms and programming constructs.

Component 2: Computational Thinking and Programming

On-screen examination: 2 hours 50 % of the qualification

This component investigates problem solving, algorithms, programming languages, data structures and data types, program design, implementation and testing. Learners are required to produce a programmed solution to a set task which will then be a basis for examination.

Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Information Technology

About the Subject

Information Technology (IT) is a practical and skills-based course designed to develop students' understanding of how IT is used in real-life workplaces. The qualification focuses on building confidence with digital tools, problem solving and creating IT-based solutions for different purposes.

Students will learn how IT systems are used by organisations, how digital products are planned and created, and how technology supports communication, data handling and decision making. The course is well suited to students who enjoy hands-on learning, project work and applying their knowledge to realistic scenarios.

Course Content

The content of the course is structured around the following units:

Unit 1 – Understanding ICT

This unit introduces students to how IT systems are used in businesses and everyday life. Topics include:

- Hardware and software
- Data and information
- Networks and connectivity
- Cyber security and data protection
- Legal, ethical and environmental issues

Students will explore the impact of IT on organisations and individuals and understand the importance of using technology safely and responsibly.

Unit 2 – Using IT to Create Digital Products

In this unit, students develop practical IT skills by creating digital solutions for specific purposes. This may include:

- Spreadsheets and data handling
- Databases
- Digital documents and presentations
- Multimedia and integrated digital products

Students will plan, design, create and review their work to meet the needs of a given brief.

Course Structure and Assessment

This is a vocational qualification assessed through a combination of coursework and examination.

- Unit 1 – Understanding ICT - External examination
- Unit 2 and Unit 3 - Internally assessed coursework

Assessment is based on practical tasks, controlled assessments and an external exam, allowing students to demonstrate their skills throughout the course rather than relying solely on written exams.

Geography

Examination Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Aims

GCSE geography allows students to travel the world from the classroom, exploring case studies from the United Kingdom, high income countries, newly emerging economies and low-income countries. Topics of study include climate change, poverty, natural hazards, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. Students are also encouraged to understand their role in society, by considering different viewpoints, values and attitudes.

Curriculum

The subject content is split into four units:

3.1 Living with the physical environment

This unit aims to develop students' understanding of physical processes such as earthquakes and extreme weather events in different environments. It also focuses on the need for sustainable management strategies and the effects of human interactions with the Earth and atmosphere.

3.2 Challenges in the human environment

This unit aims to develop students' understanding of factors that produce different types of human environments and how they change over time and place. It also focuses on the need for sustainable management strategies and the areas of challenge and opportunity for these environments.

3.3. Geographical applications

This unit requires students to draw together knowledge, understanding and skills. It is an opportunity for students to show breadth of understanding and an appreciation of the interrelationships between different aspects of geography.

3.4 Geographical skills

This unit requires students to develop and demonstrate a range of geographical skills, including cartographic, graphical, numerical and statistical skills.

Students are required to study a variety of case studies and examples. Case studies are broader in context and require greater breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding. Examples are more focused on a specific event or situation, are smaller in scale and do not cover the same degree of content.

Why study geography?

- Geography education at Nishkam High School provides students with the skills and experiences necessary to become global citizens.

- The skills you gain in GCSE geography will be transferable to many other aspects of your studies and are valued by both employers and universities.

How will I be assessed?

GCSE geography students will sit the following written examinations at the end of Year 11:

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment - 1 hour 30 minutes (35% of GCSE)

- 3.1.1 The challenge of natural hazards
- 3.1.2 The living world
- 3.1.3 Physical landscapes in the UK
- 3.4 Geographical skills

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment - 1 hour 30 minutes (35% of GCSE)

- 3.2.1 Urban issues and challenges
- 3.2.2 The changing economic world
- 3.2.3 The challenge of resource management
- 3.4 Geographical skills

Paper 3: Geographical applications - 1 hour 30 minutes (30% of GCSE)

- 3.3.1 Issue evaluation
- 3.3.2 Fieldwork
- 3.4 Geographical skills

GCSE exams in geography include a range of questions that require students to draw together their knowledge, understanding and skills, in addition to providing extended responses. As part of the preparation for Paper 3 (section 3.3.2) all students will have the opportunity to complete two pieces of fieldwork, one in a physical setting and one in an urban setting.

Health and Social Care

Examination Board: OCR

Qualification: Cambridge National Award in Health and Social Care

Option path: Only available on the Orange pathway

Why study GCSE Health and Social Care?

- This course actively encourages students to understand various aspects of the health and social care sector by taking an engaging, practical and inspiring approach to learning and assessment.
- It examines issues which affect the nature and quality of human life including an appreciation of diversity and cultural issues.
- Cambridge Nationals in Health and Social Care provide students with essential knowledge and transferable skills to improve their learning in other subjects, with the aim of enhancing their employability when they leave education, thus contributing to both their personal development and future economic well-being.

In studying this course, students will explore the following:

- Principles of care in health and social care
- Communicating and working with individuals in health, social care and early years settings.
- Researching the different work and contributions of various professionals in the health, social care and early year's sectors.
- Developing communication skills, interpersonal skills, and self-confidence.
- Becoming more self-reliant and better organised as the course progresses.
- Developing skills to be increasingly more mature and independent at work.

Course Outline

2 Mandatory Units

- RO33: Supporting individuals through life events
- RO32: Principles of care in health and social care (exam)

2 Optional Units – Pupils pick one

Progression beyond GCSE Health and Social Care

The Cambridge Nationals in Health and Social Care will equip students with a sound, specialist knowledge along with skills for everyday use. The hands-on approach reflects the way in which students use new technology and will underpin a highly valid method of assessing their skills for the many progression routes available. This course prepares pupils for further study at A-Level, Cambridge Technical Awards or for courses that are more vocational in nature.

History

Examination Board: AQA

Qualification: GCSE

Aims

The study of history will enable you to investigate different aspects of the past, engage with key issues such as conflict, and understand what drives change. In doing this you will develop a greater awareness of how society has become what it is today. As part of your study, you will evaluate the causes and consequences of major events and assess the significance of key individuals in history. You will be required to analyse a vast number of sources to understand how the past has been represented by others and require you to develop skills such as critical evaluation.

Curriculum

GCSE History is divided into four key topic areas:

Topic 1: America 1920-1973

This period study focuses on the development of the USA during a turbulent half century of change. It was a period of opportunity and inequality – when some Americans lived the 'American Dream' whilst others grappled with the nightmare of poverty, discrimination and prejudice. Students will study the political, economic, social and cultural aspects of these two developments and the role ideas played in bringing about change. They will also look at the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change and the impact the developments had on them.

Topic 2: Conflict and tension 1918-1939

This wider world depth study enables students to understand the complex and diverse interests of different individuals and states including the Great Powers. It looks at concepts such as national self-determination, ideas of internationalism and the challenges of revising the peace settlement. It focuses on the causes of the Second World War and seeks to show how and why conflict occurred and why it proved difficult to resolve the issues which caused it. This study also considers the role of key individuals and groups in shaping change, as well as how they were affected by and influenced international relations.

Topic 3: Migration, Empire and the people: c790 to the present day

This thematic study will enable students to gain an understanding of how the development of empires, the migration of people throughout the empires and the impact it had on people has impacted British society today. Students will show an understanding of different factors and key individuals and policies that contributed to the formation and growth of empires and migration, and their impact upon society.

Topic 4: Elizabethan England 1568 – 1603

This depth study explores the last 35 years of Elizabeth's reign. The study will focus on major events considered from economic, religious, political, social and cultural standpoints, and arising contemporary and historical controversies. As part of this topic students will study a specific historical site set by the exam board.

Why study history?

- History education at Nishkam High School provides students with the skills and experiences necessary to become global citizens.

- History has been identified by the Russel Group as a 'facilitating subject' in a guide to making decisions about post-16 education.
- The skills you gain in GCSE history will be transferable to many other aspects of your studies and are valued by both employers and universities.

How will I be assessed?

We will be following the AQA syllabus for GCSE history. It is a linear course which means you will take two exams at end of the course. Each exam is worth 50% of your final grade and will last for 2 hours.

- Paper 1 - Modern world (Topics 1 & 2) - Ten compulsory questions will be asked.
- Paper 2 - Shaping the Nation (Topics 3 & 4) - 8 compulsory questions will be asked.

On both papers there will be a mixture of question styles which will assess your understanding of the historical content you have studied and your ability to analyse and evaluate historical sources.

Music GCSE Eduqas (WJEC)

What does it involve?

GCSE Music is assessed through a combination of an exam and coursework. The exam content is taught and regularly revisited over the two-year course. The coursework is split into two areas: performance and composition. Performance coursework is developed across both years and requires regular independent practice, with final performances assessed by the teacher. The composition coursework is mainly completed during lesson time and consists of two pieces: one composition based on a student's own brief, started in Year 10, and one composition based on a set brief, completed in Year 11. Coursework is marked by the class teacher, with a sample of work sent to the exam board for moderation.

Why study it?

Music is an excellent choice for students who enjoy listening to, performing, or creating music, whether they already play an instrument or simply have a strong interest in the subject. GCSE Music is a practical and creative course that allows students to perform and compose in a wide range of styles while developing confidence, independence, and self-discipline. Students also gain valuable transferable skills such as problem solving, teamwork, planning, and time management, all through engaging, hands-on lessons that reward creativity and commitment.

How will it be useful to me in the future?

Music qualifications are highly valued by colleges, sixth forms, and employers as they demonstrate creativity, dedication, and the ability to work methodically and meet deadlines. GCSE Music can lead to further study in areas such as performance, composition, music technology, and the wider creative industries, while also supporting many other career pathways. Even for students who do not plan to pursue music professionally, the skills developed through studying Music are useful for life and show a well-rounded, creative approach to learning.

Assessment

Component	%	Exam or Coursework?	Requirements
Performing	30%	Coursework	A minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance of at least one minute duration. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice.
Composing	30%	Coursework	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 the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief .

Appraising	40%	Exam	<p>This component is assessed via a listening examination. Eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study.</p> <p>Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices</p> <p>Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble</p> <p>Area of study 3: Film Music</p> <p>Area of study 4: Popular Music</p> <p>Two of the eight questions are based on extracts set by WJEC.</p>
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What jobs could Music GCSE lead to?

GCSE Music can lead to a wide range of careers within the music and creative industries. As well as becoming a performer or teacher, music and music technology pathways can lead to roles such as music producer, composer, songwriter, sound or recording engineer, musical director, or broadcaster. There are also many careers behind the scenes, including artist and repertoire (A&R), artist relations, booking agent, festival or events manager, marketing or distribution manager, music publisher, label manager, journalist, media analyst, licensing or copyright representative, instrument or backline technician, and music accountant or lawyer.

OCR Sports Studies

Examination board: OCR

Qualification: Cambridge National Award in Sports Studies L1/2 Certificate

Why study Sports Studies?

Students who are good at Physical Education practically and have a desire to learn more about the theory of sport will find OCR Sports Studies exciting, informative and stimulating.

OCR Sports Studies is a challenging but a rewarding course which involves theoretical principles and practical activities. The course offers students an opportunity to foster and enjoyment of physical activity and to develop an understanding of effective and safe practical performance. The course is divided into four units that includes an exam.

Assessment – students will study **three** of the following units:

R185 Performance and Leadership in sports activities

In this unit you will have the opportunity to develop your skills both as a performer in two different sporting activities, and as a leader, developing a range of transferable skills. You will work both independently and as part of a team. Topics include key components of performance, applying practice methods to support improvement, organising and planning a sports activity session, and leading a sports activity session. This is assessed by a set assignment.

R184 Contemporary Issues in Sport

This unit involves pupils learning about contemporary sports issues such as barriers to participation, values in sport the Olympic games and performance enhancing drugs as well as other topics. This unit will be assessed in the form of an exam.

R186 Sports and the media

This unit will explore the different sides of a range of media sources and apply real life examples to show the nature of the relationship between media and sport. This is assessed by a set assignment.

R187 Increasing awareness of Outdoor Pursuits

This is both a theory and practical unit where pupils will research the different types of outdoor pursuits. Pupils will also have the opportunity to participate in one of these outdoor pursuits in year 11. This unit is assessed through coursework-based tasks. This is assessed by a set assignment.

General

Due to the nature of the course, students should also be committed to developing their practical and theory areas in their own time. Pupils are encouraged to participate in a range of sports after school to assist them with the practical element of the course

GCSE Citizenship



Examination Board: Edexcel

Qualification: GCSE

What will I learn on this course?

Citizenship is at the heart of everyday debates about the kind of society we are striving to build and our role in the process. During this GCSE course, you will learn about your rights, roles and responsibilities as a young citizen in Britain and in the world. You will develop your knowledge and understanding of different communities and how society works. Citizenship education will equip you with the skills you need to participate as a responsible and active citizen of our democracy and of wider society. Citizenship thus ensures your personal, intellectual, spiritual and social development as a young citizen in Britain.

Why is this course important for everyday life?

This course is crucial as it develops your knowledge and understanding of the structures that govern your everyday life. It will make you aware of your moral rights and responsibilities in places such as school, the workplace and the local community. You will also become knowledgeable about politics, law and the media and will be given the opportunity to explore current issues of debate.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: 1 hour 45 mins written exam (80 marks; 50% of the GCSE)

Section A (Living together in the UK),

Section B (Democracy at work in the UK),

Section C (Law and Justice),

Section D (an extended response question related to one of the topics in section A - C).

Paper 2: 1 hour 45 mins written exam (80 marks; 50% of the GCSE)

Section A (Taking citizenship action),

Section B (Power and influence),

Section C (Power and influence and a question linked to section A - B).

What will I need to do to succeed in this course?

To achieve the best possible grade in GCSE Citizenship, you will need to:

- Participate actively during discussion and debate
- Keep up with current affairs and apply this knowledge and understanding to exams
- Prepare fully for tests and exams
- Maintain a responsible and proactive approach.

What career opportunities are there from this course?

GCSE Citizenship provides the backbone and skills necessary for any career in life. It will allow you to choose A Levels and a degree that can lead to careers in law, journalism and teaching. A qualification in Citizenship also speaks volumes about your character as a responsible, aware and active citizen in society.

Hospitality & Catering

Examination board: WJEC

Qualification: Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering

What will I learn on this course?

Students who enjoy cooking, working with food, and learning practical life skills will find Hospitality and Catering exciting, creative and rewarding. This course provides students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of food, nutrition, and the hospitality industry. Students will learn essential practical cooking skills alongside important theoretical knowledge about food safety, nutrition, and how hospitality businesses operate. Hospitality and Catering is a practical and engaging course that prepares students for real-life situations and future careers in the food and hospitality industries. The course is divided into two units, including both an exam and practical coursework.

How will I be assessed?

Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry

Assessment type: Written exam

Weighting: 40% of the qualification

Exam details:

- Duration: **1 hour 20 minutes**
- Format: Short and extended answer questions based on real-life hospitality scenarios
- Assesses knowledge of:
 - Hospitality businesses
 - Health and safety
 - Food safety and hygiene
 - Job roles in the industry
 - Customer needs and nutrition

This is an **externally assessed exam**, set and marked by WJEC.

Unit 2: Hospitality and Catering in Action

Assessment type: Coursework (Controlled assessment)

Weighting: 60% of the qualification

Students complete practical and written tasks, including:

- Planning menus for specific groups
- Preparing and cooking dishes
- Demonstrating food safety and hygiene
- Presenting dishes professionally

This unit is **internally assessed by teachers and moderated by WJEC**.

Students must apply knowledge from Unit 1 to complete Unit 2 successfully

What is needed for this course?

Due to the practical nature of the course, students should be enthusiastic about cooking and willing to develop their skills both in lessons and at home. Students will be expected to demonstrate organisation, creativity and independence. Hospitality and Catering also develops valuable life skills, including teamwork, time management, organisation and confidence.

Careers and Next Steps:

This course provides excellent preparation for further study and careers in areas such as:

- Chef
- Restaurant manager
- Hotel management
- Catering
- Event management
- Food production