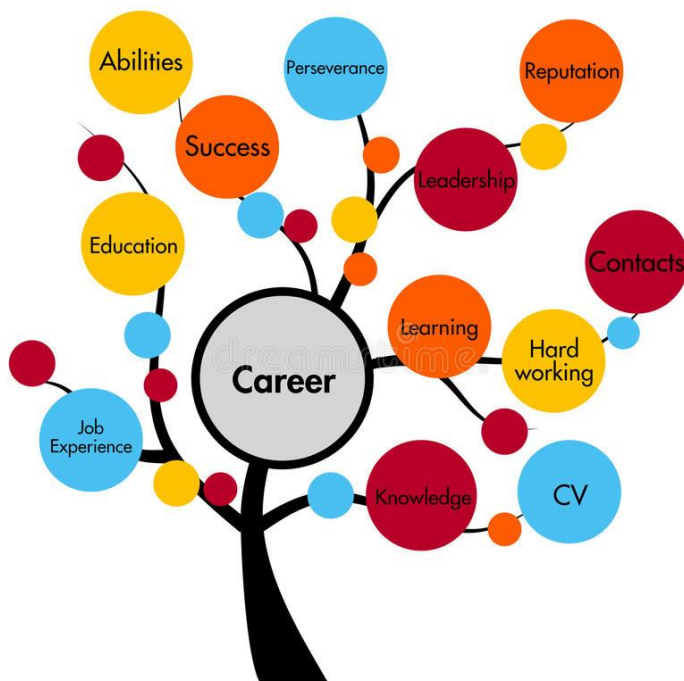




Key Stage 4 Options & Curriculum 2026-28

Laurelhill Community College





Education Authority, South Eastern Region

Laurelhill Community College

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Principal Mrs Nicola Stevenson

Dear Parent/Carer

Firstly, I would like to thank you in advance for engaging in the Key Stage 4 Options Process for your child. Your support and guidance throughout the process should certainly help your child in choosing subjects that are best suited to their interests and skill set, and those that will prepare them for life after Key Stage 4.

Core and Statutory Subjects

There are three core subjects all students must study: Maths, English and Science. Where there is more than one course available within these subject areas, the College has placed students on the most appropriate course based on baseline testing and results in Key Stage 3. There are also statutory subjects that all students must study: Careers, Learning for Life and Work (LLW), Physical Education and Religious Education. All of these subjects will be covered with all Key Stage 4 students and the format of this will depend on the pathway they are placed in.

Optional Subjects

All the optional subjects that we offer are Level 2 courses (GCSEs or GCSE-equivalents), these include: Applied GCSEs, General GCSEs, Occupational Studies, BTEC Level 2, OCN Level 2 and Level 2 Certificates.

Students should choose subjects that help them prepare for the next stage of their education or employment and which enable them to gain their best results at Key Stage 4.

Our aim is that all students will achieve at least 5 GCSEs or GCSE equivalents at grade C or higher, including English and Maths. The College has much experience and information available, including prior assessment and data to assist in making the right decisions and will advise students and parents/carers on how to decide on appropriate courses. This information and experience will be shared in a range of ways including today's Options and Curriculum Event, through communication with home and with students in school via assemblies and LLW lessons.

In this booklet you will find details on each optional subject which the College offers at Key Stage 4 as well as further information regarding our different pathways, and the core and statutory curriculum we provide.

I hope you find this information helpful when supporting your child with these important decisions.

Yours sincerely

K. McErlean

Senior Teacher for Curriculum



LEARNING AND ACHIEVING TOGETHER

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Optional Subject Information

<i>Area of Learning</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Qualification Type</i>	<i>Page</i>
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Environment & Society	Business and Communication Systems	GCSE	23
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Pathways at Key Stage 4

Students have been placed in one of five pathways to allow them to follow a Key Stage 4 curriculum that is best tailored to their abilities and strengths in terms of the courses they will be studying, the assessment style that is used, the pace, challenge and support that will be provided in teaching groups and the structure of their timetable. The placement of students in each pathway was carried out following analysis of baseline data and Year 10 winter tracking outcomes, as well as consultation with Heads of Department, Heads of Year, Senior Leadership Team and SEN Co-ordinator.

The options form that your child has been given indicates the pathway they will be following. Within all five pathways, students study English, Maths and Science as well as the statutory subjects of Careers, LLW, PE, RE. A further breakdown of each pathway and their qualifications is as follows:

Academic Pathway	Applied Academic Pathway	Applied Vocational Pathway	Vocational Pathway	Applied Skills Pathway
<p>Includes academic and general GCSEs.</p> <p>Suited to students whose preferred learning style suits assessment through mainly examination with some elements of coursework.</p> <p>Facilitates progression into Sixth Form and University.</p> <p><u>Qualifications (9)</u></p> <p>GCSE English</p> <p>GCSE English Literature or GCSE Drama</p> <p>GCSE Maths</p> <p>GCSE Statistics</p> <p>GCSE Double Award Science</p> <p>GCSE Optional subjects x3</p>	<p>Includes both academic and applied vocational qualifications – GCSE and GCSE-equivalents.</p> <p>Suited to students whose preferred learning style suits assessment through examination and coursework.</p> <p>Facilitates progression into Sixth Form and University as well as Further Education and Employment.</p> <p><u>Qualifications (8)</u></p> <p>GCSE English</p> <p>GCSE Maths</p> <p>GCSE SA Science</p> <p>OCN Level 2 Religious Studies or OCN Personal Success and Wellbeing</p> <p>GCSE or GCSE-equivalent Optional subjects x4</p>	<p>Includes mainly applied vocational qualifications with a small number of general GCSEs.</p> <p>Suited to students who perform better through the applied curriculum and project-based work.</p> <p>Facilitates progression on to Further Education and Employment.</p> <p><u>Qualifications (7)</u></p> <p>GCSE English</p> <p>GCSE Maths</p> <p>OCN Level 2 Science</p> <p>OCN Level 2 Personal Success and Wellbeing</p> <p>GCSE-equivalent or (some) GCSE Optional subjects x3</p>	<p>Includes applied vocational qualifications with English and Maths GCSEs.</p> <p>An alternative pathway suited to students who perform better through project-based work and additional time to focus on core subjects.</p> <p>Students will study off-site at SERC 1 day per week.</p> <p>Facilitates progression on to Further Education and Employment.</p> <p><u>Qualifications (7)</u></p> <p>GCSE English</p> <p>GCSE Maths</p> <p>OCN Level 2 Science</p> <p>Level 2 King's Trust (Double Award)</p> <p>Optional subjects x2 delivered at SERC</p>	<p>Includes applied vocational qualifications, English and Maths GCSEs and an enrichment programme to prepare for the world of work.</p> <p>A bespoke pathway suited to students who perform better through project-based or practical work with an aim to enter employment after year 12.</p> <p>Students will study off-site at SERC 1 day per week in year 11 and 12. In year 12, students will also complete 1 day of Work Experience per week.</p> <p>Facilitates progression on to Apprenticeships and Employment.</p> <p><u>Qualifications (7)</u></p> <p>GCSE English</p> <p>GCSE Maths</p> <p>OCN Level 2 Science</p> <p>Level 2 King's Trust (Double Award)</p> <p>Optional subjects x2 delivered at SERC</p>

Core Subjects

All students will study the below **core subjects**. Please read the following information carefully relating to the core subjects.

English

All students will complete a GCSE in English. Language. Additionally, students in **Academic Pathway** will study either GCSE English Literature or GCSE Drama. These students will be identified by their English Teachers on the basis of aptitude and performance within classwork/homework and Year 10 Examinations, as well as baseline data. There is further information on these courses on pages 9-10.

Mathematics

All students will complete a GCSE in Mathematics. The GCSE Mathematics course is modular and the modules that students are entered for will vary based on their mathematical ability. Our Maths department will decide on each student's modules on the basis of aptitude and performance within classwork/homework and Year 10 Examinations, as well as baseline data. In addition to GCSE Mathematics, students in **Academic Pathway** will study GCSE Statistics. Students will be placed in classes according to their results in the Year 10 Examinations. There is further information on these courses on page 10.

Science

All students will follow a Level 2 course in Science at Key Stage 4. Students will be placed in classes according to their results in Year 10 Examinations. Students in **Academic Pathway** will study GCSE Double Award Science, which is awarded two GCSE grades. Students in **Applied Academic Pathway** will study GCSE Single Award Science which is awarded one GCSE grade. Students in **Applied Vocational Pathway**, **Vocational Pathway** and **Applied Skills Pathway** will study OCN Level 2 Certificate in Applied Science which is awarded with a Pass Level 2 Certificate, the equivalent of one GCSE C grade.

Additionally, some students in **Applied Academic Pathway** will be given the opportunity to study GCSE Double Award Science as one of their optional subjects. Students in **Applied Academic Pathway** and **Applied Vocational Pathway** will be given the opportunity to study BTEC Principles of Applied Science as one of their optional subjects. If students choose Double Award Science or Principles of Applied Science as one of their optional subjects, this is studied as an additional qualification alongside their core Science and their suitability for either of the two courses will be assessed on their performance within the Year 10 examinations. Please note that Single Award Science alone is not an adequate level of Science at GCSE for a pathway into A-level Chemistry, Biology or Physics. More information about each Core Science course is on pages 6-7.

English Language (GCSE) – All Pathways

The study of English contributes to an understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues which impact upon our everyday lives. Pupils are provided with opportunities to explore the world of the imagination and become analytical and critical thinkers.

Course Content

- Writing for Purpose and Audience and Reading to Access Non-Fiction and Media Texts (external examination, 1hr 45mins, 30% of final mark)
- Speaking and Listening (controlled assessment, 20% of final mark)
- Studying Spoken and Written Language (controlled assessment, 20% of final mark)
- Personal or Creative Writing and Reading Literary and Non-Fiction Texts (external examination 1hr 45mins, 30% of final mark)

Related Career Path

English impacts positively upon personal conduct and personal responsibility. Careers which stress the value of good communication and interpersonal skills have English at their core. A majority of careers rely heavily on excellent communication skills. A good grade at GCSE Level provides the 'stepping-stone' onto any future career.

Further Education

After completing this course pupils may study A-Level English Literature as offered within our Sixth Form. The skills developed here will contribute to success in a wide range of traditional and applied A-Level courses within Laurelhill or beyond.

Mathematics (GCSE) – All Pathways

All students entering Key Stage 4 will follow the CCEA GCSE Mathematics specification.

Course Content

The specification has two tiers Foundation and Higher:

Foundation

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Option 1 | M1 - 1hr 45min written exam with calculator (45%)
M5 - 2 papers one with calculator, each 1hr (55%) |
| Option 2 | M2 - 1hr 45min written exam with calculator (45%)
M6 - 2 papers one with calculator, each 1hr (55%) |

Higher

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Option 3 | M3 - 2hr written exam with calculator (45%)
M7 - 2 papers one with calculator, each 1hr 15mins (55%) |
| Option 4 | M4 - 2hr written exam with calculator (45%)
M8 - 2 papers one with calculator, each 1hr 15mins (55%) |

Pupils are entered at a tier and module most suited to their abilities and expectations. The Department will mix modules to ensure the chance of obtaining the best grade possible, so combinations such as M3/M6 and M4/M7 are entered.

Related Career Path

Many courses and/or careers consider GCSE Mathematics as an essential qualification. This course not only develops knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts but also develops problem-solving strategies and reasoning skills which are highly sought after skills in today's workplace.

Further Education

Mathematics at grade C is a prerequisite for many apprenticeships, college and university courses. This course also acts as a foundation for further study of Mathematics and other subjects.

Science - Double Award (GCSE) – Academic Pathway

This two-year course provides a Double Award Science qualification equivalent to two GCSEs. The programme of study has been designed to give a suitable grounding for Advanced Level work in each of the three Sciences – Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students will also develop their problem-solving and observational skills, as well as their communication, mathematical and technological skills. This course is best suited to pupils who do well in exams.

Course Content

Year 11

- Biology Unit 1 – 11% - 1 hour exam
- Chemistry Unit 1 – 11% - 1 hour exam
- Physics Unit 1 – 11% - 1 hour exam

Year 12

- Biology Unit 2 – 14% - 1 hour 15 minutes exam
- Chemistry Unit 2 – 14% - 1 hour 15 minutes exam
- Physics Unit 2 – 14% - 1 hour 15 minutes exam
- Practical Skills - 25% - 3 1 hour exams in class and 3 x 30 minute exams at the end of each Unit 2 exam

Pupils are entered at a tier most suited to their abilities and expectations.

GCSE grades A*-G are awarded upon completion of the course.

Related Career Path

This course gives pupils sufficient in-depth knowledge of Physics, Chemistry and Biology to be able to satisfy career choices needing Science as a major subject or to undertake a Science 'A' Level or BTEC in a Science related subject. CCEA GCSE Sciences are the only GCSE qualifications that directly examine practical work, and the qualification proves practical competency to future employers.

Further Education

After completing this course, pupils may wish to undertake BTEC Applied Science or Applied A-level Health and Social Care. Alternatively, pupils may wish to proceed to other schools or Regional Colleges or Further Education Institutions to study A-level Physics, Chemistry or Biology. Double Award Science indicates to employers and Universities that the pupil has the ability and aptitude for science at a high level, even if they do not wish to study Sciences further.

Science - Single Award (GCSE) – Applied Academic Pathway

Single Award Science covers key ideas in Biology, Chemistry and Physics and has a strong emphasis on practical work. Topics include cells, food and diet, atomic structure and the Periodic Table and electrical circuits and waves. Students will also develop their problem-solving and observational skills, as well as their communication, mathematical and technological skills. The course is best suited to pupils who do well in exams but do not wish to study science further.

Course Content

- Unit 1 Biology - 25% - 1 hour exam
- Unit 2 Chemistry – 25% - 1 hour exam
- Unit 3 Physics – 25% - 1 hour exam
- Unit 4 Practical Skills – 25% - 2-hour exam in class and 1.5 hour exam at the end of Y12

25% of the course will be completed in Y11 and the remaining 75% will be completed in Y12.

Pupils are entered at a tier most suited to their abilities and expectations.

GCSE grades A*-G are awarded upon completion of the course.

Related Career Path

The course is designed to give pupils a balanced understanding of Science and how Science works. CCEA GCSE Sciences are the only GCSE Science qualifications that directly examine practical work, and the qualification proves practical competency to future employers. As a qualification, along with English and Mathematics, it satisfies the requirements for a technical career in the world of work.

Further Education

If pupils wish to study a Science subject after GCSE (e.g. A Levels), they should also take Science as an optional subject such as GCSE Double Award Science or BTEC Applied Science.

OCN Applied Science – Applied Vocational Pathway, Vocational Pathway and Applied Skills Pathway

The OCN NI Level 2 Certificate in Applied Science provides learners with the opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in key ideas in Biology, Chemistry and Physics by building on the learning gained at Key Stage 3. The course is best suited to pupils interested in applied science who do well with continuous assessment rather than exams.

Course Content

Pupils compile a portfolio of evidence which is a collection of documents containing work such as practical write-ups, diagrams and written explanations. This is set within school, marked by your teachers and moderated externally.

Pupils with excellent attendance may be able to complete an Extended Certificate by completing additional units of evidence.

Grading for this qualification is pass or fail. A pass is equivalent to a GCSE grade B. A pass in the Extended Certificate is equivalent to two GCSE grade Bs.

Related Career Path

This course provides pupils with the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills that would support employment within the Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) sector.

Further Education

This qualification will enable learners to progress to further qualifications in applied science at higher level at Further Education college.

Additional Core Subjects for Academic Pathway

All students in this pathway will study GCSE Statistics alongside GCSE Mathematics and either GCSE English Literature or GCSE Drama alongside GCSE English Language. Information on all three of these subjects is found below.

English Literature (GCSE)

The study of English Literature complements English Language by providing pupils with opportunities to engage with fictional representations in different forms and from various cultures. Close reading and analytical skills are developed within this GCSE. There will also be the opportunity to examine the socio-historical context of the author.

Course Content

- The Study of Prose (external examination, 1hr 45mins, 30% of final mark)
- The Study of Drama and Poetry (external examination, 2hrs, 50% of final mark)
- The Study of Shakespeare (external examination, 20% of final mark)

Related Career Path

The course provides opportunities to explore and develop literary interests and to promote:

- An awareness of the socio-economic, historical and cultural contexts that influence Literature;
- All career paths which rely upon good communication and analytical skills; and
- An ability to write analytical essays and use basic referencing skills.

Further Education

After the completion of this course pupils may study English Literature at 'A' Level in our Sixth Form.

Drama (GCSE)

This course involves a lot of practical performance work both devised and working with a variety of scripts. It is challenging and enjoyable as students will work with others towards two assessed performances. These performance pieces will guarantee a real sense of achievement and a lot of fun along the way.

Course Content

Controlled Assessment

Component 1: Devised Performance

In response to a stimulus, students either: present a group performance or give a design presentation. This is worth 15%. All students must submit a student log. This is worth 10%.

Component 2: Scripted Performance

Using a playscript, students either: present a group performance or give a design presentation. This is worth 35%.

Component 3: Knowledge and Understanding of Drama

External written examination – 1 hour and 30 minutes. Students answer three questions using our set text "Blood Brothers." This is worth 40%.

Related Career Path

There are many career options that relate to Drama such as teaching, acting, stage management and directing. Not all students will want to pursue a career in the theatre however this course is invaluable as it improves and develops essential life skills. Students will gain confidence and will learn to work as a team member, respecting and listening to others. This course helps students develop as active citizens for their future in employment and society, as well as for the possible further study of Drama.

Further Education

GCSE Drama facilitates the study of Drama and related subjects at a more advanced level, for example GCE AS and A2 English Literature and BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Performing Arts.

Statistics (GCSE)

Selected pupils are entered for GCSE Statistics alongside their GCSE Mathematics course. The basis for the selection is based on Year 10 Summer Examination results and CAT4/PTM Data. The CCEA GCSE Statistics specification encourages students to develop understanding of the basic concepts of statistical problem-solving. This qualification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through studying GCSE Mathematics.

Course Content

The specification has two tiers Foundation and Higher:

Foundation

Unit 1 1hr 30min written exam (50%)

Unit 2 1hr 30min written exam (50%) some questions based on a pre-release case study.

Higher

Unit 1 2hr written exam (50%)

Unit 2 2hr written exam (50%) some questions based on a pre-release case study.

Pupils are entered at a tier and module most suited to their abilities and expectations. As this course is only studied in Year 12, it is likely most students will enter the Foundation tier due to the amount of teaching time available. The Statistics course is 100% examination taken in May/June of Year 12.

Related Career Path

Many courses and/or careers consider GCSE Mathematics as an essential qualification. This Statistics course will enhance the pupil's statistical analysis skills and provide them with the opportunity to apply statistics to real life case study scenarios based on Northern Ireland data. It will develop their processing and interpretation skills which are highly sought after skills in today's workplace.

Further Education

Statistics will offer progression for further study of Mathematics and other subjects/courses at Post-16 level.

Statutory Subjects

The statutory subjects are Careers, Learning for Life and Work (LLW), Physical Education and Religious Education. These subjects are compulsory for all students. Therefore, students engage in weekly lessons in these areas, but they are not assessed subjects and do not result in a qualification.

Physical Education (College Course) – All Pathways

At Laurelhill Community College, Physical Education is a statutory, non examination subject delivered to all pupils. The Department aims to offer a positive attitude to physical activity which will give each pupil a lasting interest in sports and leisure pastimes.

The PE Department provides the pupils with a wide range of physical activities.

Years 11 and 12 pupils are encouraged to become more responsible for their own choice of activities with emphasis placed on developing personal qualities. As a result pupils can participate in activities such as:

Volleyball	Athletics
Badminton	Hockey
Football	Basketball
Netball	Dance
Rugby	Handball
Table Tennis	

An important element in Key Stage 4 is **Health Related PE**. Pupils are given the opportunity to use the extensive leisure facilities within the College and are encouraged to participate in the full range of sporting activities which the City of Lisburn's recreational centres offer.

Our main aim is to cater for all levels of ability with an emphasis on quality learning, participation and enjoyment.

Careers – All Pathways

All students will receive careers education throughout years 11 and 12.

Careers Education in Years 11 and 12 provides all pupils with a structured programme to support informed decision-making about post 16 pathways and future careers. The programme will focus on developing self-awareness, employability skills and labour market information and opportunities within Northern Ireland.

Pupils will explore their strengths, interests, qualities and skills, linking these to realistic career pathways. The programme covers post 16 options including, A-levels, vocational qualifications, apprenticeships, traineeships, further and higher education and employment. Pupils will develop practical employability skills such as CV writing, interview techniques, job searching and application processes.

Pupils will also be interviewed by their Careers Guidance Teacher to discuss appropriate career paths and options at post16. Pupils will also have the opportunity to be interviewed by a Careers Advisor from the Careers Service NI. In addition, the programme will aim to offer various opportunities for pupils to hear from further education institutions and employers through a range of talks, workshops and experiences of work in the **Academic Pathway** and **Applied Academic Pathway**, students are taught the Careers Programme are part of a carousel along with LLW and RE. Therefore, they will study the programme for one third of the year in years 11 and 12.

In the **Applied Vocational Pathway**, **Vocational Pathway** and **Applied Skills Pathway**, students study the Careers programme for 1 period per week in years 11 and 12.

Learning for Life and Work (LLW)

Students will either follow the non-assessed College-designed LLW course, the portfolio-assessed qualification of King's Trust, or the portfolio-assessed qualification of Personal Success and Wellbeing. Students will gain a Level 2 Pass qualification for the latter two courses, upon successful completion. The LLW course that your child follows will be determined by the pathway that he/she is in. More information about each course is below.

Learning for Life and Work – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

Students in these two pathways will cover a College-designed Learning for Life and Work (LLW) course as part of a carousel with Careers and RE. This course address topics which prepare young people for their current stage in life as well as the future, teaching knowledge and skills that are applicable both in the world of work as well as in their personal lives.

Personal Success and Wellbeing (Level 2 Certificate) – Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

In the **Applied Academic Pathway**, students have the option of studying either the Personal Success and Wellbeing Level 2 Certificate or the Religious Studies Level 2 Certificate (information on page 13) as an additional qualification. This is along with their LLW/RS/Careers carousel.

All students in the **Applied Vocational Pathway** will complete the Personal Success and Wellbeing Level 2 Certificate.

Through Personal Success and Wellbeing, learners can develop skills while exploring a wide range of areas relevant to them both now and in the future: from cyberbullying and staying safe online to learning about personal finances and improving overall health and wellbeing.

The qualifications aim to develop personal skills such as self-awareness, personal health and relationships, as well as an understanding of:

- **Personal Development:** Build confidence, self-awareness, and goal-setting skills.
- **Emotional Wellbeing:** Learn how to handle stress, stay motivated, and maintain a positive mindset.
- **Healthy Relationships:** Understand how to build and maintain respectful relationships, communicate effectively, and resolve conflicts.
- **Practical Life Skills:** Improve time management, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities.

Course Structure

The qualification is made up of a series of units that cover different areas of personal success and wellbeing. There are 12 portfolios to be completed in total.

Assessment

For each unit learners must complete a portfolio of work to show how they have met the assessment criteria. Portfolios are assessed within the College and moderated by OCN.

King's Trust Achieve Programme – Vocational Pathway and Applied Skills Pathway

This qualification has been developed by The King's Trust with the aim of progressing learners into further education and/or employment. The qualification is the equivalent to two full GCSEs at Grade C if completed successfully.

Course Content

The course of study gives learners the opportunity to:

- Develop their own personal growth and engagement through learning.
- Engage in learning to that is relevant to them and support their development of personal skills and attributes that are essential for working life and employment.
- Prepare themselves for progression into further education programmes, apprenticeships, or other work-based learning.
- Develop their English and Mathematics skills.

The qualification is 100% portfolio based and is equivalent to two GCSEs at grade C or higher. The King's Trust Award and Certificate in Personal Development and Employability Skills (PDE) recognises a breadth of personal skills, qualities and attitudes required by employers across a range of sectors.

Religious Education

Students will study a College-designed RE course in all pathways. Students in the **Applied Academic Pathway** will have the option of studying either the Religious Studies Level 2 Certificate or the Personal Success and Wellbeing Level 2 Certificate (information on page 12) as an additional qualification. They will also follow the College-course as a part of a carousel along with Careers and LLW.

College Course – All pathways

This is not a GCSE Course, the Programme of Study has been set by the Department of Education and does not include coursework or any external assessments.

Course Content

There are several main areas of study which include:

1. Does God exist? The Debate.
2. Applying some of Jesus' teaching to life today:
Discipleship – Committed to a cause.
Forgiveness – Forgive? You must be joking!
Helping the poor – Is it my responsibility?
Life after death – Is this life all that there is?
3. Themes from the Book of Acts.
4. A Christian perspective on such issues as Family Matters, Drugs and Addictions, Abortion, Euthanasia, Capital Punishment
5. World Religions

OCN Religious Studies (Level 2 Certificate) – Applied Academic Pathway

This course is suited to learners who wish to develop a knowledge and understanding in Religious Studies, enabling them to make sense of religious choices people make in today's society. It is intended that learners will develop empathy, respect and an awareness of other religious beliefs and cultural diversity. A pass in this course is the equivalent to a GCSE C grade. Throughout the course, pupils will cover the following:

- Unit 1: Addiction
- Unit 2: Charity and Religious Charities
- Unit 3: Exploring Personal Identity and Faith
- Unit 4: Exploring Religious Traditions within Own Community
- Unit 5: Life and Death Issues
- Unit 6: Life of a Famous Person of Faith
- Unit 7: Marriage and Divorce

Unit 8: Prejudice and Reconciliation

Unit 9: World Faith

There is no written exam for this course. Rather, all units are assessed via continuous assessment, based on a portfolio of evidence:

- Task-based controlled assessment
- Written assignments.
- Oral presentations

The classroom teacher monitors and assesses work throughout the year.

Grading Systems

GCSE Grading

The following grades are available in GCSE examinations:

Old CCEA Grading	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	U	
New CCEA Grading (from 2019)	A*	A	B	C*	C	D	E	F	G	U

A* grade is awarded for outstanding achievement to approximately 5-7% of all GCSE candidates attaining A grades, including students attending grammar schools. **U** grade denotes a candidate's failure to secure the minimum standard of achievement laid down for GCSE candidates.

BTEC Grading *(Principles of Applied Science only)*

BTEC Level 2 courses are graded as follows:

<i>L2 Distinction*</i>	<i>(equivalent to grade A* at GCSE)</i>
<i>L2 Distinction</i>	<i>(equivalent to grade A at GCSE)</i>
<i>L2 Merit</i>	<i>(equivalent to grade B at GCSE)</i>
<i>L2 Pass</i>	<i>(equivalent to grade C at GCSE)</i>
<i>L1</i>	<i>(equivalent to grade D/E/F at GCSE)</i>

Level 2 Certificate Grading

The following courses are based on this grading system: OCN IT, OCN Science, OCN Religious Studies, OCN Personal Success and Wellbeing, PAL and King's Trust

Level 2 certificate Pass equates to a GCSE C grade or above.

Occupational Studies Grading

Occupational Studies courses are designed to relate to national Occupational Standards and to enhance links between schools and colleges, training providers and employers.

<i>Level 2:</i>	<i>Equivalent to GCSE A* - C</i>	
	Distinction*	(equivalent to grade A* at GCSE)
	Distinction	(equivalent to grade A at GCSE)
	Merit	(equivalent to grade B at GCSE)
	Pass	(equivalent to grade C at GCSE)
<i>Level 1:</i>	<i>Equivalent to GCSE D - G</i>	
	Distinction	(equivalent to grade D at GCSE)
	Merit	(equivalent to grade E at GCSE)
	Pass	(equivalent to grade F/G at GCSE)

Choosing Optional Subjects

As mentioned in the opening letter, all students must study Core (Compulsory) Subjects and Statutory Subjects. The details of the Core and Statutory Subjects for each Pathway can be found in pages 4 to 13.

For optional subjects, students will choose two, three or four optional subjects to study across year 11 and 12. The number that they choose will be based on the pathway that they follow. Please see table on page 3.

These subjects are chosen using the form given to your child. There is specific information on each form along with instructions as to how to complete the form. It is important to remember that students should choose their subjects in rank order with 1 being their most desired subject, working down through the numbers. As well as this, 1-2 reserve subjects should be selected. An example is shown below.

GCSE Subjects	Choice
Agriculture and Land Use	
Art and Design	1
Business and Communication Systems	R2
Business Studies	4
Digital Technology	
Double Award Science	
Drama	
Geography	
Health and Social Care	
Home Economics: Food and Nutrition	
History	2
Music	
Physical Education	
Religious Education	
Spanish	
Technology and Design	
GCSE-Equivalent Subjects	
Applied Science (BTEC)	
Child Care (Occupational Studies)	3
Construction (Occupational Studies)	
Health and Social Care (Occupational Studies)	R1
Hospitality and Catering (Occupational Studies)	
Interior & Graphic Design (Occupational Studies)	
IT Applications (Level 2 Certificate)	
Sport and Leisure (Occupational Studies)	

This student is following the **Applied Academic Pathway** and therefore must choose four optional subjects and two reserve subjects. Their favourite subject is Art, followed by History, Child Care and Business Studies. They have indicated that they would also be happy to study Health and Social Care (OS), possibly as an alternative to Child Care and BACS, possibly as an alternative to Business Studies.

Reserve subjects may be used in the event of:

- Timetable clashes.
- Oversubscribed courses.
- Courses not running as a result of being undersubscribed.
- Unsuitability of an originally chosen course.

Therefore, it is important that these selections are also carefully considered.

Further Important Information:

1. The College may, in discussion with students and/or parents, make changes to options choices based on Key Stage 3 data. This is to ensure that our students are on the correct course in relation to their ability to provide them with the best opportunity to succeed.
2. In the event of oversubscribed classes where subjects **are** taught in Year 10, classes will be filled in the following order:
 1. *Students who show an aptitude in the subject as evidenced by tracking scores.*
 2. *Students who demonstrate the required ability as evidenced by CAT4, PTM and PTE assessment data.*
 3. *Students who submitted option choices early in the process, in rank order.*
 4. *Remaining students in rank order.*
3. In the event of oversubscribed classes where subjects **are not** taught in Year 10, spaces will be filled using evidence from CAT4, PTM and PTE assessment data.
4. If a subject is not running as a result of being undersubscribed, the student will be placed in their second choice, or in consultation with the student/parent.

Next Steps

All forms should be returned to the College via your child's form tutor by the date stated on the form, after having been signed by a parent/carer. The school may be in contact with a student or parent/carer if there is an issue or query regarding the subjects chosen. If this is not required, the next form of communication will be a letter confirming optional subjects which will be sent during Summer Term.

Factors to consider when making choices:

Students should:

1. Concentrate on the subjects in which they are **strongest**.
2. Consider subjects that may not be their favourite but will benefit their chosen career pathway and/or studies in Sixth Form, Further Education or employment.
3. Select the subjects they enjoy doing at Key Stage 3 and are capable of doing well in.
4. Not choose subjects based on the choices of their friends or the teachers that they may have had in a subject at Key Stage 3.
5. Engage fully in LLW lessons which are designed around supporting students in their options choices in year 10 in relation to careers and further education.

Information on Optional Subjects

Art and Design (GCSE) – Academic Pathway, Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

In this subject you will have opportunities to develop creative, intellectual and artistic abilities as well as your personal knowledge, understanding and skills through investigating, realising, experimenting and problem solving. You will be working in 2D, 3D, fine art and design and will produce a final piece showcasing your strengths. They will also be encouraged to work independently and with a broad range of media to experiment, take risks and refine ideas and outcomes.

Course Content

This course is made up of two units:

Part 1 60% of final award

Exploratory Portfolio (Component A)

Students will explore a wide range of the core skills of visual language, media, materials, techniques and new technology.

Investigating the Creative and Cultural Industries (Component B)

Students build on the knowledge, skills and confidence they have gained in their Portfolio. They engage with and demonstrate understanding of different roles and opportunities in the creative and cultural industries. Students will have the opportunity to specialise in this part of the course and are required to produce evidence of working through the creative process and producing an outcome for their idea and individual investigations.

Part 2 Externally Set Assignment - 40% of final award.

Working to a Stimulus

The exam gives students an opportunity to investigate and develop their ideas creatively in response to a stimulus paper and new theme which is set by CCEA. Students will again work through the creative process and produce an individual outcome based on their response to the set theme.

Students must complete both Unit 1 and Unit 2 and have a final outcome for each unit.

Related Career Path

A career in any creative field can be pursued such as fashion, furniture, product, interior or graphic design, gallery manager, community artist, arts officer, teacher, photographer, professional artist, art therapist, costume design, architecture, landscape gardener, illustrator, game designer, fashion merchandising, set designer and many more depending on your area of specialism and talent.

Further Education

This course prepares students for the study of art and design and related courses at GCE Advanced Level, Advanced Subsidiary Level and the National Diploma. It also provides students who have an interest in developing a career in art and design with relevant, skills-based knowledge. A degree or HND can also be pursued to allow for specialism to be explored and skills developed further.

Is this the subject for you?

Students who chose art should ensure they can cope with the level of coursework this subject requires and have attained a minimum of a high C in all tracking tasks over the last 3 years. A strong level of ability in drawing as well as the ability to use tone and colour skilfully is essential.

Art – Interior & Graphic Design (Occupational Studies) – Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

The world of work is constantly changing. Occupational Studies allows learners to learn for work, through work and about work, and it provides the potential for this learning to take place in out-of-school contexts. This hands-on approach is ideal for those who prefer to develop their skills in a more practical, occupational environment.

Course Content

Two units are studied. Each unit is worth 50% of the final marks and is marked on the cumulative coursework and evidence produced for each unit.

1. Interior Design
2. Graphic Design

The emphasis of this course is to develop skills within a chosen area using appropriate materials, techniques and processes. Creativity and innovation are key factors within this course and students will have the opportunity to show their understanding through working on a set design brief. This will take into account the importance of health and safety, working within a budget and the constraints of a design brief. Students will be given the opportunity to research related careers and develop an understanding of the importance of these areas to the small business sector.

Each unit will include:

- practising skills through workshops;
- working to a brief;
- writing the proposal of an idea;
- procedures for self and peer evaluation;
- consideration of career opportunities in the industry;
- consideration of environmental issues within the industry;
- a review and evaluation of performance.

Related Career Paths

The Occupational Studies specification focuses on occupation and employability and enables progression to other courses, training and employment. This then helps learners to develop the transferable skills needed in a changing and dynamic working environment.

Further Education

Pupils can expand on the skills obtained at this level and follow these creative careers through BTEC and HND courses which are available at local Education Colleges.

Is this the subject for you?

Students who chose this subject should have a good level of creativity and be able to generate creative ideas. Students will need to be capable of working independently and manage a fast-moving coursework-based subject. Ideally, a minimum of a C grade in Key Stage 3 Art tracking is preferable.

Drama (GCSE) – Academic Pathway, Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

If you enjoy working with others in a creative environment, then GCSE Drama is the course for you. This course involves a lot of practical performance work, both devised and working with a variety of scripts. It is challenging and enjoyable as you will work with others towards two assessed performances. These performance pieces will guarantee a real sense of achievement and a lot of fun along the way!

Course Content

Controlled Assessment

Component 1: Devised Performance

- In response to a stimulus, students either: present a group performance or give a design presentation. This is worth 15%.
- All students must submit a student log. This is worth 10%.

Component 2: Scripted Performance

- Using a playscript, students either: present a group performance or give a design presentation. This is worth 35%.

Component 3: Knowledge and Understanding of Drama

- External written examination – 1 hour and 30 minutes. Students answer three questions using our set text “Blood Brothers.” This is worth 40%.

Related Career Path

There are many career options that relate to Drama such as teaching, acting, stage management and directing. Not all students will want to pursue a career in the theatre however this course is invaluable as it improves and develops essential life skills. Students will gain confidence and will learn to work as a team member, respecting and listening to others. This course helps students develop as active citizens for their future in employment and society, as well as for the possible further study of Drama.

Further Education

GCSE Drama facilitates the study of Drama and related subjects at a more advanced level, for example GCE AS and A2 English Literature and BTEC Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Performing Arts.

Is this subject right for you?

Can you collaborate and work well with others in a creative environment?

Do you have creative ideas and are you willing to contribute to group work?

Are you confident to perform in front of an audience?

Are you keen to develop your performance skills?

Experience of extra curricular Drama inside or outside school could help your confidence with this subject.

Music (GCSE) – Academic Pathway, Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

GCSE Music is a two-year course comprised of listening, composing and performing. The three distinctive areas are assessed as follows:

Listening (35%)	One paper (1 hour 30 minutes)
Composing (30%)	Two pieces of composition
Performing (35%)	One solo piece and one ensemble piece

Course Content

The course involves learning about different types of music. There are 3 main areas:

1. **Western Classical Music 1600 – 1910** e.g. Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique*, fourth movement
2. **Music Traditions in Ireland** e.g. *The Boys of Belfast*
3. **Film Music** e.g. *The Dambusters March*
4. **Popular Music 1980 – present** e.g. Florence and the Machine: *Cosmic Love*

Related Career Path

A qualification in GCSE Music is considered to be an asset by employers and in Further Education. It is an important subject if you wish to teach at either primary or secondary level. Other popular career choices include music therapy, professional performer, arts administration or composing. Alternatively, for students who are more technologically minded, there are opportunities to pursue a career in sound engineering or music software development.

Further Education

On completion of GCSE Music, pupils may wish to proceed to study the BTEC Music Performance or move on elsewhere to study A-level Music. Alternatively, pupils may wish to continue their Music studies in Performing Arts or in Music and Drama at the Regional Colleges.

Is this the subject for you?

1. Have you enjoyed Music at Key Stage 3?
2. Do you already play an instrument? Not essential for GCSE Music but you have to be willing to take lessons and learn an instrument.
3. Have you made good progress and achieved good results in your Key Stage 3 exams?
4. If you would like to find out more information or you want to know if you are suitable for studying GCSE Music speak to your teacher.

Business and Communication Systems (GCSE) – Academic Pathway, Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

In this qualification students gain a broad introduction to the Business world. They look at all these factors in the context of the changing nature of business today. Pupils will learn about software applications and develop their skills in using them in Business concepts.

Course Content

The course is split into three main components:

- **Practical – Software Applications for Business:**
Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Databases, Graphics, Presentation Software, Web Authoring

Computer Based Exam – 40% - 2hrs
- **Theory – The Business Environment:**
The Business Environment, ICT Data Systems, Security of Data, Human Resources, Communication – purpose, systems, importance of ICT in Business Communications, the internet and E-commerce, Stakeholders, types of Business, Digital Trading, Marketing

Written Paper – 35% - 1hr
- **Controlled Assessment**
Developing Digital Solutions – 25%

Related Career Path

Most careers involve the use of computers e.g. from booking a car in for a service, to writing a story in a local newspaper office. Students will learn standard ways of working and best practice approaches suitable for all career paths.

Further Education

Pupils may develop a sound foundation for further education in ICT or Business-related courses offered in Laurelhill Community College or the Regional Colleges.

Is this the subject for you?

This is the subject for you if you enjoy computers and want to learn basic ICT skills as well as learn about the main functions of a Business. This subject is a cross between Business Studies and ICT and contains elements of both.

Business Studies (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

This subject is highly valued amongst employers and universities. It covers a wide range of issues relating to the world of work and gives a good basis for general study for any career choice. Its primary focus is on the setting up and operation of a business. GCSE Business Studies encourages pupils to appreciate that businesses engage with a wide range of stakeholders holding differing perspectives.

Course Content

The course involves learning about:

- **Starting a Business (Exam 40% - 1hr 30mins)**
Creating a Business, Marketing, Business Operations.
- **Developing a Business (Exam 40% - 1hr 30mins)**
Human Resources, Business Growth, Finance.
- **Controlled Assessment: Planning a Business – 20%**

Related Career Path

It has an obvious link to all working environments providing pupils a greater understanding of the expectations and practices in any business organisation. The course may also act as a foundation for those interested in starting their own business or maintaining a family business.

Further Education

After completing this course, pupils may want to undertake the 'A' Level Business offered in our Sixth Form. Alternatively, pupils may wish to consider one of the Business qualifications offered in the Regional Colleges.

Is this the subject for you?

This is the subject for you if you want to run your own business in the future. Please note that due to the analytical skills required for this subject, we will review pupil's key stage 3 data to ensure suitability for the course.

Child Care (Occupational Studies) - **Applied Academic Pathway** and **Applied Vocational Pathway**

This two year course is assessed through controlled assessment only and comprises of two equally weighted units, each worth 50% of the course. There is no exam in this subject. In Year 11 pupils will study '*The Physical Care of Babies*' (50%) and in Year 12 they will study '*Child Care: The Play Environment*' (50%).

Course Content

The Physical Care of Babies (Year 11):

This unit helps pupils to develop an understanding of the physical care needs of babies. They will identify the basic care needs of babies and develop their knowledge and practical skills to meet these needs. Learning will be promoted through role-play, discussion and practical activities.

Child Care: The Play Environment (Year 12):

This unit will introduce pupils to working with children in a childcare environment. It focuses on the importance of play and children's development. It is suitable for those who are interested in child development and who would like to work with children in the future.

Career Path

Child Development will open many doors including entry to the following further education courses:

Early Childhood Studies at Stranmillis College
Child Care Courses
Child Psychology
Nursery Teaching/Assistant
Health Education
Classroom Assistant
Nursing
Midwifery
Social Work

Further Education

This GCSE can lead to a Level 3 Diploma in Child Care and Education (CACHE) as well as GCE Applied A Level Health & Social Care.

Is this subject for you?

Occupational studies Child Care equips you to work competently and confidently in all aspects of Childcare and early years. As the qualification is taught by continuous assessment, good school attendance is vital.

Geography (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

Geography is the study of the earth and the world in which we live. It is a dynamic and relevant subject that helps pupils understand the world around them and the challenges facing people and the planet. We will study the earth's landscape, people, places, and environments. The course combines physical geography, human geography and fieldwork skills, encouraging pupils to think critically about growing concerns around climate change, shrinking energy resources and global poverty. Geography is one of the most relevant courses you could choose to study and opens many career paths.

Course Content

Content	Assessment	Weightings
Unit 1: Understanding our Natural World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> River Environments (25%) Coastal Environments (25%) Our Changing Weather and Climate (25%) The Restless Earth (25%) 	External written examination (1 hour 30 mins) The examination includes four multi-part questions, one on each theme. Students answer all four questions.	40%
Unit 2: Living in Our World <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population and Migration (25%) Changing Urban Areas (25%) Contrasts in World Development (25%) Managing Our Environment (25%) 	External written examination (1 hour 30 mins) The examination includes four multi-part questions, one on each theme. Students answer all four questions.	40%
Unit 3: Fieldwork	External written examination 1 hour Students base their answers on their knowledge and experience of a local fieldwork investigation on The River Shimna, County Down.	20%

Related Career Path

Geography helps you gain a knowledge of different places around the world, and opens up various career opportunities, such as those identified below:

Teaching/ Civil Service	Sustainable energies	Conservation	Tourism
Geographic Information Systems	Town/Environmental Planning	Surveying	Meteorology

Further Education

After completing this course, students may wish to study BTEC Level 3 Travel and Tourism or A-Level Geography.

Is this the subject for you?

This is an interesting and relevant GCSE with a mixture of written content, fieldwork investigations and developing personal skills. Geography is a science, and it links well with other subjects such as Business Studies. Do you enjoy learning about our world and current issues? Are you interested in learning about new places?

If you are unsure, please speak with your geography teacher for further guidance or for the full specification details, visit the CCEA website: CCEA GCSE Geography (2017).

Health and Social Care (Occupational Studies) – **Applied Academic Pathway** and **Applied Vocational Pathway**

This qualification provides a more vocational hands-on approach to learning and is made up of continuous assessment. There are two units to complete over the two years and no exam. Pupils can achieve a Level one or Level two. A level 2 is equivalent to a GCSE qualification and is recognised by employers and schools for entry into further education or work.

Course Content

The course involves learning about:

Unit One – working in a care environment

- Topics include:
 - Health and safety issues
 - The role of the care worker in different care settings
 - First aid
 - Planning activities for clients in a care environment
 - Creating a suitable care environment for clients
 - Career opportunities

Unit Two – reminiscence with individuals in a care environment

- Topics include:
 - The role of the social care worker
 - Code of practice for Social Care Workers
 - Methods of communication
 - Reminiscence work with individuals within health and social care
 - Health and safety issues

Related Career Path

Social Work	Childcare	Children's nursing	Counsellor
Nursing	Paramedic	Teaching	Care worker
Midwifery	Physiotherapy	Support worker	Health visitor

Further Education

Learners achieving this qualification will be equipped to progress to courses at post-16 in the relevant subject areas within Health and Social Care. It also prepares students for working in the health, social care, early years and children's services sector and for further studies in this or a related subject area.

Is this subject for you?

If you are interested in a job where you care for others, then this is the subject for you. You will learn how to look after people while developing your skills and gaining confidence in this area. It is also 100% coursework so, no exam!

Health and Social Care (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

This subject is about caring for people through all stages of life and acquiring knowledge of life events. You will gain an insight into diet, exercise, alcohol, drugs, smoking and health related illnesses such as diabetes, osteoporosis and coronary heart disease.

It also prepares students for working in the health, social care, early years and children's services sector and for further studies in this or a related subject area.

Course Content

The course involves learning about:

Unit One: Personal development, health and well being (Exam 50% - 1hr 30 mins completed in Year 11)

- Topics include:
 - Human development
 - Factors affecting health and well-being
 - Relationships
 - Self-concept
 - Major life changes and sources of support

Unit two: Working in the health, social care and early years sectors (Controlled Assessment 50% - Nov-March completed in Year 12)

- Topics include:
 - Identifying and meeting the needs of service users
 - Provision of integrated health, social care and early years services
 - Accessing health, social care and early years services and barriers to access
 - Job roles of practitioners
 - Values of care
 - safeguarding

Related Career Path

Social Work	Childcare	Children's nursing	Counsellor
Nursing	Paramedic	Teaching	Care worker
Midwifery	Physiotherapy	Support worker	Health visitor

Further Education

This is a good foundation for learners to progress onto further education such as A level Health and Social Care Single and Double Award offered in our Sixth Form.

Is this subject for you?

Are you interested in pursuing a career in any of the jobs listed above? If your answer is yes or even maybe, then this is the subject for you as it will give you a firm basis on which to develop your skills in this sector. This is a subject that requires significant learning and extended writing. You need to be able to work independently researching topics for Year 12 controlled assessment. It would be advantageous to have good literacy skills and a positive work ethic.

History (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

History is traditionally a popular option within the College and is studied at all levels: Key Stage 3, GCSE and GCE A Level. This GCSE course is highly relevant and challenging. It enhances students' understanding of key historical events, personalities, developments, and issues. Students are encouraged to consider the relevance of the past and gain a deeper understanding of the world we live in.

Course Content

Unit 1 – Modern World Study:
Life in Nazi Germany 1933-1945
Northern Ireland and its Neighbours 1965-1998

This will be assessed by one exam paper in year 11 and is worth 60% of the final qualification.

Unit 2 – International Relations 1945 - 2003

This will be assessed by one exam paper in year 12 and is worth 40% of the final qualification.

Related Career Path

A qualification in GCSE History is highly respected by employers and in further education. It helps to develop a range of transferable skills which are highly sought after by employers. It is an excellent foundation for students wishing to study GCE 'A' Level History and beyond. History is a well-respected and attractive subject to both universities and employers. Careers in *Journalism, Media, Social/Community work, Law* and *Teaching* are just a few of the career avenues which History can lead you down.

Further Education

On completion of GCSE History, pupils may undertake the GCE 'A' Level History course offered in our Sixth Form. This further develops the knowledge, understanding and skills studied at GCSE Level. Qualifications in History at GCSE and 'A' Level are a proven asset in today's world.

Is this the subject for you?

History is for you if you are curious about the who, what, why, where, when and how.

Are you someone who enjoys investigating, reading, analysis and are keen to develop your literacy skills? Do you possess extending writing skills or are you willing to develop these? If so, this may be the subject for you.

Home Economics – Food and Nutrition (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

Home Economics GCSE Food and Nutrition specification encourages students to develop knowledge and understanding of the science behind food. This includes topics such as food provenance, food processing and production, macronutrients and micronutrients, government nutritional guidelines, and food safety. Students develop practical skills in food preparation, cooking and presentation.

Course Content

The specification has two units:

- Unit 1: Food and Nutrition

This will be assessed by one exam paper in Year 12 and is worth 50% of the final grade.

- Unit 2: Practical Food and Nutrition

This is controlled assessment and is worth 50% of the final grade.

Related career path

A qualification in Food and Nutrition will be invaluable for pupils considering careers in:

Food Science, Dietetics, Nutrition, Teaching, Health Promotion, Food Production, Product development, Environmental Health or Consumerism. It helps to develop a range of transferable skills which are highly sought after by employers.

Further Education

It is an excellent foundation for pupils wishing to study Applied 'A' Level Health and Social Care offered in Sixth Form. Alternatively, pupils may wish to proceed to other schools to study GCE 'A' Level Nutrition and Food Science.

Is this subject for you?

This is a rigorous GCSE with a high level of written content. There is a small practical element. Pupils are expected to have excellent nutritional knowledge and good literacy skills. As a result, we suggest pupils should have attained 70% or more in their year 10 Winter tracking test.

Hospitality and Catering (Occupational Studies) – Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

This qualification has been designed to provide a more vocational hands-on approach to learning. The course is divided into 2 units with continuous assessment. There is no exam with this qualification. Pupils can achieve a Level 1 or Level 2. These are considered an equivalent qualification to GCSE by employers and schools and colleges for entry into Sixth form.

Course Content

Unit 1 - Patisserie and Baking

1. Prepare and cook bread and scones
2. Prepare, cook and finish cakes and biscuits
3. Prepare and cook hot and pastry products
4. Study of Health and Safety in Catering

Unit 2 - Contemporary Cuisine

1. Prepare and cook a range of starters
2. Prepare and cook a range of main dishes
3. Prepare and cook a range of desserts
4. Study of Health and Safety, Careers and environmental issues in Catering

Career Path

Hospitality will open many doors including entry into the following further education courses:

Hospitality, Catering, Food Supply Management, Food Technology and Food Production.

Further Education

This course provides a good basis to study FOOD related courses offered in the Regional Colleges.

Is this subject for you?

If you enjoy practical cooking and if you are creative in your presentation skills, you will thoroughly enjoy Occupational studies Hospitality. This qualification equips you to work competently and confidently within the catering industry. As the qualification is taught by continuous assessment, good school attendance is vital.

Preparation for Adult Life (Level 2 Certificate) – Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

Through Preparation for Adult Life, learners can develop skills while exploring a wide range of areas relevant to them both now and in the future: from cultural diversity and social justice to preparing interviews and improving overall health and wellbeing.

The qualifications aim to develop personal skills such as self-awareness, personal health and relationships, as well as an understanding of:

- Diversity and inclusion;
- Human rights and social responsibility;
- Equality and justice;
- Roles and responsibilities of parents;
- Work in the local and global economy;
- Social, economic and cultural issues; and
- Personal development.

Course Structure

Three areas of study:

Citizenship – 4 units

Employability – 4 units

Personal and Social Development – 5 units

Assessment

For each unit learners must complete a portfolio of work to show how they have met the assessment criteria. Portfolios are assessed within the College and moderated by CCEA.

Is this Subject for You?

As the qualification is 100% coursework, excellent attendance is required. There are 13 portfolios to be completed in total, so a good level of literacy is required to explain and develop responses and ideas to fully meet the assessment criteria.

French (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

Students of French can develop their enthusiasm for the language and confidence in using it to listen, speak, read and write. They learn more about French-speaking countries/communities, as well as covering topics like social and global issues – taking their place as citizens in a multilingual, global society.

Learning French promotes good communication skills and valuable transferable skills, including working effectively with others and understanding local and global perspectives.

Course Content

Three contexts for learning provide plenty of variety and scope for investigating, understanding, describing, discussing and giving opinions. The contexts are:

- Identity, lifestyle and culture
- Local, national, international and global areas of interest
- School life, studies and the world of work.

There is an external examination for each of the specification's four assessment units, each worth 25% of the overall mark.

Related Career Path

Learning French promotes good communication skills and valuable transferable skills, including working effectively with others and understanding local and global perspectives.

As a linguist, the academic, professional and technical skills that you develop are useful across a wide range of professions. In an increasingly interconnected world, these skills can prepare you to succeed in a variety of careers such as business, education and other professional fields.

Further Education

GCSE French gives a good foundation for further study of French at A-Level. Many universities offer a Modern Languages element to complement their degree courses. E.g., Business Studies with French.

Is this Subject for You?

GCSE French requires much dedication, effort and independent study so it is important you have studied Spanish in Years 8-10.

Physical Education (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

This two year course combines practical (37.5%) Controlled Assessment (12.5%) and theoretical (50%) aspects of physical education. The course allows pupils to improve upon:

- their ability to plan, perform and evaluate Physical Education
- their knowledge, skills and understanding in Physical Education
- their personal and social development through the medium of sport

Course Content

The course is divided into three areas:

1. Practical – Internally examined practically in 3 activities. Each marked out of 50 – 37.5% (Fitness, Football, Netball, Cross Country, Athletics, Badminton etc)
2. Controlled Assessment – Sports Performance Analysis. Marked out of 50 – 12.5%
3. Written Examination
 - Paper 1 Health - 1hr 15mins – 25%.
 - Paper 2 Developing Performance - 1hr 15mins – 25%

Related Career Path

This course may provide a starting point for those students wishing to pursue further educational qualifications or a chosen career in the Sport and Leisure Industry.

Further Education

After completing this course pupils may wish to pursue BTEC National Diploma in Sport offered in Laurelhill Community College's Sixth Form.

Is this the subject for you?

To be successful on this course, you must:

- Play at least 1 sport to a high level either inside or outside of school.
- Be able to swim and take lessons in swimming in the GCSE course.
- Have a participation rate in Key Stage 3 PE of 90% or above.

Sport and Leisure (Occupational Studies) – Applied Academic Pathway and Applied Vocational Pathway

This two year course is assessed through controlled assessment only and comprises of two equally weighted units, each worth 50% of the course. In Year 11 pupils will study 'Running a Leisure Event' (50%) and in Year 12 they will study 'Sports Leadership (50%)'. The practical element of sport will be delivered through Athletics, Badminton, Cross Country, Football, Handball, Swimming and Table Tennis. Pupils will also develop skills in coaching in all of these sports.

Course Content

Running a Leisure Event (Year 11):

In this unit pupils will investigate the wide variety of leisure events which take place in Northern Ireland. They will develop and use their skills to work effectively as part of a team and will have the opportunity to plan a leisure event. They will need to consider the type of event they wish to plan, while also taking into consideration the customer type, the resources required for the event, and health, safety and environmental issues. Pupil will participate in the event and will learn to evaluate their own performance. Career opportunities will also be explored.

Sports Leadership (Year 12):

Pupils will develop the basic skills required to run a sports session and will have the opportunity to develop their organisational, motivational and communication skills to assist in the running of a sports or physical activity session. Pupils will have the opportunity to plan, run and evaluate a sports or physical activity session while taking into consideration the type of participant, resources required and any related health and safety issues.

Related Career Path

This course may provide a starting point for those students wishing to pursue further educational qualifications or a chosen career in the Sport and Leisure Industry.

Further Education

After completing this course, pupils may wish to pursue BTEC National Diploma in Sport offered in Laurelhill Community College's Sixth Form.

Is this the subject for you?

To be successful on this course, you must:

- Have a participation rate in Key Stage 3 PE of 85% or above.
- Ideally play 1 sport either inside or outside of school.

Religious Studies (GCSE Full Course) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

This GCSE course combines two modules, The Gospel of Matthew and an Introduction to Christian Ethics. Pupils can obtain a full range of GCSE grades from A*-G. There is no coursework to complete, but two final 1½hr examinations based on each module. One exam will be completed in Yr11 and one exam in Yr12. Each exam is worth 50%. The programme of study is produced by CCEA.

Course Content

The Gospel of Matthew: Yr11 (50%)

- The identity of Jesus – the birth of Jesus and the temptations
- Jesus the Miracle Worker – the miracles of Jesus
- The Kingdom of God – the parables of Jesus
- The Death and Resurrection of Jesus – the Passover, the trials of Jesus, Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection
- The place and Nature of Christian Discipleship – Jesus calls his disciples.

An Introduction to Christian Ethics: Yr12 (50%)

- Personal and Family Issues – sexual relationships, marriage and divorce.
- Matters of Life and Death – abortion, euthanasia and capital punishment.
- Development in bioethics – infertility, IVF and the status of the embryo.
- Contemporary issues in Christianity – prejudice, discrimination and poverty.
- Modern Warfare – The Just War theory, weapons of mass destruction and pacifism.

This course will help pupils to develop the skills of being able to make reasoned arguments and develop an understanding of spiritual, moral and ethical issues. Pupils have an opportunity to enhance their knowledge, understanding and their ability to evaluate key passages.

Related Career Path

Religious Studies is a relevant qualification for any job which involves working with other people. The skills developed by studying Religious Studies are particularly useful for future careers in law, education, social work, politics, medicine, administration, or the media.

Further Education

On completion of GCSE Religious Studies, pupils may undertake the GCE 'A' Level Religious Studies course offered in our Sixth Form.

Is this the subject for you?

Religious Studies GCSE is a good subject to consider if you're interested in learning about religion, culture, morality and philosophy. The subject is 100% exam based so pupils will need to have a good level of English. The course will help you to develop critical thinking skills, explore ethical issues, develop empathy and improve your writing skills. Pupils will be expected to complete research and written tasks.

Agriculture and Land Use (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

The Agri-food sector is the largest manufacturing industry in Northern Ireland. This course has been designed to give students a deeper understanding of this sector and would appeal to those who are interested in working in land based and environmental industries. It complements the course content in GCSE Business Studies, Double Award Science, Geography, Home Economics, Hospitality and Single Award Science.

Students will have the chance to develop their knowledge of farming practices, renewable energies, and the food manufacturing industry. The course also has a large coursework component (Unit 3) where students conduct a practical task and a research task on a particular topic. Pupils who enjoy Science will enjoy the extended practical opportunities in Agriculture.

Course Content

The specification has three units:

- Unit 1: Soils, Crops and Habitats - Written Exam – 1 hour and 15 minutes (25%)
- Unit 2: Animals on the Land - Written Exam - 1 hour and 15 minutes (25%)
- Unit 3: Contemporary Issues in Agriculture and Land Use - Controlled Assessment (50%) comprising a practical investigation (20%) and a research project (30%)

Related Career Path

A qualification in GCSE Agriculture and Land Use will be invaluable for pupils considering careers in any area of the Agri-food industry. It helps to develop a range of transferable technical, practical and problem-solving skills which are highly sought after by employers.

Further Education

This course offers a good basis for Level 3 Science related courses offered at Laurelhill and other educational providers.

Is this the subject for you?

- I enjoy science and geography.
- I am interested in the science of plants and animals.
- I am pretty good at studying for exams and getting good grades.
- I would enjoy working on an investigation and research project.
- I am good at organising myself and handing work in on time.

Construction – Carpentry & Joinery (Occupational Studies) – **Applied Academic Pathway** and **Applied Vocational Pathway**

This course has a strong occupational and employability focus which emphasises learning by doing. The course is strongly focused on developing the transferable skills necessary in a dynamic workplace whilst enabling progression to further courses, training and employment.

This will be an enjoyable but demanding course focusing on developing manufacturing skills for wood-based products. The qualification is 100% coursework and there are no external exams, however some coursework will be done under controlled assessment conditions. Students will complete two portfolios and manufacturing two products as outlined below.

Course Content

Carpentry & Joinery

This unit is designed to provide vocational skills in carpentry and joinery. This unit includes:

- consideration of health and safety issues with respect to activities in carpentry and joinery;
- consideration of career opportunities related to working with wood in the construction industry;
- an appreciation of environmental issues relating to timber;
- the appropriate use of basic carpentry and joinery hand tools and hand-held power tools;
- construction of a range of carpentry and joinery models relating to site-based activities, incorporating a wide range of joints and jointing methods; and
- a review and evaluation of performance.

Bench Joinery

This unit is designed to provide increased vocational skills in bench joinery and associated activities. This unit includes:

- consideration of health and safety issues with respect to workshop activities in bench joinery;
- consideration of career opportunities related to working with wood in the construction industry;
- an appreciation of environmental issues relating to timber;
- the appropriate use of bench joinery hand tools, and basic hand-held power tools;
- techniques of cutting, jointing, boring and planning to produce construction related components;
- construction of a range of bench joinery models; and
- a review and evaluation of performance.

Related Career Path

This course is suitable for those wishing to pursue a career in the Construction industry and encourages the development of entrepreneurial skills such as setting up a small business.

Further Education

The course provides the foundation to progress to higher level courses in a related field through a vocational route.

Is this subject for you?

Can you follow a working drawing to make your project accurate and to a high-quality finish? Can you look after and maintain woodworking tools in your toolbox? If so, this might be the course for you.

Digital Technology (GCSE) Academic Pathway

CCEA GCSE Digital Technology [Multimedia] will be an enjoyable but demanding technical course focusing on how a computer works, the laws that govern what you are allowed to do with digital data and on how a business might benefit from using Digital Technology.

Course Content

This has three units completed over the two years; two are external exams which need short written answers about the theory of ICT and one unit is a multi-part controlled assessment made up of database design, web design, movie design and general digital skills.

Unit 1: Digital Technology [1 hour Written Exam: 30%]

In this unit students are taught how computer hardware works; they learn how information is coded and stored using binary, how it is accessed and processed by the CPU and how networks are structured. They also learn about laws affecting the use of ICT. This is delivered in Year 11.

Unit 2: Digital Authoring Concepts [1½ hour Written Exam: 40%]

In this unit students learn about why companies will invest money in computer systems and what their user requirements are. They learn how a company would plan the creation of database or website solutions. This is delivered in Year 12.

Unit 3: Digital Authoring Practice [Controlled Assessment: 30%]

This unit is more practical with the students being assessed on their ability to create a relational database and a website. This is delivered in Year 12.

Related Career Path

This course gives valuable preparation for any job in business or in the public sector that involves significant use of ICT.

Further Education

After completing this course, pupils may want to consider undertaking an A-Level or Level 3 qualification in Digital Technology or other IT-based vocational subject offered in our Sixth Form which changes from year to year to best equip our students for university or employment or any IT based course in another college. This GCSE and A level is often a required subject for further study in College and University in Computing and Information Technology courses.

Is this the subject for you?

- I enjoy the theory of ICT and find it interesting.
- I am pretty good at studying for exams and getting good grades in English, Science and Maths.
- I might want to study ICT at A level or as a BTEC.
- I think Digital Technology would be an advantage on my CV for further education or future employers.
- This is a rigorous GCSE with a high level of written content. There is a small practical element.
- I have excellent literacy and numeracy skills in addition to good ICT subject knowledge.
- *As a result, we suggest pupils should have attained 70% or more in their year 10 Winter ICT tracking test.*

Information Technology Applications (Level 2 Certificate) **Applied Academic Pathway** and **Applied Vocational Pathway**

OCN IT Level 2 Certificate in Applications is awarded a Pass or a Fail [a pass is equivalent to a GCSE C grade]. The marks all come from the completion of controlled assessments and coursework for the units chosen. This qualification is 100% coursework and there are no external exams, however some coursework will be done under controlled assessment conditions. You will complete coursework assignments worth 15 credits in total.

The minimum entry requirement is an interest in Practical IT and a PTM/ PTE of 3 or higher.

Course Content

This course consists of 15 credits, achieved through the completion of a combination of the following units. The chosen ones in Laurelhill add up to 16 but are the most useful and easily achievable for our pupils and are actually less work than other combinations which add up to 15 credits.

- Word Processing Software [4 Credits]
- Spreadsheet Software [4 Credits]
- Presentation Software [2 Credits]
- IT User Fundamentals [3 Credits]
- Email Software [3 Credits]

Related Career Path

This course gives valuable preparation for any job in business or in the public sector that involves significant use of ICT.

Further Education

After completing this course, pupils may want to consider undertaking an OCN Level 3 qualification in Information Technology Applications offered in our Sixth Form, any ICT based course or apprenticeship in a college of further education or may consider employment.

Is this the subject for you?

- I enjoy the practical use of IT and find it interesting.
- I am pretty good at working solidly in class and getting coursework completed.
- I usually have 100% attendance or close to this every school year.
- I might want to study ICT as a BTEC or OCN Level 3 in the future.
- I think business IT skills would be an advantage on my CV for further education or future employers.
- This GCSE-equivalent Level 2 course has a high level of practical content, so I need to be in school virtually every day and work in class without exception.
- I have excellent work ethic, good ICT subject knowledge and a commitment to building my personal organisational skills.
- *As a result, we suggest pupils should have attained 40% or more in their year 10 Winter ICT tracking test.*

Principles of Applied Science (BTEC Level 2) – **Applied Academic Pathway** and **Applied Vocational Pathway**

BTECs are vocationally-related qualifications, where learners develop knowledge and understanding by applying their learning and skills in a work-related context. They are popular and effective because they engage learners to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop skills that are essential for the modern-day workplace. These skills include: teamworking; working from a prescribed brief; working to deadlines; presenting information effectively; and accurately completing administrative tasks and processes.

This BTEC Course is a 2-year course equivalent to one GCSE and graded at Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction* Levels. If chosen, this course is studied alongside Single Award Science and is awarded as two separate qualifications. This course is suited to pupils who want to study additional science but find they do best with continuous assessment.

Course Content

The course is comprised of one exam in Year 11 and controlled assessment which is set and marked within school and externally verified.

Unit 1: Principles of Science (25% External Exam)

This unit is externally assessed by a 1 hour paper based exam (25%). You will study the fundamental core science concepts in biology, chemistry and physics. You will use and develop the knowledge learnt in this unit to the next three units in a vocational context.

Unit 2: Chemistry and Our Earth (25% Controlled Assessment)

You will learn about chemical reactivity and bonding, the use of chemicals based on their physical and chemical properties, investigate the factors involved in the rate of chemical reactions and understand the factors that are affecting the Earth and its environment.

Unit 3: Energy and Our Universe (25% Controlled Assessment)

You will understand ionising radiation, know how electrical energy is produced via different sources, study the components of the solar system and understand how the universe is changing.

Unit 4: Biology and Our Environment (25% Controlled Assessment)

You will investigate the relationships that different organisms have with each other and with their environment, understand the effects of human activity on the environment and explore the factors that affect human health.

Related Career Path

In Applied Science typical employment opportunities may be as a laboratory technician in a range of industrial settings or in roles involving sample analysis in environmental protection, healthcare or forensic science.

Further Education

Pupils may progress to BTEC Level 3 courses in Science related subjects or move to a more traditional A-Level route.

Is this the subject for you?

- I enjoy science and find it interesting.
- I prefer completing tasks and projects in science rather than exams.
- I might want to study science as a BTEC after GCSEs.
- I am good at organising myself and handing work in on time.

Science - Double Award (GCSE) – Applied Academic Pathway

This two-year course provides a Double Award Science qualification equivalent to two GCSEs. The programme of study has been designed to give a suitable grounding for Advanced Level work in each of the three Sciences – Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students will also develop their problem-solving and observational skills, as well as their communication, mathematical and technological skills. This course is best suited to pupils who do well in exams.

Course Content

Year 11

- Biology Unit 1 – 11% - 1 hour exam
- Chemistry Unit 1 – 11% - 1 hour exam
- Physics Unit 1 – 11% - 1 hour exam

Year 12

- Biology Unit 2 – 14% - 1 hour 15 minutes exam
- Chemistry Unit 2 – 14% - 1 hour 15 minutes exam
- Physics Unit 2 – 14% - 1 hour 15 minutes exam
- Practical Skills - 25% - 3 1 hour exams in class and 3 x 30 minute exams at the end of each Unit 2 exam

Pupils are entered at a tier most suited to their abilities and expectations.
GCSE grades A*-G are awarded upon completion of the course.

Related Career Path

This course gives pupils sufficient in-depth knowledge of Physics, Chemistry and Biology to be able to satisfy career choices needing Science as a major subject or to undertake a Science 'A' Level or BTEC in a Science related subject. CCEA GCSE Sciences are the only GCSE qualifications that directly examine practical work, and the qualification proves practical competency to future employers.

Further Education

After completing this course, pupils may wish to undertake BTEC Applied Science or Applied A-level Health and Social Care. Alternatively, pupils may wish to proceed to other schools or Regional Colleges or Further Education Institutions to study A-level Physics, Chemistry or Biology. Double Award Science indicates to employers and Universities that the pupil has the ability and aptitude for science at a high level, even if they do not wish to study Sciences further.

Is this the subject for you?

- I enjoy science and find it interesting.
- I am pretty good at studying for exams and getting good grades in English, Science and Maths.
- I might want to study science at A level or as a BTEC.
- I think Double Award Science would be an advantage on my CV for further education or future employers.

Technology and Design (GCSE) – Academic Pathway and Applied Academic Pathway

This GCSE enables pupils to focus on the needs and opportunities which arise in a wide range of contexts including home, leisure and industry. It provides opportunities to work with a range of constructional materials including plastics, metal and wood.

Course Content

There are three units in this course and pupils must be assessed on all three units.

Year 11 is theory based with the delivery and assessment of unit 1 being covered:

- Unit 1 Technology and Design Core
External Examination 1 ½ hours (25% of final mark)

Year 12 is a combination of exam preparation for unit 2 as well as Controlled Assessment (unit 3) which includes research, design and manufacture elements:

- Unit 2 Product Design
External Examination 1 ½ hours (25% of final mark)
- Unit 3 Design Project
Pupils will design and make a product in response to a Set Design Project
This Controlled Assessment is completed in class (50% of the final mark).

Related Career Path

This GCSE allows pupils to gain insight into sectors such as Manufacturing and Engineering. It also prepares them to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.

Further Education

This course should help facilitate the study of Technology and Design related subjects at a more advanced level, for example A-level Technology and Design, A-level Environmental Technology and BTEC Nationals in Engineering.

Is this the course for you?

Have you shown good revision skills in year 10? 50% of the course is theory based, and you will be required to work through your notes, preparing for the two written exams. This is not the course for you if you are only interested in the practical element of Technology and Design. There is no practical in year 11 but you will complete practical in year 12. You will design and develop products so, if you have good drawing skills, this will be a great help. GCSE Technology is for people who can think, plan, and do.

South Eastern Regional College Courses – Vocational Pathway and Applied Skills Pathway

In both the **Vocational Pathway** and **Applied Skills Pathway**, students are provided with the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge within specific occupational settings through the completion of two Occupational Studies courses over the course of year 11 and 12.

Students will attend the Lisburn campus of South Eastern Regional College (SERC) one day per week over the course of two years. In this setting they will have the opportunity to work within an industrial setting and gain a qualification in two out of the four below courses:

- Carpentry and Joinery
- Catering
- Child Care
- Electrical Wiring
- Hair and Beauty
- Plumbing
- Vehicle Servicing

All four of these courses have 100% internal assessment based on:

- i. Moderation from CCEA
- ii. Direct observation of student performance
- iii. Practical work-related tasks
- iv. 'My Record' – a training diary completed by student and SERC-based tutor.

Successful completion of these courses is awarded as follows:

Level 2:	<i>Equivalent to GCSE A* - C</i>	
	Distinction*	(equivalent to grade A* at GCSE)
	Distinction	(equivalent to grade A at GCSE)
	Merit	(equivalent to grade B at GCSE)
	Pass	(equivalent to grade C at GCSE)
Level 1:	<i>Equivalent to GCSE D - G</i>	
	Distinction	(equivalent to grade D at GCSE)
	Merit	(equivalent to grade E at GCSE)
	Pass	(equivalent to grade F/G at GCSE)

On their options form, students in both of these pathways have also been encouraged to note down any other occupational-based course that they may be interested in studying, if it is not already provided in our list of courses. Together, with SERC, will look into the potential of offering a course of that nature, if possible.

Further information on these and other Occupational Studies courses can be found here:

<https://ccea.org.uk/key-stage-4/vocational/subjects/level-1-and-level-2-occupational-studies-2013>

Related Career Path and Further Education

Successful completion of these courses prepare students to progress into a relevant level 2 or 3 course within each specialism or take up an apprenticeship or employment within the relevant occupational setting.

