



YEAR 9

# OPTIONS

Personalising your Key Stage 4 curriculum at Pix Brook Academy



KS4 AT PBA



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# YEAR 9 OPTIONS

Dear Pix Brook Families,

We are absolutely thrilled to embark on one of the most exciting and significant stages of your child's journey here at Pix Brook Academy: The Key Stage 4 Options Process! Throughout their first three years of secondary education, your child has engaged with an ambitious, broad, and balanced curriculum, developing a strong academic foundation complemented by enrichment activities and school trips and visits. Now, it's time to build on that success and start shaping their future specialisms

As our young people move into Year 10, our primary focus is ensuring they are fully prepared for post-16 education and beyond. To achieve this, the EBacc (English Baccalaureate) remains a priority for PBA. This pathway, which includes English, Maths, Science, a Language, and either History or Geography, is highly valued by universities and A-level providers because it promotes rigorous development of essential knowledge and critical thinking skills. Research consistently shows that studying the EBacc subjects provides students with greater opportunities in further education and dramatically improves performance in core subjects. Our talented students are extremely capable, articulate and ready to meet these demands, and still be able to opt for other subjects they enjoy.

We know this process may feel daunting, but rest assured, your child has already been engaging in vital groundwork. They have participated in a survey to gauge their interests and have listened to presentations from our expert subject leaders outlining the various courses and requirements. This information, combined with accessible careers advice and individual meetings, is designed to empower you and your child to make the most informed choices possible. While planning for future aspirations is crucial, we also emphasise the importance of choosing subjects that genuinely align with your child's passions and aptitudes!

Mr. Szwajbak will be overseeing this exciting process, guiding students meticulously towards their final option choices. This is a truly pivotal period, but please know we are not doing this alone; we know your children well, and together, through partnership, we will enable each child's success. We look forward to working with you to support them in making the very best choices to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive and excel!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'C. Linehan'.

Mrs C Linehan  
Principal



# YEAR 9 OPTIONS

Dear Pix Brook Families,

We are incredibly excited to welcome you to the start of the Key Stage 4 journey! This Options Process is the moment where, for the first time, pupils will begin to personalise their curriculum, moving from the broad foundation of KS3 into the depth and challenge of the next phase. This is a truly pivotal and thrilling time for our learners as they start tailoring their education to match their passions, aptitudes, and future ambitions.

At Pix Brook Academy, our curriculum is designed to offer a dynamic mix of academic rigour and practical subjects, comparable to similar schools in the country. Our unwavering focus remains on the consistent delivery of high-quality teaching and learning, empowering all pupils to achieve their absolute best.

## The Foundation: The Core Curriculum

Every student at PBA entering KS4 (Year 10) will follow a rigorous and essential Core Curriculum that ensures a broad base of knowledge and skills:

- English Language & Literature (Leading to two GCSEs)
- Mathematics (Leading to one GCSE)
- Combined Science (Leading to two GCSEs) or Triple Science (leading to three GCSEs)
- Core Physical Education (PE) (Non-examined)
- Citizenship (Includes the delivery of age-appropriate Health, Sex and Relationships Education).

## The EBACC Pathway

We firmly believe in setting high expectations, and for many of our capable, confident and articulate learners, this means following the EBacc (English Baccalaureate) curriculum. This pathway ensures that the curriculum remains broad and balanced for as long as possible, making your child highly competitive for post-16 opportunities.

The EBacc recognises pupils who achieve a minimum of a good pass (Grade 5) in all qualifying subjects: English, Mathematics, Science, a Language (French), and either History or Geography.

Your Options Commitment: All students will need to include one of History or Geography within their preferences. A typical KS4 curriculum at PBA will include a minimum of 8 GCSEs.

Raising the Challenge: For our students who thrive on academic complexity, there is the opportunity to increase the challenge further by studying both History *and* Geography alongside French. The possibility of an extra GCSE via Triple Science (leading to three separate science GCSEs) will be confirmed in Year 11 based on performance data.


For a few children who need a less demanding programme of study, there are two non-GCSE subjects which can be selected, BTEC Digital Information Technology and Cambridge Nationals Sport Studies. This decreases the GCSE load but there is still an examined component amounting to 40% of the course.

When your child submits their options form, please be aware they are giving us their preferences. We will of course do our best to match everyone's preferences as closely as possible.

If your child is unhappy with any of the subjects awarded, there will be a brief period in June 2026 where changes can be requested.

## Understanding Qualifications: Grades and Levels

Several years ago, GCSEs switched to numbered grades, which focus on final examinations and content mastery. Grades are now awarded as numbers as opposed to letters. These reforms saw a return to final exams in most GCSE subject areas.

OLD GRADES	NEW GRADES
A*	9
A	8
	7
B	6
C	5 STRONG PASS
	4 STANDARD PASS
D	3
E	2
F	1
G	1
U	U 

Running alongside GCSEs, schools can offer BTEC and Cambridge Nationals qualifications. In this booklet you will find information on **BTEC Digital Information Technology** and **Cambridge Nationals Sports Studies**. These subjects are not GCSEs, but offer the chance to be awarded the equivalent of a level 1 or level 2 qualification according to the quality of work produced by the learner. BTEC and Cambridge Nationals qualifications are graded differently: typically with pass, merit and distinction.

Level 1 qualifications are equivalent to grades 3,2 and 1 at GCSE.

Level 2 qualifications are equivalent to grades 9,8,7,6,5 and 4 at GCSE.

## Advice for pupils when selecting subject preferences

Consider the following questions when discussing your options at home, or with friends:

- Does this subject suit my strengths?
- Did I enjoy this subject in KS3, and if I didn't study it, have I completed my research?
- Will the subjects help with my future aspirations and career?
- What did my last progress report reveal?
- Are my teachers supportive of my choices? Have I talked it through with my tutor?
- Do I want to pursue the EBacc pathway?

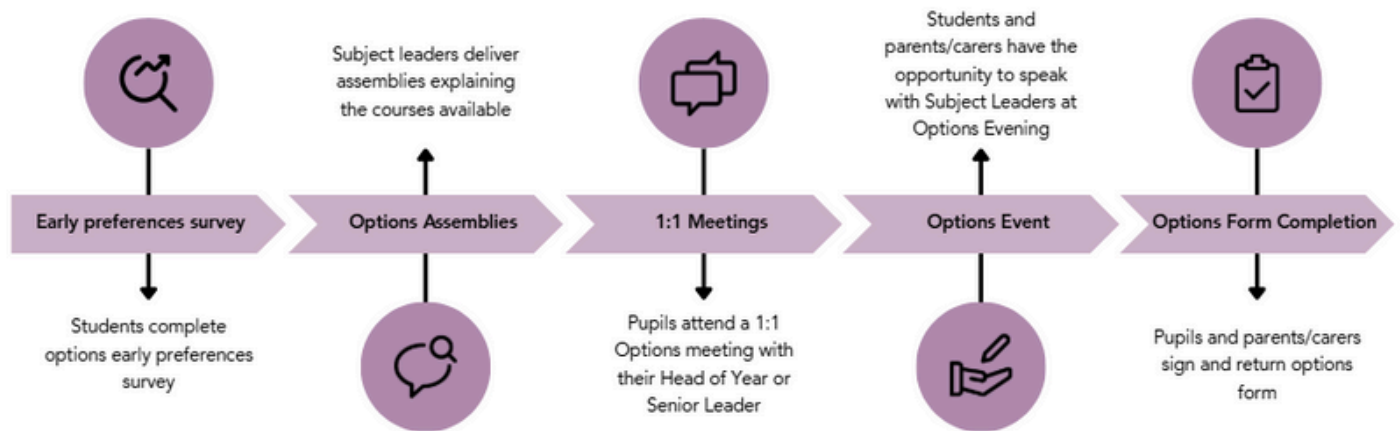


### ✓ Dos

### ✗ Don'ts

<p><b>Choose subjects that excite you</b></p> <p>You must be interested in the subject to remain motivated.</p>	<p><b>Choose subjects because your friends are</b></p> <p>Make a decision that is right for you.</p>
<p><b>Research the GCSE course</b></p> <p>What's the course content? Discuss your choices at home.</p>	<p><b>Choose a subject because they are your favourite teacher</b></p> <p>They may not be your teacher in KS4.</p>
<p><b>Try and balance your workload</b></p> <p>How is the subject assessed? Is there a coursework element?</p>	<p><b>Worry that your choices now will determine every future education pathway</b></p>
<p><b>Consider your Post-16 pathway</b></p> <p>How does the subject link to A-levels or future careers?</p>	<p><b>Rush this decision - you have time</b></p> <p>The submission date is the 23<sup>rd</sup> February.</p>

## Your Options Journey



The deadline for returning the options form is **Monday 23rd February 2026**. These must be checked and signed by parents/carers. There is no advantage to returning the form early although it is important it is submitted on time.

The subjects allocated will be released in June 2026. This enables your child plenty of opportunity to make an adjustment before the start of Year 10 if needed.

The team and I look forward to working collaboratively through this process with your children. It is a really exciting time and we often see young people flourish and thrive as they grow into the new high expectations that come with being in Key Stage 4.

I am confident that, through working collectively together, we will be able to offer your child a Key Stage 4 curriculum that will encourage them to do their very best and is tailored to their needs, interests and future aspirations.

*J. Szwajbak*

Mr J. Szwajbak  
Assistant Principal

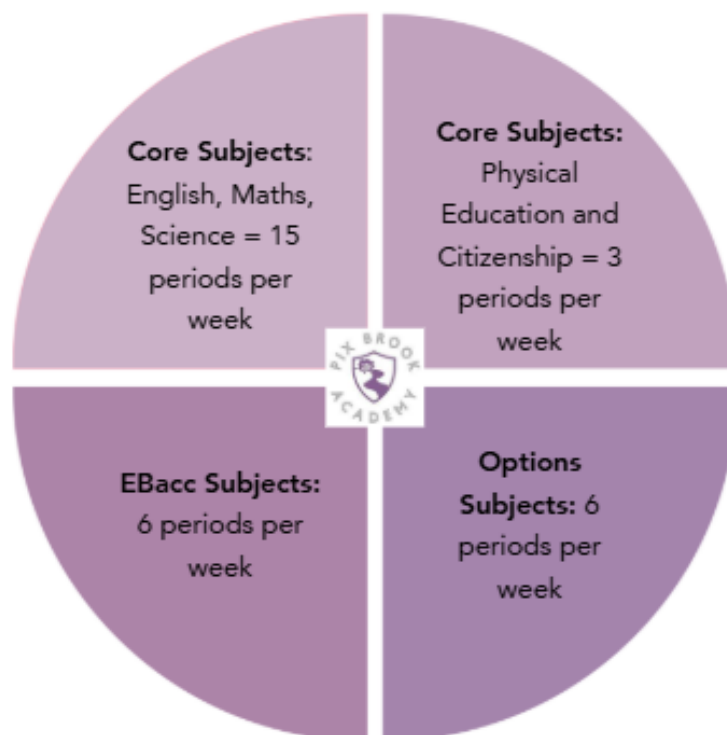


# KS4 CURRICULUM GUIDE

Core Subjects	Humanities Option	Three Free Choice Options
<p><b>Examined Subjects</b> GCSE English Language GCSE English Literature GCSE Mathematics GCSE Combined Science</p> <p><b>Non-examined Subjects</b> Citizenship Physical Education</p>	<p><b>Examined Subjects</b> GCSE Geography</p> <p>or</p> <p>GCSE History</p>	<p><b>Examined Subjects</b> <b>GCSE's</b> Art &amp; Design Business Studies Computer Science Design Technology - Timbers Drama Food Preparation &amp; Nutrition French* Geography History Media Studies Music Philosophy &amp; Religious Ethics Physical Education Psychology</p> <p><b>BTEC</b> Digital Information Technology</p> <p><b>Cambridge Nationals</b> Sport Studies</p>

\*Must be included if following the EBacc Pathway with either History or Geography

## PBA Key Stage 4 curriculum



The below table shows the Key Stage 4 curriculum based on the current 30 lesson timetable:

EBacc subjects					Other subjects	
English	Mathematics	Science	Humanity	MFL	Option 1	Option 2
5 periods	5 periods	5 periods	3 periods	3 periods	3 periods	3 periods
GCSE English Language	GCSE Mathematics	GCSE Combined science	GCSE History and / or	GCSE French	GCSE option	GCSE option
GCSE English Literature		Or GCSE Triple science	GCSE Geography			
2 GCSEs	1 GCSE	2 or 3 GCSEs	1 GCSE	1 GCSE	1 GCSE	1 GCSE

*A student following the EBacc pathway should achieve 9 GCSEs. Some may achieve 10 GCSEs if they are invited to Triple Science in Year 11.*



## **Compulsory Core Subjects**

1. English Language GCSE
2. English Literature GCSE
3. Mathematics GCSE
4. Combined Science GCSE
5. Citizenship
6. Physical Education

## **EBacc Subjects**

7. French GCSE
8. Geography GCSE
9. History GCSE

## **Other option subjects**

10. Art and Design GCSE
11. Business Studies GCSE
12. Computer Science GCSE / Digital Information Technology BTEC
13. Design Technology: Timbers GCSE
14. Drama GCSE
15. Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE
16. Media Studies GCSE
17. Music GCSE
18. Philosophy and Religious Ethics (PRE) GCSE
19. Physical Education GCSE / Sport Studies Cambridge Nationals
20. Psychology GCSE



# COMPULSORY CORE SUBJECTS

English Language  
English Literature  
Mathematics  
Combined Science  
Citizenship  
Physical Education



**KS4 AT PBA**

<b>Subject: English Language GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: AQA</b>	<b>Specification: 8700</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To read a wide range of texts, fluently and with good understanding.</li> <li>• To read critically, and use knowledge gained from wide reading to inform and improve their own writing.</li> <li>• To write effectively and coherently using Standard English appropriately.</li> <li>• To acquire and apply a wide vocabulary, alongside a knowledge and understanding of grammatical terminology, and linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Pupils will be assessed on the following Assessment Objectives (AOs) across the course. These are the same across all GCSE boards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AO1: identify and interpret explicit and implicit information and ideas. Select and synthesise evidence from different texts.</li> <li>• AO2: Explain, comment on and analyse how writers use language and structure to achieve effects and influence readers, using relevant subject terminology to support their views.</li> <li>• AO3: Compare writers' ideas and perspectives, as well as how these are conveyed, across two or more texts.</li> <li>• AO4: Evaluate texts critically and support this with appropriate textual references.</li> <li>• AO5: Communicate clearly, effectively and imaginatively, selecting and adapting tone, style and register for different forms, purposes and audiences.</li> <li>• AO6: Candidates must use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation. (This requirement must constitute 20% of the marks for each specification as a whole.)</li> <li>• AO7: Demonstrate presentation skills in a formal setting.</li> <li>• AO8: Listen and respond appropriately to spoken language, including to questions and feedback on presentations.</li> <li>• AO9: Use spoken Standard English effectively in speeches and presentations.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p><b>Paper 1:</b> Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing – 1 hour 45 minutes, 80 marks, 50%.            Section A: Reading - one literature fiction text.            Section B: Writing - descriptive or narrative writing.</p> <p><b>Paper 2:</b> Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives– 1 hour 45 minutes, 80 marks, 50%.            Section A: Reading - one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text.            Section B: Writing - writing to present a viewpoint.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Literature, followed by further education opportunities at University including English Literature, Language, Creative Writing, Linguistics and Journalism courses.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"I really enjoy having the opportunity to go through past papers and having the teacher model responses – especially the creative writing element of paper 1." – Evelyn P</p>	

<b>Subject: English Literature GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: AQA</b>	<b>Specification: 8702</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To read in depth, critically and evaluatively, so that students are able to discuss and explain their understanding and ideas.</li> <li>• To develop the habit of reading widely and often.</li> <li>• To appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage.</li> <li>• To write accurately, effectively and analytically about their reading, using Standard English.</li> <li>• To acquire and use a wide vocabulary, including the grammatical terminology and other literary and linguistic terms needed to criticise and analyse what has been read.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Pupils will be assessed on the following Assessment Objectives (AOs) across the course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AO1: Read, understand and respond to texts.</li> <li>• AO2: Analyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects.</li> <li>• AO3: Show understanding of the relationships between texts and the contexts.</li> <li>• AO4: Use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures for clarity, purpose and effect, with accurate spelling and punctuation.</li> </ul> <p>Texts studied:            Shakespeare – Macbeth.            The 19th Century Novel – A Christmas Carol.            Modern Text – An Inspector Calls.            Poetry – Power and Conflict.</p>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p><b>Paper 1:</b> Shakespeare and The 19th Century Novel – 1 hour 45 minutes, 64 marks, 40%.            Section A: Shakespeare - Students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole.            Section B: The 19th-century novel - Students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole.</p> <p><b>Paper 2:</b> Modern Texts and Poetry – 2 hours 15 minutes, 96 marks, 60%.            Section A: Modern texts - Students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text.            Section B: Poetry - Students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster.            Section C: Unseen poetry - Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Literature, followed by further education opportunities at University including English Literature, Language, Creative Writing, Linguistics and Journalism courses.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"I like the diversity of poems we get to study and the way we explore the similarities and differences between them." – Aayush P</p>	

<b>Subject:</b> <b>Mathematics GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: AQA</b>	<b>Specification: 8300</b>																		
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<p>The Mathematics GCSE course provides a broad, coherent, course of study that encourages students to develop confidence in, and a positive attitude towards, maths and to recognise the importance of it in their own lives and to society. It will also provide a strong mathematical foundation for students who go on to study mathematics at a higher level post-16.</p> <p>The course will enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts.</li> <li>• Acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems.</li> <li>• Reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions.</li> <li>• Comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.</li> </ul>																			
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>The course content is made up from five topic areas with the following weightings:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="523 925 1430 1115"> <thead> <tr> <th>Topic Area</th> <th>Foundation Tier (%)</th> <th>Higher Tier (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number</td> <td>25</td> <td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Algebra</td> <td>20</td> <td>30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ratio</td> <td>25</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geometry</td> <td>15</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Probability and statistics (combined)</td> <td>15</td> <td>15</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Topic Area	Foundation Tier (%)	Higher Tier (%)	Number	25	15	Algebra	20	30	Ratio	25	20	Geometry	15	20	Probability and statistics (combined)	15	15
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<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>Students must take three question papers at the same tier. Each paper is a mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as students progress through the paper.</p> <p>Paper 1 is a non-calculator and Paper 2 and 3 allow a calculator. All papers are a written exam of 1 hour and 30 minutes and is 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment.</p> <p>The exams will assess the following assessment objectives (AOs):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AO1: Use and apply standard techniques.</li> <li>• AO2: Reason, interpret and communicate mathematically.</li> <li>• AO3: Solve problems within mathematics and in other contexts.</li> </ul>																			
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Maths, followed by further education opportunities at University including Maths, Medicine, Sciences, Humanities as well as many applied courses such as engineering.</p>																			
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"Even though maths is not my strongest subject I am happy to ask for help in class and find the videos useful on our homework platform. My favourite topics are in geometry. I like that in year 11 we are going over everything we have learnt before and getting better ready for the GCSE exam." - Teddy E</p>																			

<b>Subject: Combined Science GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Edexcel</b>	<b>Specification: 1SC0</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<p>GCSE study in the sciences provides the foundation for understanding the material world. All students should learn essential aspects of the knowledge, methods, processes and uses of science. They should gain appreciation of how the complex and diverse phenomena of the natural world can be described in terms of a small number of key ideas that relate to the sciences that are both inter-linked and of universal application.</p>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding through the specific disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.</li> <li>• Develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science, through different types of scientific enquiries that help them to answer scientific questions about the world around them.</li> <li>• Develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills in the laboratory, in the field and in other learning environments.</li> <li>• Develop their ability to evaluate claims based on science through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions, both qualitatively and quantitatively.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>There are 6 papers which are each 1 hour and 10 minutes in length.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Biology 1:</b> Topic 1 – Key concepts in biology. Topic 2 – Cells and control. Topic 3 – Genetics. Topic 4 – Natural selection and genetic modification. Topic 5 – Health, disease and the development of medicines.</li> <li>• <b>Chemistry 1:</b> Topic 1 – Key concepts in chemistry. Topic 2 – States of matter and mixtures. Topic 3 – Chemical changes. Topic 4 – Extracting metals and equilibria.</li> <li>• <b>Physics 1:</b> Topic 1 – Key concepts of physics. Topic 2 – Motion and forces. Topic 3 – Conservation of energy. Topic 4 – Waves. Topic 5 – Light and the electromagnetic spectrum. Topic 6 – Radioactivity.</li> <li>• <b>Biology 2:</b> Topic 1 – Key concepts in biology. Topic 6 – Plant structures and their functions. Topic 7 – Animal coordination, control and homeostasis. Topic 8 – Exchange and transport in animals. Topic 9 – Ecosystems and material cycles.</li> <li>• <b>Chemistry 2:</b> Topic 1 – Key concepts in chemistry. Topic 6 – Groups in the periodic table. Topic 7 – Rates of reaction and energy changes. Topic 8 – Fuels and Earth science.</li> <li>• <b>Physics 2:</b> Topic 1 – Key concepts of physics. Topic 8 – Energy - Forces doing work. Topic 9 – Forces and their effects. Topic 10 – Electricity and circuits. Topic 12 – Magnetism and the motor effect. Topic 13 – Electromagnetic induction. Topic 14 – Particle model. Topic 15 – Forces and matter.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Sciences, followed by further education opportunities at University including Biology, Chemistry and Physics as well as many other applied courses such as engineering, medicine, forensic science.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"I enjoy science because I find it fascinating to learn about different concepts and topics about how the world works. I personally like Biology the most as I love to learn about how the human body and the natural world functions and how we can overcome problems and difficulties. I also enjoy the challenging aspect of the subject ."- Nathan F</p>	

Subject: Citizenship	Examining Body: N/A	Specification: N/A
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<p>We aim to educate the socially responsible citizens of the future and to do this we believe students need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of how the United Kingdom is governed, its political system and how citizens participate actively in its democratic systems of government.</li> <li>• Understand the role of law and the justice system in our society and how laws are shaped and enforced.</li> <li>• Be aware of future educational steps including apprenticeships, college, sixth form and university, and how these link to student's future careers.</li> <li>• Be provided with information to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds. Together with the knowledge and skills they need for a lifetime of good sexual health.</li> <li>• Be equipped with the skills to enable them to manage their money on a day-to-day basis, and plan for future financial needs.</li> <li>• Build a strong understanding of the importance of good mental and physical health and how these can be maintained.</li> <li>• Develop an interest in, and commitment to our local community and environment with participation in volunteering as well as other forms of responsible activity, that they will take with them into adulthood.</li> <li>• Understand the risks that they may be presented with as they get older, how to identify these and mitigate such risks.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>The course builds upon the broad themes that students studied during Key Stage 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk and safety.</li> <li>• Alcohol, Tobacco and other drugs.</li> <li>• Healthy lifestyle.</li> <li>• Sex, sexuality and sexual health.</li> <li>• Finance.</li> <li>• Identity.</li> <li>• Careers.</li> <li>• Relationships.</li> <li>• Emotional wellbeing and mental health.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>There is no formal assessment for citizenship.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>The knowledge gained in Citizenship supports applications to college, university, or apprenticeships, helping you to make informed decisions about future pathways and achieve your academic and professional potential across a wide range of fields, including health and social care, education, public services, and business.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"Citizenship isn't just another subject; it's actually helped me figure out how to handle real-life stuff like managing stress during exams and understanding my personal finances. It's definitely given me more confidence to speak up in class and make better decisions about my future." - Leo G</p>	

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION



<b>Subject: Physical Education</b>	<b>Examining Body: N/A</b>	<b>Specification: N/A</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To participate in a wide range of physical activities.</li> <li>• To improve or maintain health, fitness and wellbeing.</li> <li>• To develop individual characteristics and teamwork skills.</li> <li>• To understand and acquire the skills to perform in a range of sports and activities.</li> <li>• To understand how to lead and officiate activities.</li> <li>• To instil a passion and motivation for lifelong involvement in physical activity.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Students will have the opportunity to participate, officiate and coach in a range of activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invasion games, such as football, netball, rugby and handball.</li> <li>• Net and wall games, such as badminton, table tennis and tennis.</li> <li>• Striking and fielding games, such as cricket and rounders.</li> <li>• Trampolining.</li> <li>• Athletics.</li> <li>• Health related fitness.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will not receive an official grade, although they will be assessed and monitored for their attitude to learning to aid school termly reports.</li> <li>• Students who have selected GCSE PE will have the opportunity to use Core PE lessons to support their practical assessment in their selected activities.</li> <li>• Students who have selected GCSE PE will be assessed according to the AQA GCSE PE criteria for each of their selected sports for their skill-based practice and competitive performance.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>While there are no qualifications gained from Core PE, there are a wide range of opportunities for students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in physical activity.</p> <p>Students will have opportunities to further their experiences in PE through extra-curricular clubs and competitive fixtures while representing the school.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"Core PE has taught me that making mistakes is just part of improving, a mindset that helps me keep going even when my other subjects get tough. It has also helped me to continue to develop a range of social skills - preparing me for post 16 options." - Chloe P</p>	



# EBACC OPTIONS

French  
Geography  
History



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<b>Subject: French GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Edexcel</b>	<b>Specification: 1FR1</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate confidently with native speakers in speech and writing.</li> <li>• Express and develop thoughts and ideas spontaneously and fluently.</li> <li>• Acquire skills to understand and respond to a rich range of authentic materials.</li> <li>• Develop understanding of the culture of the countries where the language is spoken.</li> <li>• Develop language-learning skills and knowledge for further language study in higher education or employment.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>If students are considering A-levels/University degrees post 16, an EBacc curriculum may be advantageous. A GCSE in languages is an essential element of an EBacc curriculum.</p> <p>Course content Learners will study the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My personal world.</li> <li>• Lifestyle and wellbeing.</li> <li>• My neighbourhood.</li> <li>• Media and technology.</li> <li>• Studying and my future.</li> <li>• Travel and tourism.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>Learners must demonstrate their ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and respond to spoken and written language.</li> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge and accurate application of the grammar and vocabulary prescribed in the specification.</li> </ul> <p>How is it assessed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Paper 1:</b> Speaking in French. Internally conducted and externally assessed (50 marks): 7-9 minutes (Foundation) / 10-12 minutes (Higher) plus 15 minutes' preparation time – 25% of GCSE.</li> <li>• <b>Paper 2:</b> Listening and understanding in French. Externally assessed (50 marks): 45 minutes (Foundation) / 60 minutes (Higher) – 25% of GCSE.</li> <li>• <b>Paper 3:</b> Reading and understanding in French. Externally assessed (50 marks): 45 minutes (Foundation) / 60 minutes (Higher) – 25% of GCSE.</li> <li>• <b>Paper 4:</b> Writing in French. Externally assessed (50 marks): 1 hour 15 minutes (Foundation) / 1 hour 20 minutes (Higher) – 25% of GCSE.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level French courses. Pupils regularly go on to study French single honours or combined with another subject at University. Language skills can lead to a wide range of careers in both the UK and abroad and can add to an individual's employability profile.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"I like French because the teachers are supportive and give you feedback that helps you progress. It allows you to develop a wider knowledge of a different country/culture." - Evie S</p>	

<b>Subject:</b> Geography GCSE	<b>Examining Body:</b> Edexcel B	<b>Specification:</b> 2016
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and extend geographical knowledge of the wider world including locations, places, environments and processes.</li> <li>• Gain understanding of the interactions between people and environments including changes in places and processes that can influence change.</li> <li>• Develop analytical skills, including fieldwork and map reading.</li> <li>• Use of geographical technology such as earth and political processes to understand the world through research and visualising trends.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Geographical investigations - includes physical and human fieldwork investigations. To complete the physical fieldwork students visit a coastal region to conduct an investigation. The human fieldwork requires students to visit an urban location investigating societal processes.</p> <p><b>Global Geographical Issues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hazardous Earth.</li> <li>• Development dynamics.</li> <li>• Challenges of an urbanising world.</li> </ul> <p><b>UK Geographical issues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UK's evolving physical landscape.</li> <li>• The UK's evolving human landscape.</li> <li>• Geographical investigations.</li> </ul> <p><b>People &amp; Environment Issues, Making Geographical Decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People and the biosphere.</li> <li>• Forests under threat.</li> <li>• Consuming energy resources.</li> <li>• Making geographical decisions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p><b>Paper 1:</b> Global Geographical Issues (37.5% of GCSE).          An externally-assessed written exam with three 30-mark sections.</p> <p><b>Paper 2:</b> UK Geographical issues (37.5% of GCSE).          An externally-assessed written exam with three sections.</p> <p><b>Paper 3:</b> People &amp; Environment Issues, Making Geographical Decisions (25% of GCSE).          An externally-assessed written exam with four sections.</p> <p>The exam papers include multiple-choice questions, short open, open response and extended writing questions.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Supports progression to A Level – gives students the opportunity to lay a foundation of knowledge and understanding that can be further developed at A-Level. Geography is a really useful subject as the skills and knowledge gained can be used in almost every job sector. There are lots of geography related jobs available to deal with the consequences of climate change such as in flood risk management and environmental management.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"I've really enjoyed the GCSE Geography course. The way it connects theory to the real world is fantastic. I particularly enjoyed the case studies linked with development and urbanisation because they genuinely help me understand the world and the issues we face. I find Human Geography especially interesting - those topics really spark my curiosity." - Erin C</p>	

<b>Subject: History GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: AQA</b>	<b>Specification: 8145</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand the breadth of history via the use of substantial study of History across eras.</li> <li>To develop the ability to compare one era to another underpinned by the assessment objectives.</li> <li>To develop a coherent pathway from KS3 to KS4.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>If students choose GCSE History, then they will be ensured of a broad, comparable and coherent course of study. Students will develop a secure understanding of chronology, knowledge and understanding of history on different scales and contexts. Pupils will engage with a variety of perspectives, such as political, social and economic, and investigate the contributions of key individuals and groups. In this way students will be able to draw parallels and make links between the distinct areas of study.</p> <p><u>Course content</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Power and the people (1170-Present).</li> <li>Kaiser Reich, Weimar, Nazi Germany (1890-1945).</li> <li>Cold war – Korea and Vietnam, (1950-1975).</li> <li>Elizabeth &amp; site study (1568-1603).</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>Students understanding of the modern world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Period studies:</b> There are four modern world period studies to choose from. Each period study has a focus of one country over a period of around 50 years. The period studies are national in their focus, allowing students to study the domestic history of a country and its people in a period of change. The assessment will enable students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Students will also apply their knowledge and understanding to second order concepts such as causation, consequence and change. Students will also evaluate interpretations.</li> <li><b>Wider world depth studies:</b> There are five modern European/wider world depth studies to choose from. Each depth study investigates international conflict. Students will be able to deepen their understanding of the modern world. Students also investigate the shaping of the nation via the use of thematic studies. Students will be able to understand the history of Britain and key events, people and developments which have shaped the nation. Lastly, students will need to show a coherent understanding of change and continuity across a long sweep of history.</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper 1:</b> Understanding the modern world: Written exam: 2 hours (50% of GCSE).  <b>Paper 2:</b> Shaping the nation: Written exam: 2 hours (50% of GCSE).</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to History A-Level. Careers in archaeology, heritage, archive and museum work. The skills you learn from studying history include investigating, researching documents, examining evidence and presenting arguments. These are valuable in a great number of careers, including law, journalism, politics and management broadcast journalism.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"I really enjoyed learning about the clothing that was connected to your social class during Elizabethan times and how similar that is to our current society." - Lacey P</p>	



# FREE CHOICE OPTIONS

Art & Design

Business Studies

Computer Science/Digital Information Technology

Design Technology: Timbers

Drama

Food Preparation & Nutrition

Media Studies

Music

Philosophy & Religious Ethics

Physical Education/Sport Studies

Psychology



## KS4 AT PBA



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Owning Our Actions, Shaping Our Future.



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<b>Subject: Art and Design GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Edexcel</b>	<b>Specification: 1AD0</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop independent and creative learners, who are reflective and analytical thinkers with enquiring mind</li> <li>• To become confident in taking risks and learn from experience when exploring and experimenting with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques.</li> <li>• To acquire and develop technical skills through working with a broad range of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies with purpose and intent.</li> <li>• To develop knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures.</li> <li>• To demonstrate safe working practices in art, craft and design.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>We advise that students spend a <b>minimum of two hours per week</b> on their GCSE Art and Design coursework outside of lessons. Students opting for this course should have a genuine interest in art and design and a desire to develop both their practical skills and theoretical knowledge in the subject.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Component 1: Personal Portfolio</b> (internally set). Students will explore a wide range of ideas, media, processes and techniques in order to produce a personal portfolio of work.</li> <li>• <b>Component 2: Externally Set Assignment</b> (theme set by the exam board). Students will produce preparatory work before creating a personal response to the theme that has been set by the exam board. The final piece(s) will be completed during a 10-hour sustained focus period under examination conditions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Component 1: Personal Portfolio</b> - 60% of final grade.</li> <li>• <b>Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (ESA)</b> - 40% of final grade.</li> </ul> <p>Students' work must consist of supporting studies (sketchbook and/or loose sheet work) and personal response(s) (final outcomes).</p> <p>Both Component 1 and Component 2 must each show evidence of all four Assessment Objectives.</p> <p>At the end of the course, teachers will mark all student work using the course assessment grid and then a cross section of work will be internally standardised. Marks awarded by the centre will be subject to external moderation by a visiting moderator from Pearson.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to further education, including A-Level Art and Design courses and/or a foundation diploma. There are also a wide range of University courses open to students, including the study of fine art, graphic communication, art history, concept art, animation, fashion and textiles and photography, as well as an increasing number of apprenticeships in creative industries.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"I like the diversity of the course and how we can express our own identities. Art helps to give us an understanding of each other." - Ruby D</p>	

<b>Subject: Business Studies GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Edexcel</b>	<b>Specification: 1BS0</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop an interest and understanding in businesses at a local and national level.</li> <li>• To understand and acquire cognitive skills such as problem solving and critical thinking.</li> <li>• To investigate and analyse real business opportunities and issues to construct well-argued, well-evidenced, balanced and structured arguments.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Students need to immerse themselves in current affairs within the Business world to ensure they can apply knowledge they have gained to real-world scenarios.</p> <p><b>Paper 1- Investigating a small business:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Enterprise and entrepreneurship (Where ideas come from, risk vs reward and adding value).</li> <li>•Business opportunities (Customer needs, market research and competition).</li> <li>•Putting ideas into practice (Aims/objectives, costs/revenues, cash flow and sources of finance).</li> <li>•Making a business effective (Business ownership, location and the marketing mix).</li> <li>•Understanding external influences on business (Stakeholders, technology, legislation and the economy).</li> </ul> <p><b>Paper 2 - Building a business:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Growing the business (Mergers and takeovers, globalisation and ethics).</li> <li>•Business marketing decisions (Pricing strategies, product lifecycle, promotion strategies and distribution networks).</li> <li>•Business operational decisions (Production processes, managing quality and working with suppliers).</li> <li>•Business financial decisions (Business calculations: GPM, NPM and ARR).</li> </ul> <p>Business human resources decisions (Organisational structures, recruitment, training and motivation).</p>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>Understanding and application of course content in the form of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions relating to Business contexts.</p> <p><u>How is it assessed?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two exams (1 hour and 45 minutes each) sat at the end of Year 11.</li> <li>• <b>Paper 1:</b> Investigating a small business - 90 marks - 50% of GCSE (Year 10 content).</li> <li>• <b>Paper 2:</b> Building a business - 90 marks - 50% of GCSE (Year 11 content).</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Business, followed by further education opportunities at University including accountancy, marketing, finance, banking, operations, economics and a host of other broader opportunities.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"The lessons are always varied and exciting, whether you're developing business ideas or assessing customers and the markets, you will always have something to intrigue you during your lessons." - Stan W.</p>	



# COMPUTER SCIENCE GCSE/ DIGITAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BTEC

<b>Subject:</b> Computer Science GCSE / Digital IT BTEC	<b>Examining Body:</b> OCR / Edexcel	<b>Specification:</b> <b>GCSE Computer Science: J277</b> <b>BTEC DIT: 603/2740/6</b>
<b>Intent:</b> <b>Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand the components that make up digital systems, and how they communicate with one another and with other systems.</li> <li>To understand and apply the principles and concepts of computers.</li> <li>To analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Course content and considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following the application process, please note that the school will select which specific course (e.g., GCSE Computer Science, or BTEC Digital Information Technology) will be most appropriate for each individual student.</li> <li>This decision will be based on pupils' suitability towards the course assessment objectives and course content. This rigorous approach ensures that every student is placed on the qualification path where they are most likely to achieve success.</li> <li>GCSE Computer Science: Students are advised that 50% of this course is theory based and whilst the other 50% is focused on programming and logical skills, this is assessed in a written format.</li> </ul> <p><b>GCSE Computer Science:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper 1: Systems Architecture / Memory and Storage / Computer networks / Network security / Systems software / Ethical, legal cultural and environmental impacts of technology.</li> <li>Paper 2: Algorithms / Programming / Boolean logic / IDE's.</li> </ul> <p><b>BTEC Digital Information Technology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Component 1: Interface design and project planning.</li> <li>Component 2: Data collection / dashboards / data manipulations.</li> <li>Component 3: Components of modern technologies.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Assessment</b>	<p><b>BTEC Digital Information Technology:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Component 1: Exploring User Interface Design and Project Techniques – Internal assessment (30% of BTEC qualification).</li> <li>Component 2: Collecting, Presenting and Interpreting Data – Internal assessment (30%).</li> <li>Component 3: - Effective Digital Working Practices – External Exam assessment (40%).</li> </ul> <p><b>GCSE Computer Science:</b> All students are given the opportunity to undertake a programming task(s), either to a specification or to solve a problem.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper 1: (80 marks): 1 hour 30 minutes - 50% of GCSE.</li> <li>Paper 2: (80 marks): 1 hour 30 minutes - 50% of GCSE.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to BTEC Level 3 IT or A Level Computer Science. Further education opportunities at university including in Computing, Computer Science, IT, Information Systems, or IT Management for Business. IT, Computing or Digital Enterprise apprenticeship opportunities.</p>	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>"BTEC DIT is a practical, hands-on course that focuses on coursework rather than a final exam. I like this because it involves real-world projects like designing user interfaces, digital systems, and dashboard plans. I really enjoyed the user design element." - George W</p> <p>Computer science is a new course at Pix Brook Academy, launching in September 2026!</p>	



# DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: TIMBERS GCSE

<b>Subject: Design Technology: Timbers GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Edexcel</b>	<b>Specification: 1DT0</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To prepare students to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world.</li> <li>• To help students to be aware of, and learn from, wider influences on design and technology.</li> <li>• To develop the understanding that all design and technological activity takes place in contexts that influence the outcomes of design practice.</li> <li>• To understand and apply iterative design processes through which they explore, create and evaluate a range of creative, imaginative but realistic real-world outcomes that meet user needs.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>This GCSE consists of 2 parts; Component 1 and Component 2. Component 1 is a written examination and Component 2 is a non-examined assessment (NEA). The components are worth 100 marks each.</p> <p><b>Component 1</b> (written examination) is divided into two sections: core content and material (Timbers) categories. The core content provides students with a breadth of study and the material (Timbers) categories provides students with a depth of study. All students must study the core content plus at least one material category (Timbers).</p> <p><b>Component 2</b> (NEA) has four parts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate - includes investigation of needs and research, and a product specification.</li> <li>• Design - includes producing different design ideas, review of initial ideas, development of design ideas into a chosen design, communication of design ideas and review of the chosen design.</li> <li>• Make - includes modelling, manufacturing, quality and accuracy.</li> <li>• Evaluate - includes testing and evaluating the completed manufactured products.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p><b>Written Examination: 1 Paper</b></p> <p>Section A (Core) and Section B (Material) both contain a mixture of different question styles, including open-response, graphical, calculation and extended-open-response questions. Written examination - 1 hour 45 min - 40 marks available in Section A (Core) and 60 marks available in Section B (Material - Timbers) – 50% of GCSE.</p> <p><b>Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) - Contextual challenge release date: June 2027 (Year 10)</b></p> <p>Undertake a project based on a contextual challenge released by the exam board which tests skills in investigating, designing, making and evaluating a prototype of a student designed product.</p> <p>Non-Examined Assessment – 50% of GCSE - Project will be internally assessed and externally moderated and completed in an academic year. NEA marks - Investigate (16 marks), Design (42 marks), Make (36 marks) and Evaluate (6 marks).</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Pathway to A-Level Product Design/DT, followed by further education opportunities at University including Architecture, Engineering, Product Design, Project Management, Video Games Designer, Civil Engineering and Fashion Design courses.</p>	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>"I have really enjoyed learning to use new tools, machinery and techniques throughout Year 10 and 11. The practical projects are fun and help improve my skills. The theory lessons are taught once a week and help relate to key topics, these are delivered in a variety of interesting ways." - Taylor L</p>	

<b>Subject: Drama GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Edexcel</b>	<b>Specification: 1DR0</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop an interest and understanding of performance, analysis and design skills.</li> <li>• To understand and acquire the skills to perform in a range of practical projects.</li> <li>• To develop an understanding of the role of the Playwright, Director, Designer and Performer.</li> <li>• To develop and enhance an appreciation of live theatre.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>We advise students that they <u>must</u> participate in <u>at least 2</u> extra-curricular Drama opportunities at school. This can be as a performer or a designer.</p> <p>The course involves devising / performing from a script / study of an influential play / study of live theatre.</p>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p><b>Devising:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils will create and develop a devised piece from a stimulus.</li> <li>• Students will perform this piece in front of a small audience and the teacher.</li> <li>• Pupils will analyse and evaluate the devising process and performance in a written portfolio.</li> <li>• Students can choose to be examined on acting, lighting, sound, set or costume.</li> </ul> <p><b>Performance from a text:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are given two extracts to perform or design for.</li> <li>• Students can choose to be examined on acting, lighting, sound, set or costume.</li> <li>• Students perform this in front of a small audience, the teacher and the examiner.</li> </ul> <p><b>Theatre Makers in Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will study a complete play.</li> <li>• Students will go to the theatre to see a live production.</li> <li>• Understanding how to approach a play as an actor, designer and director.</li> <li>• Part of the exam is writing about the production we see.</li> </ul> <p><u>How is it assessed?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devising (40% of overall grade): This component is internally marked by the Drama teacher and externally moderated by the exam board. consists of a practical exam and an extended written portfolio.</li> <li>• Performance from a text (20%): This component is marked by an external examiner..</li> <li>• Theatre Makers in Practice (40%): This is a written exam at the end of Year 11.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Drama and Theatre Studies or Level 3 BTEC Performing Arts courses. This can also be followed by further education opportunities at University and Drama School. Drama can help with most career paths because of the skills it helps you to build.</p>	
<b>Student's view</b>	<p>"Drama has allowed me to understand the real world and develop morals through performing." - Connor C</p>	

<b>Subject: Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: AQA</b>	<b>Specification: 8585</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills.</li> <li>• Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical characteristics of food as well as a sound knowledge of the nutritional content of food and drinks.</li> <li>• Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health.</li> <li>• Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Students are expected to provide their own containers, cooking dishes and pre-prepared ingredients from home for practical lessons. Students should be proficient at cooking and willing to practice at home.</p> <p><u>Course content</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas of theoretical content:</li> <li>• Food, nutrition and health.</li> <li>• Food science.</li> <li>• Food safety.</li> <li>• Food choice.</li> <li>• Food provenance.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation. Apply knowledge and understanding of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation. Plan, prepare, cook and present dishes, combining appropriate techniques. Analyse and evaluate different aspects of nutrition, food, cooking and preparation.</p> <p><u>How is it assessed?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Component 1 - Food preparation and nutrition:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Written examination: 1 hour 45 minutes (50% of GCSE).</li> <li>◦ Multiple choice questions (20 marks).</li> <li>◦ Five questions each with sub-questions (80 marks).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Component 2 - Non-examined assessment (NEA):             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Task 1: Food investigation (30 marks- 15%). Report (1,500–2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.</li> <li>◦ Task 2: Food preparation assessments (70 marks- 35%). Written portfolio consisting of five sections including photographic evidence. Practical 3 hour exam.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Opportunity to study Food and Nutrition at Level 3 (A-Level/college), for example Level 3 Certificate in Food Science and Nutrition. This qualification will also provide a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for pupils if they do not progress to further study in this subject. In addition, the qualification will introduce students to a new way of thinking about food which could help them make informed decisions about a wide range of career pathways.</p>	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>"I enjoy the practical work a lot, you get to make a nice range of foods so you learn lots of new skills. The theory course work is also manageable and interesting." - Emily G</p>	

<b>Subject: Media Studies GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Eduqas</b>	<b>Specification: C680QS</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand the central role and impact of the media in contemporary society and culture, including how it shapes perceptions, enables communication and cultural expression, facilitates social participation, and drives significant economic activity.</li> <li>• To equip learners with the ability to critically debate important questions about the media, using a theoretical framework to analyse both established and evolving media forms and products from different historical periods.</li> <li>• To study a range of rich and stimulating products, including those for different and less familiar audiences, working from the product outwards</li> <li>• To apply theoretical knowledge by offering exciting opportunities to develop media production skills, enabling learners to apply their knowledge of media language and representation and become creators of meaning themselves.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Students will study a range of media products from four different frameworks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Media Language:</b> How do media texts communicate meaning?</li> <li>• <b>Representation:</b> How are different social groups, places, and ideas portrayed in the media?</li> <li>• <b>Media Industries:</b> Who owns and controls the media?</li> <li>• <b>Audiences:</b> Who consumes the media?</li> </ul> <p>Students will study a variety of exciting and relevant media forms, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Television:</b> In-depth analysis of a TV Crime Drama.</li> <li>• <b>Print Media:</b> Comparing newspapers and magazines.</li> <li>• <b>Advertising &amp; Marketing:</b> Analysing classic and contemporary adverts and film posters.</li> <li>• <b>Music Video &amp; Online Media:</b> Studying contemporary music videos and their online presence.</li> <li>• <b>Other Forms:</b> Pupils will also touch on forms such as Radio and Video Games.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>Component 1: written exam (1 hour 30 mins): 40%: explore a range of media products including newspapers, advertising and film marketing.</p> <p>Component 2: written exam (1 hour 30 mins): 30%: An in depth analysis of two media forms (television and music videos).</p> <p>Component 3: NEA (non-exam assessment): 30%: A practical media production based on a set brief.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Media Studies is a brilliant foundation for many future careers and qualifications. It's an excellent stepping stone for <b>A-Level Media Studies</b> or <b>Film Studies</b>, and opens doors to industries such as: <b>Journalism</b> and <b>Publishing</b>; <b>Advertising</b> and <b>Marketing</b>; <b>Film and TV Production</b>; <b>Digital Media</b> and <b>Social Media Management</b>; <b>Public Relations (PR)</b>.</p>	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>Media Studies is a new course at Pix Brook Academy, launching in September 2026!</p>	

<b>Subject: Music GCSE</b>	<b>Examining Body: Edexcel</b>	<b>Specification: 1MU0</b>
<b>Intent: Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop a passion for music through the development of performing, composing, and appraising.</li> <li>To acquire the skills to engage critically and creatively with a wide range of music.</li> <li>To understand the role that music plays in different cultures and contexts.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Course content and considerations</b>	<p>We advise that students should already be playing a musical instrument (including voice) before the start of the course. By the end of Year 10, students should not be playing at less than a grade 3 level.</p> <p><u>Course content</u></p> <p>Students will study the musical elements of 8 set works as well as developing their performance and composition skills. The 8 set works are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Instrumental music (1700-1850):</b> L van Beethoven – 1<sup>st</sup> movement from Piano Sonata no.8 in C minor 'Pathetique', JS Bach – 3<sup>rd</sup> Movement from Brandenburg Concerto no.5 in D Major.</li> <li><b>Vocal music:</b> H Purcell – Music for a While, Queen – Killer Queen (from the album <i>Sheer Heart Attack</i>).</li> <li><b>Music for Stage and Screen:</b> S Schwartz – Defying Gravity (from <i>Wicked</i>), J Williams – Main title/rebel blockade runner (from the soundtrack to <i>Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope</i>).</li> <li><b>Fusion:</b> Afro Celt Sound System – Release (from the album <i>Volume 2: Release</i>), Esperanza Spalding – Samba Em Preludio (from the album <i>Esperanza</i>).</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation: Assessment</b>	<p>Understanding and application of course content in the form of multiple choice, short and extended answer questions.</p> <p>Development of performance skills as a soloist and as part of an ensemble.</p> <p>Development of composition skills.</p> <p><u>How is it assessed?</u></p> <p><b>Component 1: Performance (30%)</b> – Non-exam assessment. Students will perform two pieces of music. One must be a solo (with or without accompaniment) and the other music be an ensemble performance.</p> <p><b>Component 2: Composition (30%)</b> – Non-exam assessment. Students will write two pieces of music. The first is a free composition and can be written in any style/genre for any type of ensemble. The second will be released by the exam board in September of the awarding year. This piece of music will have to fit a brief which will be supplied by the exam board.</p> <p><b>Component 3: Appraising (40%)</b> – Written exam lasting 1 hour and 45 minutes. Students will be assessed on their understanding of musical elements as they relate to the eight set works. The exam also consists of musical dictation and a piece of unfamiliar listening.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Music (or equivalent), followed by further education opportunities at University including degrees in performance, composition, or musicology.</p>	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>"I picked GCSE music because music has always been a big part of my life and allows me to express myself. I enjoy being able to create my own music and learning about a variety of songs." - Oliver B</p>	



# PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS ETHICS GCSE

<b>Subject:</b> Philosophy and Religious Ethics GCSE	<b>Examining Body:</b> AQA	<b>Specification:</b> A
<b>Intent:</b> <b>Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To challenge students with questions about belief, values, meaning, purpose and truth.</li> <li>• To understand religious and non-religious worldviews and acquire skills to think critically, analytically, and to work with abstract ideas, leadership and research.</li> <li>• To gain an appreciation of how Philosophy, Religion and Ethics form the basis of our culture.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Course content and considerations</b>	<p>If students select Philosophy, Religion and Ethics (PRE) they will be following the full GCSE course. Students will be examining two different religious perspectives. As pupils are aware from their experience of PRE so far, <b>they do not need a religious faith to study the course.</b> The GCSE is designed to move with the times. Therefore, it is important that students have an interest in what's going on in the world. Students will frequently look at current issues that affect both religious and non-religious people in our society, along with expressing their own personal view on these issues.</p> <p>The skills students can develop in PRE are extremely helpful once they leave school. Being able to express an opinion clearly, discuss and debate in a reasoned way, and possess developed writing skills, will all be important whether pupils decide to go to a Sixth Form, college, or start an apprenticeship.</p> <p>This PRE qualification exposes students to a wide range of concepts allowing them to confidently interpret, contextualise and analyse the beliefs and practices of religions and world views they encounter.</p> <p><u>Course content</u></p> <p><b>Section A - Philosophy of Religious Beliefs, Teachings and Practices:</b> Christianity and Islam.  <b>Section B Themes - Ethical studies:</b> Relationships and Families /Crime and Punishment / Peace and Conflict / Religion and Life.</p>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Assessment</b>	<p>Students will be assessed on their understanding of:          Component 1: The study of religions: beliefs, teachings and practices.          Component 2: Thematic and ethical studies.          Philosophy of Religion.</p> <p><u>How is it assessed?</u>          Students will take two written exams lasting 1 hour 45 minutes.          Each exam will be out of 96 marks, plus 6 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG)          Both exams will have two 5 part questions of 1, 2, 4, 5 and 12 marks.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Progression to A-Level Philosophy and Ethics, Theology or other subjects in the social sciences. These can develop on to university courses, serving as excellent preparation for degrees in Philosophy, Politics, Economics, English, Sociology, Criminology, Art History, or any other Humanities, Arts or Social Science course.</p>	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>"PRE is really good as it gives an interesting insight into religion and philosophy rather than just surface levels. It also promotes the use of your own judgement instead of a set right or wrong answer." - Freya S</p>	



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION GCSE / SPORT STUDIES CAMBRIDGE NATIONALS

<b>Subject:</b> Physical Education GCSE / Sport Studies CNAT	<b>Examining Body:</b> AQA / OCR	<b>Specification:</b> <b>GCSE PE: 8582</b> <b>Sport Studies CNAT: J829</b>
<b>Intent:</b> <b>Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop an interest and understanding in physical activity, health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• To understand and acquire the skills to perform in a range of sports and activities</li> <li>• To develop an understanding of the role of physical activity and sport in society.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Following the application process, please note that the <b>school will select which specific course (e.g., GCSE PE, or Cambridge Nationals Sports Studies) will be most appropriate for each individual student.</b></p> <p>This decision will be based on pupils' suitability towards the course assessment objectives and course content. This rigorous approach ensures that every student is placed on the qualification path where they are most likely to achieve success.</p> <p>GCSE PE: We advise students that they <b>must</b> participate in <b>at least</b> 3 sports or activities at school or club level to consider GCSE PE as an option. They must participate at school/club level in a combination of <b>TEAM</b> and <b>INDIVIDUAL</b> sports/activities.</p> <p><u>Course Content</u></p> <p><b>GCSE PE:</b> Paper 1 = Anatomy and physiology / Physical Training / Movement Analysis          Paper 2 = Socio-cultural Factors, Sport Psychology / Health, Fitness and Wellbeing          Non-Exam Assessment = Practical Performance</p> <p><b>Sport Studies CNAT:</b> Contemporary Issues in Sport / Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities / Sport and the Media</p>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Assessment</b>	<p><b>GCSE PE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper 1: (78 marks): 1 hour 15 minutes – 30% of GCSE.</li> <li>• Paper 2: (78 marks): 1 hour 15 minutes – 30% of GCSE.</li> <li>• Non-exam assessment: 40% of GCSE             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Practical Performance in three activities (75 marks).</li> <li>◦ Coursework: Analysis and evaluation of performance in one named activity (25 marks).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Sport Studies CNAT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contemporary issues in sport - 1 hour 15 minute written examination (70 marks) - 40% of overall grade.</li> <li>• Performance and leadership in sports activities - Broken into 5 assignment tasks (80 marks) - 40% overall grade.</li> <li>• Sport and the media - OCR set assessment (40 marks - coursework) - 20% of overall grade.</li> </ul>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	Progression to A-Level PE, BTEC Sport followed by further education opportunities at University including Sport Science, Sport Psychology, Sports Coaching and Sports Management courses.	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>"GCSE PE is an engaging course. I particularly like the practical element and the range of opportunities that you can have, for example rock climbing." - Josh S</p> <p>Sport Studies CNAT is a new course at Pix Brook Academy, launching in September 2026!</p>	



# PSYCHOLOGY GCSE

<b>Subject:</b> Psychology GCSE	<b>Examining Body:</b> OCR	<b>Specification:</b> J203
<b>Intent:</b> <b>Course aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop an understanding of the relationship between psychology and personal, moral, social and cultural issues, and develop an understanding of ethical issues.</li> <li>• To develop an understanding of psychological issues, the contribution of psychology to individual, social and cultural diversity, and how psychology contributes to society.</li> <li>• To build skills in presenting information, developing arguments and drawing conclusions through a critical approach to psychological evidence, developing as reflective thinkers.</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Course content and considerations</b>	<p>Psychology is broadly accepted to be a branch of science, and as such, there are crossovers with some content and the way it is delivered. Students should have confidence in being able to apply mathematical skills to psychological practice.</p> <p>Studies and Application in Psychology Paper 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal Psychology - What are the different types of crime and why do people commit them? How far can rehabilitation programmes be effective?</li> <li>• Development - What are the crucial stages of childhood development and how do schools support this?</li> <li>• Psychological Problems - An introduction to mental health, including how these can be defined. A focus on schizophrenia and clinical depression.</li> </ul> <p>Studies and Application in Psychology Paper 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Influence - Why do people show conformity and obedience even in the most awful situations?</li> <li>• Memory - How do we acquire and recall memories? Is it possible that our memories can be altered?</li> <li>• Sleep and dreaming - What are the stages of sleep and why are these crucial for a healthy lifestyle? Why do we dream? What happens if someone experiences Insomnia?</li> </ul>	
<b>Implementation:</b> <b>Assessment</b>	<p><b>Paper 1:</b> 50% of the course. 1 hour and 30 minutes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Criminal Psychology (24 marks)</li> <li>2.Development (24 marks)</li> <li>3.Psychological Problems (24 marks)</li> <li>4.Research Methods (18 marks) - learners will be required to design an investigation.</li> </ol> <p><b>Paper 2:</b> 50% of the course. 1 hour and 30 minutes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Social Influence (24 marks)</li> <li>2.Memory (24 marks)</li> <li>3.Sleep and Dreaming (24 marks)</li> </ol> <p>Research Methods (18 marks) - learners will be required to respond to a novel source.</p>	
<b>Impact: Careers and further learning</b>	<p>Students can study A Level Psychology at post-16, before further progression at university. The field of Psychology is hugely diverse and allows for opportunities within Education, Sport, Forensic, Health, amongst many others.</p>	
<b>Student's View</b>	<p>Psychology is a new course at Pix Brook Academy, launching in September 2026!</p>	



# SUBJECT LEADERS

## Compulsory Core Subjects

English Language GCSE - srichards@bestacademies.org.uk

English Literature GCSE - srichards@bestacademies.org.uk

Mathematics GCSE - spowell@bestacademies.org.uk

Combined Science GCSE - eadams@bestacademies.org.uk

Citizenship - fcook@bestacademies.org.uk

Physical Education - rnicholl@bestacademies.org.uk

## EBACC Subjects

French GCSE - vlewis@bestacademies.org.uk

Geography GCSE - ipearce@bestacademies.org.uk

History GCSE - sbrooks@bestacademies.org.uk

## Other option subjects

Art and Design GCSE - kpoxson@bestacademies.org.uk

Business Studies GCSE - nmcguigan@bestacademies.org.uk

Computer Science GCSE / Digital Information Technology BTEC - ebrant@bestacademies.org.uk

Design Technology: Timbers GCSE - wfleckney@bestacademies.org.uk

Drama GCSE - ljones@bestacademies.org.uk

Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE - hkinnear@bestacademies.org.uk

Media Studies GCSE - edaplyn@bestacademies.org.uk

Music GCSE - tweed@bestacademies.org.uk

Philosophy and Religious Ethics (PRE) GCSE - scollins@bestacademies.org.uk

Physical Education GCSE / Sport Studies Cambridge Nationals - rnicholl@bestacademies.org.uk

Psychology GCSE - ccrellin@bestacademies.org.uk