

Options 2026

Subjects to study in Years 10 & 11

KS4 Programme of Study

As a Year 9 student you are now approaching a very important stage of your education where key subject decisions need to be made.

The decision does not need to be a scary one and there are plenty of people on hand to help you with your decision.

At Key Stage 4, all students must study the following compulsory core subjects:

- **English Language**
- **English Literature**
- **Mathematics**
- **Science**
- **Religious Studies**
- **Physical Education**
- **Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)**

In addition to core subjects, you will study up to 3 additional subjects.

Occasionally, you may have subject clashes regarding your option choices, when two subjects run at the same time. We will do our best to try to give you your first choices and will amend the Options Block if possible. This is not always achievable, however, in these circumstances we would discuss with you possible alternative subjects and explore any other means of resolving the clash.

Religious Studies and PSHE are delivered through our Form Time Programme.

EBacc

The EBacc (English Baccalaureate) is a broad set of academic subjects at GCSE that helps to keep your options open for further study and future careers.

The EBacc subjects:

- **English language and English Literature**
- **Maths**
- **Geography (Humanity)**
- **Spanish (Language)**
- **All Sciences, including Computer Science**
- **History (Humanity)**
- **French (Language)**

Before you decide which GCSE options you would like to take, it is worth looking online at your potential future options (e.g. university courses) to see which A-level subjects would be useful as 'facilitating subjects'. This could give you a better idea about which subjects to choose at GCSE, some of which fall into the EBacc category. This is especially important if you are not yet sure about what you would like to study at university, as the EBacc ensures you have a broad mix of academic subjects at GCSE.

If you would like to study the full English Baccalaureate you must include at least **one humanity and one language** in your option choices.

The EBacc is optional and you should not feel limited to the EBacc set of subjects, providing you have thought about your future study plans and your interests.

If you require any further information, please ask your Year 9 Achievement and Support Team or the school's C&K careers adviser. You can also find further information online.

The options process

Key Dates:

MONDAY 9th MARCH – Options form opens

FRIDAY 20th MARCH – Options form closes

On Monday 9th March you will receive a **Parent Mail** with a link to our online options form for you to complete and submit with your child.

Should you have any questions, queries or concerns,
please contact: options@rastrick.polarismat.org.uk



Your options

Our curriculum is broad and balanced to offer students the best opportunities in taking their next steps following their GCSEs. All students will study English (Language and Literature), Maths and Science. All students will then select a subject from **Option 1** - either History, Geography, French or Spanish. All students will then have a choice of subjects for **Options 2 and 3**. To ensure students study a broad range of subjects there are some combinations which cannot be chosen together. The process is represented in the visual below:

English Language

English Literature

Maths

Science

Option 1 - Choose one of the following:

History (Humanity)

Geography (Humanity)

French (Language)

Spanish (Language)

Option 2 & Option 3 - Choose two of the following:

Art

Drama

Geography

Design

OCR Enterprise & Marketing

Art Textiles

Food

History

Religious Studies

Creative iMedia

Business Studies

Preparation & Nutrition

Music

Spanish

Health & Social Care

Computing

French

Product 3D

Sociology

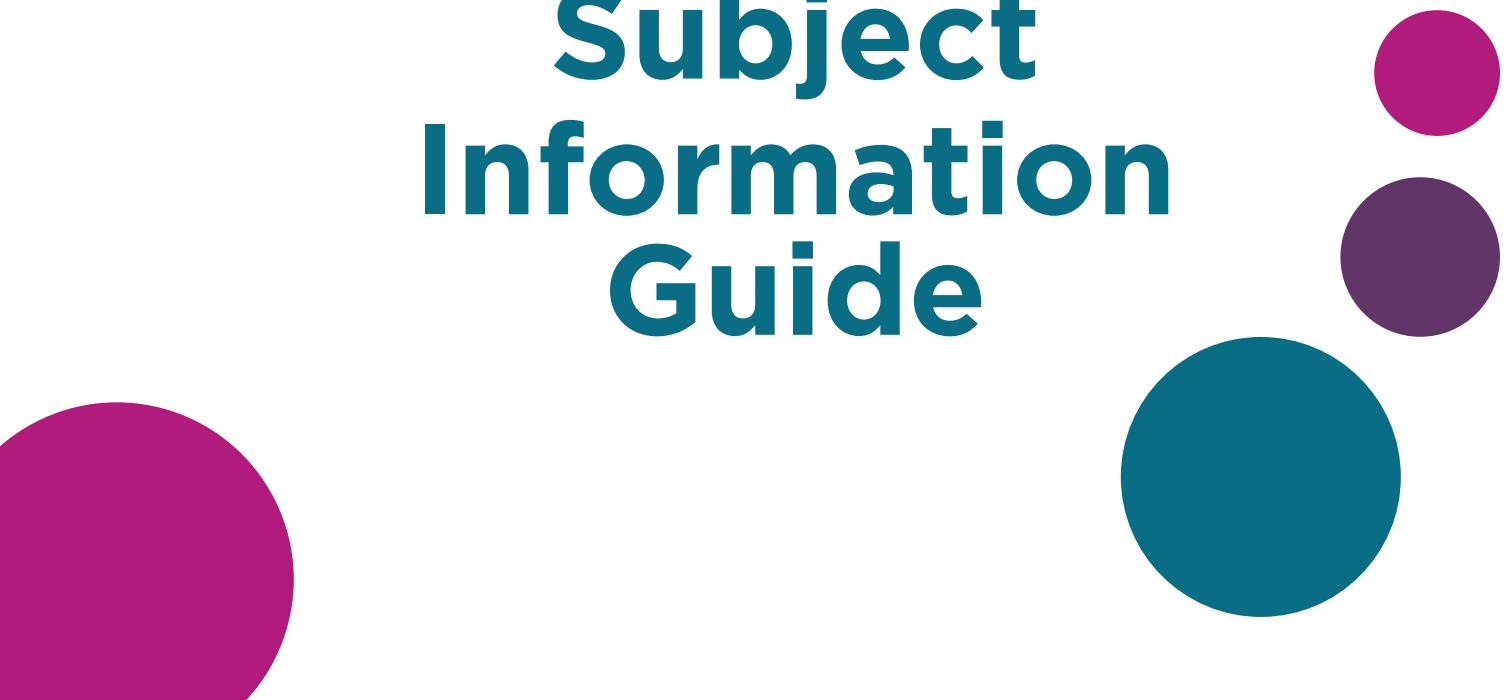
However, please note that you can only choose **one subject** from those that are grouped together below:

Product 3D Design
Art
Art Textiles

GCSE Business
OCR Enterprise & Marketing

For example, you **cannot** select both GCSE Business and OCR Enterprise & Marketing but **can** select GCSE PE and OCR Enterprise & Marketing

GCSE Subject Information Guide



English Language and English Literature

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mrs Hancock

Topics covered:

- **English Literature** - Shakespeare - The 19th Century novel - A modern (20th century) drama - Poetry
- **English Language** - Exploration of a variety of genres of writing from romance to gothic, science fiction to dystopia - Development of creative writing skills - Development of spoken language skills

How is this subject examined:

2x written English Language examinations

2x written English Literature examinations

1x spoken language endorsement

Career Opportunities:

Advertising account executive - Advertising copywriter - Arts administrator - Public relations (PR) officer - Broadcasting presenter - Digital copywriter - Editorial assistant - English as a foreign language teacher - Lexicographer - Journalist - Private tutor - Publishing copy-editor/proofreader - Web content manager - Writer - Archivist - Arts administrator - Education consultant - Information officer - Learning mentor.

Maths

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr Zahid

Topics covered:

The year 9 Maths curriculum is designed to give you the opportunity to consolidate and extend your skills from year 7 and 8, and progress to more advanced skills and problem solving within geometry, number and algebra. This will ensure that you are truly ready to start your GCSE journey in year 10. At GCSE you will learn how to tackle more demanding GCSE problems that require a firm grasp of data, geometry, and particularly algebra. In year 11 you will extend your learning into more complex and abstract mathematics.

How is this subject examined:

Three exams at the end of Year 11. All topics can appear on any of the three papers.

Paper 1 - Non-Calculator 80 Marks, 90 mins

Paper2 - Calculator 80 Marks, 90 mins

Paper3 - Calculator 80 Marks, 90 mins

Career Opportunities:

Acoustics consultant - Actuary - Aerospace engineer - Air traffic controller - Civil engineer - Criminologist - Cyber intelligence officer - Data analyst-statistician - Economist - Electrical engineer - Financial adviser - Insurance underwriter - Investment analyst - Meteorologist - Research scientist - Software developer - Stockbroker.

Sciences

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr O'Callaghan

Topics covered:

- **Biology** – Organisms, Genes & Evolution, Ecology
- **Chemistry** – Matter and the periodic table, Earth's resources, Chemical reactions
- **Physics** – Forces and motion, Energy and particles, Electromagnetism

How is this subject examined:

Combined (dual) science: Six 1 hour 15 mins exams (two biology, two chemistry, two physics)
– The total for all six exams is then calculated, and a double GCSE grade is generated from the cumulative scores of these exams and awarded as two science GCSEs.

Separate (triple) science: Six 1 hour 45 mins exams (two biology, two chemistry, two physics)
– The total of the two biology exams is calculated, and a grade is generated from the cumulative scores of these exams and is awarded as a single Biology GCSE.
The same process also occurs for the chemistry and physics.

The decision as to which students study combined (dual) science and which study separate (triple) science is made by the science department in the final term of year 9. The decision for who studies which course is primarily made on student attainment.

Career Opportunities:

Accountant - Aerospace engineer - Analytical chemist - Architect - Astrophysicist - Chemical engineer - Civil engineer - Computer programmer - Cosmetic chemist - Plus many more!

Art

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr Dolan

Topics covered:

- **3D ceramics work**
- **Mixed media**
- **Textiles**
- **Photography**
- **Technical painting**
- **Expressive mark making and recording**
- **Glass sculpture**

How is this subject examined:

Students will produce a sketch book of work over two years which will count towards 60% of their GCSE grade. Students will then produce an exam project set externally by the AQA exam board. Sketch book and development work 60%. Practical exam 40%.

Career Opportunities:

Illustration - Fashion textiles - Commercial printing - Commercial photography - Web design - Television prop and costume design.

Art textiles

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mrs Barker

Topics covered:

- **Embroidery (Machine & Hand)**
- **Fabric Manipulation**
- **Printing and Dying Techniques**
- **Embellishment Techniques**
- **Fashion and Surface Design**



GCSE Art Textiles is a vibrant and dynamic course which teaches skills such as weaving, felting, stitching, appliquéd, construction methods, and printing. It allows students the freedom to express themselves using a variety of techniques and materials. It is not only inspiring and enjoyable but equips them with the skills to continue the subject with confidence at A-level and beyond.

How is this subject examined:

Students will produce a portfolio of evidence over the two years that will count towards 60% of their GCSE grade. Students will then complete a practical exam project set by the exam board that makes up the remaining 40%

Career Opportunities:

Fashion Designer/Illustrator - Visual merchandise - Graphic designer - Teacher - Surface pattern designer - Buyer for fashion/interior fabrics - Interior designer.

Product Design 3D

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Miss Cove

Topics covered:

- **3D outcomes**
- **Exploring wood, metal and plastic**
- **Laser cutting**
- **3D printing**
- **Lathe work**
- **Casting including concrete and resin**

GCSE Product Design 3D allows students to explore a range of materials to produce 3D outcomes that are creative and innovative. Students will be able to gain new skills in both traditional and computerised techniques and create a personalised project tailored to their skills and interests.

How is this subject examined:

Students will produce a portfolio of evidence over the two years that will count towards 60% of their GCSE grade. Students will then complete a practical exam project set by the exam board that makes up the remaining 40%.

Career Opportunities:

Product designer - Architect - Engineer - Graphic designer - Industrial design - Construction - Plumbing - Joinery.

Computer Science

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr Reilly

Topics covered:

Computer Science is engaging and practical, inspiring creativity and problem solving. It encourages students to develop their understanding and application of the core concepts in Computer Science. Students also analyse problems in computational terms and devise creative solutions by designing, writing, testing and evaluating programs.

How is this subject examined:

The course is 100% examination over 2 exam papers. There is also a course requirement to provide students with the opportunity to undertake programming tasks.

PAPER 1: Systems Architecture - Memory and Storage - Computer networks, connections and protocols - Network Security - Systems Software - Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental impacts of digital technology

PAPER 2: Algorithms - Programming fundamentals - Producing robust programs - Boolean logic - Programming languages and Integrated Development Environments

Career Opportunities:

Students will be able to progress onto other Computer Science courses as well as jobs in web and app development and roles as ICT technicians.

Drama

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mrs Homan

Topics covered:

- **Introduction to drama (practitioners, methods and skills)**
- **Understanding drama**
- **Devising drama**
- **Texts in practice**

How is this subject examined:

Written and practical coursework 40%

Performances to an audience and an examiner 20%

Written exam 40%

Career Opportunities:

Actor - Stage manager - Arts administrator - Drama teacher - Drama therapist Television production assistant - Radio/television presenter - Theatre director - Journalist - Script writer.



Food Preparation & Nutrition

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Ms Frith-Clarkson

Topics covered:

- **Food science**
- **Food preparation skills**
- **Food, nutrient and health**
- **Food safety**

This course is delivered over two years, with the majority of key learning being covered within the first year of the course.

How is this subject examined:

50% Non exam assesment & 50% examination:

Task 1: Food investigation task (15% - 10 hours) Task set by the exam board

Task 2: Food preparation task (35%) 3 main dishes to be planned, prepared, cooked and presented in 3 hours. Task set by the exam board.

50% examination paper: A 1hr 45mins exam based on the theory of the topics covered in class which will be taken at the end of Year 11.

Career Opportunities:

Nutritionist - Medical professions - Hospitality - Chef.



Geography

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr Cooper

Topics covered:

- **Natural hazards**
- **Ecosystems**
- **Rivers and coasts**
- **Urban world**
- **Economic development**
- **Resource management**
- **Fieldwork**

How is this subject examined:

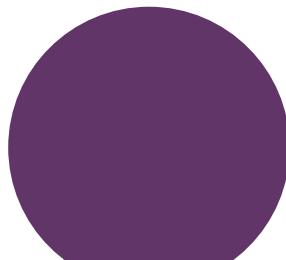
Paper 1 - Physical Geography, 35% of the course, 1 hour 30 min exam

Paper 2 - Human Geography, 35% of the course, 1 hour 30 min exam

Paper 3 - Fieldwork and decision making, 30%, 1 hour 15 min exam

Career Opportunities:

Cartographer - Civil Servant - Environmental consultant - Geologist - Journalist - Land Surveyor - Landscape architect - Lecturer - Town Planner - Travel writer - Teacher.



History

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr George

Topics covered:

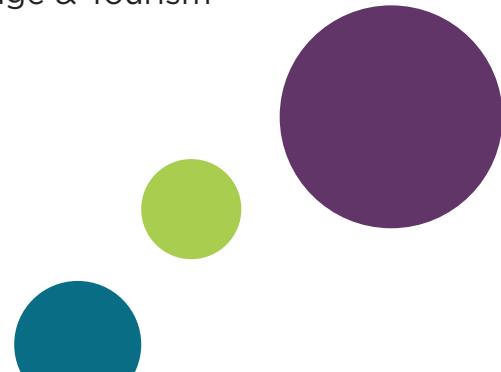
- **Conflict & tension 1894-1918** (First World War)
- **Germany 1890-1945**
- **Health & medicine c1000-present**
- **The Norman Conquest 1066-c1100**

How is this subject examined:

Two exams: 2 hours each

Career Opportunities:

Marketing & PR - Accountancy - Law - Business & management - TV & Radio - Banking - Social work - Conservation - Town planning - Heritage & Tourism - Building restoration - Police - Journalism - Teaching.



MFL

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr Kordbacheh

Choices: French/Spanish

Topics covered:

- **Culture and Identity**
- **Local, national, international and global areas of interest**
- **Current and future studies and employment**

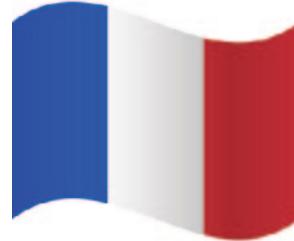
How is this subject examined:

100% Exam - The four skills count for 25% each.

(Writing, Reading, Speaking and Listening)

Career Opportunities:

Broadcast journalist - Interpreter - Teacher - Customer services - Marketing executive - Detective - Tour manager - Diplomatic service officer - Football liaison officer - Travel inspector - International aid worker - Translator.



Music

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mrs Fakie

Topics covered:

- **Understanding music listening and contextual understanding**
- **Performing music**
- **Composing music**

How is this subject examined:

40% Understanding music - written exam, 1 hour 15 minutes

30% Performing music - two pieces, one solo and another as an ensemble

30% Composing music - 2 compositions

Career Opportunities:

GCSE Music will show employers you have a wide range of interests and skills, as well as demonstrating that you have shown dedication and commitment to learning a musical instrument and to studying music. GCSE Music can also help with confidence and performance skills needed in situations such as job interviews.

Composing - Music therapy - Music publishing - Sales - Careers in TV/Radio - Teaching - Playing opportunities in the Armed Forces - Music technician.



Physical Education



Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mrs Dunne

Topics covered:

Paper 1:

- **Anatomy and physiology (Biology):** Skeleton, muscles, heart & lungs
- **Biomechanics (Physics):** Levers & planes
- **Physical training:** Components of fitness, training plans & injury prevention

Paper 2:

- **Health, fitness & well-being:** Sport and lifestyle & nutrition
- **Socio-cultural influences on sport (Sociology):** Media, sports behaviour & participation
- **Sports psychology:** Types of skills & coaching

How is this subject examined:

Theory exams 60%: Exam 1 Fitness and Body Systems /Exam 2 Health and Performance

Practical Sports 30% : Team sports & Individual sports - Skills & gameplay

Analysis and Evaluation of Performance 10%: Coursework: Plan and evaluate a training plan.

Career Opportunities:

Sports development officer - Physiotherapist - Sports injury rehabilitator - Director of sport - PE teacher - Physiotherapist - Performance analyst - Sports therapy - Sports nutritionist - Sports psychologist - Sports scientist - Sports massage therapist - Sports biomechanics - Coach - Broadcaster - Public services (Police/Fire Service/Health care) - Strength and conditioning coach - Lab technicians (Drug testing) - Sport analyst.

Business Studies

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mr Seale

Topics covered:

Business activity, marketing and people

You will be introduced to business concepts and issues concerning the activities of a business. You will explore the purpose and role of a business from spotting an opportunity through to the growth of an established business, as well as looking at the role of marketing and human resources.

Operations, finance and influences on business

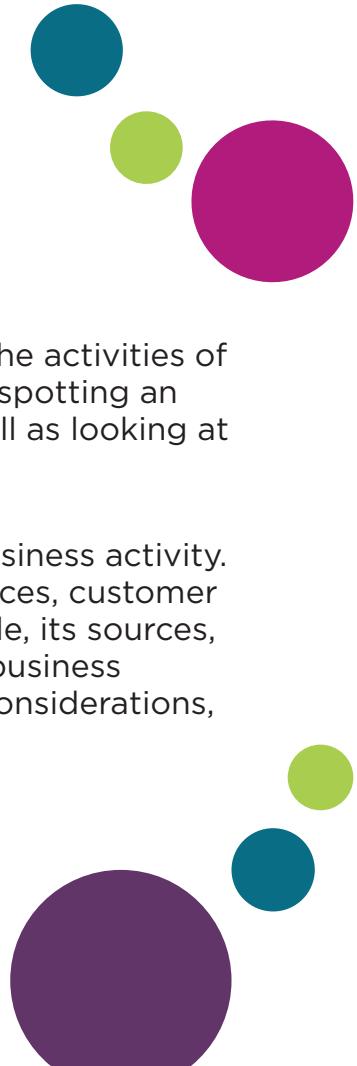
You will take a closer look at the role of operations and finance in business activity. Operations include production processes, quality of goods and services, customer service, and working with suppliers. We also cover finance and its role, its sources, costs, profit and loss, cash and cash flow. You will also explore how business responds to external influences, such as ethical and environmental considerations, the economic climate and globalisation.

How is this subject examined:

Two exams at the end of Year 11, which are weighted at 50% each.

Career Opportunities:

Finance, Management - Commerce - Sales - Product Management - Investment and Marketing.



Religious Studies

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Miss D'Amado

Topics covered:

- **Issues of life and death** (Creation; abortion; euthanasia; afterlife)
- **Issues of human rights** (Prejudice and discrimination; wealth and poverty)
- **Issues of relationships** (Role of family; marriage; divorce; sex before marriage)
- **Issues of good and evil** (The nature of good and evil; capital punishment; the aims of punishment)
- **Christianity** (A study of main beliefs and practices of Islam)
- **Islam** (A study of the main beliefs and practices of Christianity)

How is this subject examined:

Issues units: 2 hour exam (50%)

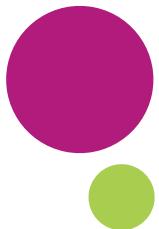
Christianity: 1 hour exam (25%)

Islam: 1 hour exam (25%)

Career Opportunities:

We develop analytical and evaluative skills, as well as increasing knowledge of a wide variety of beliefs held by many people in the UK and around the world. These skills and knowledge provide a firm basis for excelling in a number of professions.

For example: Law - Human Resources - Medical professions - Management positions - Journalism - Politics - Education - Civil Service - Police



Sociology

Course Type: GCSE

Course Leader: Mrs Fielding

Topics covered:

- **Understanding social processes**
- **Families**
- **Education**
- **Understanding social structures**
- **Social difference and stratification**
- **Crime and deviance**
- **Research methods**

How is this subject examined:

Two exams, 1hr 45 mins each at the end of the 2-year course.

Career Opportunities:

Data Analyst - Lawyer - Paralegal - Police officer - Probation officer - Social service case worker - Community organizer - Health care service administration - Human resource manager - Market researchers and advertiser - Teacher - Researcher.

Vocational Subjects

OCR Enterprise & Marketing

(Business Studies)

Course Type: Vocational

Course Leader: Mr Seale

Topics covered:

- Characteristics, risk and reward for enterprise
- Market research to target a specific customer
- What makes a product financially viable
- Creating a marketing mix to support a product
- Factors to consider when starting up and running an enterprise
- Develop a brand identity to target a specific customer profile
- Create a promotional campaign for a brand and product
- Plan and pitch a proposal
- Review a brand proposal, promotional campaign and professional pitch.

How is this subject examined:

- Students produce a portfolio of work looking at real world scenarios (60% of final grade)
- Examination element at end of Year 11 (40% of final grade)

Career Opportunities:

OCR Enterprise & Marketing provides a strong foundation for employment, with students progressing, with further training, to a wide range of careers training such as Management, Sales, Product Management, Investment and, especially, Marketing and Finance.

IT/Creative iMedia

Course Type: Vocational

Course Leader: Mr Seale

Topics covered:

Pre-production skills: This is the examination unit and will cover skills relating to the planning of media products in industries such as Film, Gaming and Animation.

Creating digital graphics: You will learn to use professional graphics software (Photoshop) to create a variety of graphics that meet the needs of a given scenario.

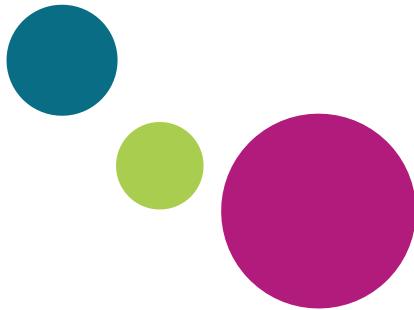
Creating a digital game: You will plan and create an interactive, engaging 2D video game using industry-standard software (Construct 2) to meet a client's requirements.

How is this subject examined:

The course is made up of three units; two of which are coursework worth 30% each and one is exam. The coursework equates to 60% of the qualification and the exam is 40%. Grades are given from Pass to Distinction * equivalent to a grade 1-9 GCSE.

Career Opportunities:

Careers in ICT, Creative and Digital Media. You can progress to more advanced studies and Media-related careers, including A level qualifications and apprenticeships.



Health and Social Care

Course Type: Vocational

Course Leader: Mrs Dunne

Topics covered:

Component 1: Human Lifespan development (understanding human growth across life stages, the factors which affect it and how individuals deal with life events)

Component 2: Health and social care services and values (understanding the types of health and social care services available, the barriers to them and the skills, attributes and qualities required to give care)

Component 3: Health and well-being (factors which affect health and well-being, interpreting health indicators and person-centred approaches to improving health and well-being)

How is this subject examined:

The course is made up of three units in total, two of which are coursework and one theory exam. The coursework equates to 60% of the qualification. Grades are awarded from a Level 1 pass up to a Level 2 distinction*.

Career Opportunities:

These courses can lead onto jobs in Healthcare such as doctors, pharmacists, nurses, midwives, healthcare assistants and physiotherapists or social care such as care assistants and social workers.

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