

GCSE/BTEC Exam Year  
**2026**

A GUIDE TO

# Key Stage 4 Options

BRITISH SCHOOL MUSCAT



**BRITISH SCHOOL  
MUSCAT**

# Welcome

## Choosing your Key Stage 4 Options

Welcome to all students & parents, please find the following booklet as a reference guide to making informed decisions for Key Stage 4.

### Key Stage 4 Options

The British educational curricular offers students the opportunity to choose a flexible and personalised approach to their curriculum choices at Key Stage 4.

Students are given the opportunity to select from **four** additional 'Option subjects' to complement their **core** subjects of study.

British School Muscat offers GCSE and BTEC Level 2 qualifications for study at Key Stage 4. All are excellent options, offering a 2 year course for students aged 14 - 16 enabling them to successfully apply for Post 16 Education.

The combination of GCSE Core, GCSE Options and BTEC Options offers students a vibrant mix of opportunities to explore a rich and contemporary curriculum.

### Where can I find information?

British School Muscat provides a Curriculum Guide for Key Stage 4, this 'Options' Booklet for Key Stage 4 containing Option choices and an Options Evening event typically held in November. This event offers and opportunity to meet departments and enquire around the subject.

Further to this, students can discuss option choices with their form tutors, Head of Year and Head of Department prior to making confirmed Options choices.

### What next?

You will have received a letter explaining in detail the Options process. [You can view this again here for reference.](#)

There are a number of upcoming events and deadlines to be considered as students begin to consider Options in Key Stage 4. A timeline is provided to help with this process.

## Key Stage 4 Option Considerations

The following questions are always worth asking:

- Do I need to choose this subject to qualify for my likely path?
- If I am not sure what I would like to do in the future, have I chosen subjects that will keep my options open?
- Am I capable of being successful in this subject?
- Am I really interested in studying this subject?

At Key Stage 4 there remains core subjects of study and additional Option subjects. Students are to **choose 4 Option subjects, one of which is to be a language.**

It is good practice to hold a reserve subject that students may wish to study if a course does not run in the upcoming academic year or if the course is oversubscribed,

### Timeline of events

A more comprehensive timeline can be found in the letter sent to parents in October. The key highlights to be aware of include

- Options Evening: 7th November 2023
- Options Form: 8th November 2023
- Options Deadline One: 16th November 2023
- Options Deadline Two: 22nd February 2024
- Options Confirmation: June 2024
- Key Stage 4 begins: August 2024

At BSM we know how important it is to talk with people to make an informed choice. With Options evening, parent engagement events, parents evenings, you can rest assured advice and support is available throughout the whole process. If you wish to make an inquiry, please contact our Senior School Office on [senioroffice@britishschoolmuscat.com](mailto:senioroffice@britishschoolmuscat.com) for help.

We hope you find this Options booklet beneficial in making informed choices for study at Key Stage 4.

Thank you

# Options information

## Pathways and choices

Students can design their choices to suit their aspirations and broaden their horizons, ensuring they are best for the world. In this respect the following pathways are all viable options to be considered

## Guidance on Choosing Options Courses

Typically at this stage it is common for students to fall into two clear categories

- Those who are unsure on what they wish to study and where they wish to take their studies
- Those who are clear on what they wish to study and why

Every student is unique and every ambition is personal to them. The advice we offer is designed to support the process of making choices for Options at Key Stage 4 which support students into future study at A Level and beyond. Form tutors, teachers, heads of department and senior leaders are all on hand to help answer any questions students or parents may have.

## Students and parents please note the following

*While every effort will be made to meet students' choices, it may not be possible to provide every combination requested. We also reserve the right to not offer a course if there is insufficient demand for it. If either of these scenarios occur, parents and students will be advised and offered appropriate advice and guidance.*

When making option choices, please follow the deadlines for submission. *Students who miss deadlines may not be able to receive their preferred choices.*

Students will have two opportunities to decide on options choices and may change their mind at the second opportunity if their new option choices fit the constructed option blocks.

## Key Stage 4 Options: support

### Head Of Year & Heads of Department

Year 9 students can speak with their Head of Year for guidance around the Options process. It is the Head of department or teacher within the department who can begin to answer subject specific questions. Remember the focus is on studying what you enjoy and experiencing new fields of study which were not available at Key Stage 3

### Options Event

Students and parents will be invited to attend the Options event where they may meet with subject specialists and be given an overview of the options process, university applications and next steps

### Options Booklet

The options booklet will provide students and parents with more information around choosing options and the option courses available.

### Unifrog

Each student of Year 9 will have access to Unifrog, an online tool designed to assist students in researching careers and courses. Students will be introduced to this in September and provided with associated login details at this time.

### Future Planning

Some students will have a clear focus on their goals and understand the Options choices they want and links to A Level/Post 16 studies. To help all parties The Russell group of Universities have produced an interactive guide to choosing subjects for study at degree level. This can be found at [www.informedchoices.ac.uk](http://www.informedchoices.ac.uk).



# British School Muscat: student destinations

Upon completion of their studies at Post 16, British School Muscat students went on to study at Universities around the world, in a few years, you will be one of these students...but where! [#everyone can](#)



## Option

# Art & Design

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 120 minutes per fortnight

## Overview

Art & Design encourages innovative and imaginative responses from students in their interpretation of subject matter presented.

The process of studying Art is an ongoing visual enquiry that has an infinite number of creative possibilities. The Art & Design department uses a wide range of media from the traditional drawing & painting, printmaking, collage and ceramics through to photography & digital manipulation.

We are looking to engender creative thinking and originality through stunning visual vocabulary. We ensure all artwork produced has a political, social, cultural or historical context.

Who is it for: Anyone who loves being Artistic: creative, imaginative, expressive, experimental and open minded. This course is for people who enjoy a range of learning styles, it is for people who celebrate their originality and express their ideas in a variety of styles and materials.

Creative Careers: fashion, graphics, architecture, make up, illustration, animation, jewellery, art therapy, photography, ceramics, furniture, special effects

*I enjoy the freedom you get in art.  
One topic could have endless  
possibilities in the ways you and  
others interpret it."*

*Imagination is more important than  
knowledge. Einstein*

## What will I learn

Personal Portfolio unit 1: Completed in Year 10 this project is about our local culture. It incorporates a field trip to places of local interest and students develop skills in painting & drawing, surface texture, digital media, photography, textiles and ceramics

Personal Portfolio unit 2: Completed in term 1 of year 11, this project is based on natural forms which students investigate in a personally chosen direction, selecting media and techniques of their choice

Externally Set Assignment: The starting point comes from the exam board which students interpret individually during term 2 before the 10 hour timed test (usually held in late April).

## How can I support my learning

Appreciate that Art & Design can be found wherever you look- fashion, textiles, architecture, illustration, animation, interior design, graphics... everywhere!

Draw what you see, draw from your imagination. Be inspired by artists online, in books and in galleries or museums. Follow your favourite artists or designers on social media.

Download some art apps/ programmes and use them to doodle on your photos and to create new images

Be patient and enjoy the process from concept to realisation.



## Option

# Creative Media: Lv2 BTEC

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: Up to 90 minutes per fortnight

## Brief overview

The Level 2 International BTEC in Creative Media is a vocational course, which concentrates on the creation of digital media. It is wholly practical and teaches students the creative processes involved in producing and manipulating photography, a range of print media products, moving image shooting and editing and marketing techniques.

With a studio equipped with cameras, tripods, green screens, lighting, gimbals, teleprompters, microphones, etc. the emphasis is on production and students are assessed in house; there are no examinations.

## How can I support my Learning?

To succeed in Creative Media students need to be willing to research thoroughly across all medias to understand how they are all inextricably linked. The department has an extensive library of specialist media books which cover every aspect extensively.

## How am I Assessed?

All work is digitally uploaded onto the student's own website where it is assessed internally and moderated externally. Assessment consists of 5 criteria:

- research and investigation
- problem solving
- technical skills
- professional practice
- communication skills

## What will I learn

The course is broken down into the following key units:

### Unit 1 – Research, develop and Propose

- Research a digital media product set by Pearson
- Develop an idea for a digital media product based on your research
- Propose your idea explaining both content and format

### Unit 4 – Digital Video Production

- Plan, shoot, edit and publish a short film of 3-5 minutes

### Unit 7 – Digital Photography

- Apply digital photography processes, skills and techniques to plan and take photographs for a digital media product.

### Unit 10 – Advertising Production

- Research, plan and produce a cross platform marketing campaign for a product aimed at a global audience

*"He who controls the media controls the minds of the public"*  
Noam Chomsky



Option

# Business

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 30 minutes per fortnight

## Brief overview

You might have an interest in business and want to start your own business one day. You may have an enquiring mind and be interested in learning about the world around you, how businesses are set up and what it is that makes someone a great entrepreneur and how to manage that business effectively.

Simply, this GCSE is for people interested in knowing how the world of business works. The vast majority of people will be employers or employees in their working life. This course provides an initial insight into what those roles involve and what you can do to increase your chances of success in the work environment. It's not just a course for budding entrepreneurs, although this course will be just what entrepreneurs are looking for.



## What will I learn

### Theme 1: Investigating Small Business

- Enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Spotting a business opportunity
- Putting a business idea into practice
- Making the business effective
- Understanding external influences on business

### Theme 2: Building a Business

- Growing the business
- Making marketing decisions
- Making operational decisions
- Making financial decisions
- Making human resource decisions

Assessed via two 105 minute exams comprising of calculations, multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-writing questions, completed at the end of Year 11.

## How can I support my learning

- Take a proactive approach to learning. Seek support from online resources, your peers and your teachers.
- Keep notes up to date and regularly practice exam technique.
- Read around the subject to develop wider knowledge of Business in the real world.

*Amazon is worth more than the GDP of both Switzerland and the Netherlands... combined.*

*"The subject was interesting and intriguing and the lessons were informative and enjoyable"*



## Option

# Computer Science

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: Short Research Activities

## Brief overview

During the course students will learn how to understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science. The course encourages student to analyse problems in computational terms, through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging their own scripts in Python.

The subject encourages students to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically. With strong ties to mathematics, students must use their skills and apply them to computer science.

The course is assessed through two papers, both worth 50%:

- Paper 1 - Written Exam (1hr 30mins)
- Paper 2 - On Screen Programming Exam (2hrs)

Students can study Computer Science and go on to a career in Engineering, Business, or any type of Science. There are also a multitude of Computing related to degrees, allowing students to focus in on a specific area of interest eg. Cyber Security, Networking or App Development



## What will I learn

By the end of Year 11 students will have an understanding of the components that make up digital systems and how they communicate with one another and with other systems, as well as an understanding of the impact digital technology has on wider society, including issues of privacy and cybersecurity.

These are taught through 6 Units:

- Topic 1: Computational thinking
- Topic 2: Data
- Topic 3: Computers
- Topic 4: Networks
- Topic 5: Issues and impact
- Topic 6: Problem solving with programming

## How can I support my learning

On the Google Classroom students will find various links to supporting websites which can help support their learning, such as Craig n Dave with interactive Lessons that students can use to work independently and further their knowledge!

Each Unit of study also has a Learning Resources area which they can drop into at any time with additional activities, notes, videos and questions.

To improve their programming students may wish to access the W3Schools Python Course, which offers a strong foundation in all of the skills they will need.

*The waste energy generated from one bitcoin transaction is equivalent to binning two iPhones.*



## Option

# Lv2 BTEC – Performing Arts Dance

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 90 minutes per fortnight

## Brief overview

Level 2 International BTEC in Performing Arts Dance, is a vocational course that is equivalent to a GCSE. The programme allows students to develop their choreographic, technical and performance ability.

Students will explore a range of dance styles and professional practitioners, gaining an appreciation of the surrounding context and artistic intention.

Within lessons, students work collaboratively with their peers to rehearse, choreograph and perform pieces for assessment, show performances and technical development.

The course is predominantly practical and explores the creative processes involved in choreographing and performing a range of solo and ensemble pieces, across a breadth of dance styles. Students are assessed in house through practical and written coursework tasks; there are no examinations.

*Did you know that some of the UK's best footballers have also had dance training?*

*See where Dance may take you....*

*"Dance has taught me the importance of discipline, whilst giving me the freedom to express myself with confidence"*

*Quote from a Year 11 student.*

## What will I learn

The course is broken down into the following key units:

### Unit 1 – Introduction to Performance and Production Arts.

- Learners will explore the performing arts industry, developing skills and collaborative working practices through workshops, classes and rehearsals.

### Unit 2 – Performing Arts Production

- This unit has a Pearson Set Assignment. Learners must complete a Pearson Set Assignment Brief.
- Learners will take part in the planning, and preparation of a dance production in a performance role.

### Unit 4 – Devising Performance Work

- Learners will work as part of a group to create, rehearse and perform a dance piece in response to a given stimulus.

### Unit 6 – Community Performance

- Learners will gain an understanding of organisations and community performance projects and how they make a difference in community settings. They will plan and develop a community performance project for primary students.

Grades awarded are:

Distinction\* [A\*], Distinction [A], Merit [C], Pass [E], Fail [U]



## Option

# Design & Technology

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: Up to 90 minutes per fortnight

## Brief overview

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare students to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Students will gain awareness and learn from wider influences on Design and Technology including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Students will get the opportunity to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise.

GCSE D&T allows students to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials, techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth.

The assessment consists of the project (Non exam assessment) which makes up 50% of the marks and a 1 hour 45 minute exam paper that students will sit at the end of year 11 which makes up the other 50% of the marks.

## What will I learn

Students will complete a practice project in year 10 to further enhance their knowledge from KS3. Alongside the project they will complete 3 units of theory in year 10.

In year 11 students will work on their final project which they will choose and will be based on 1 of 3 contexts set by the examination board (Pearson Edexcel). The remaining 2 units of theory will be covered in year 11.

The 5 units of theory that students will cover are:

- New and emerging technologies
- Energy, materials, systems and devices
- Materials and their working properties
- Common specialist technical principles
- Timber based materials

## How can I support my learning

To make progress in Design & Technology, students need to be aware of the world around them and understand how products are designed and made. Students can support their learning by ensuring they stay up to date with new technologies and watch plenty of videos on how products are made. The following websites will also support you.

[www.technologystudent.com](http://www.technologystudent.com)

[www.focuselearning.co.uk](http://www.focuselearning.co.uk)

<https://www.autodesk.com>

[www.youtube.com/user/camtopher](https://www.youtube.com/user/camtopher)

*"Design & Technology is the best subject of the week"*

*Did you know that there are over 23,000 different species of trees*



## Option

# Drama

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 60 minutes per fortnight

The course has a 60% Practical and 40% Written *weighting*, with the majority of lessons focused on a practical approach to learning.

## Brief overview

The Edexcel Drama course is an exciting, rewarding and highly creative subject to study at GCSE. It is not just for students who want to be performers. Your time studying this course will equip you for many life skills: teamwork, listening, public speaking, time management, confidence in your imagination, problem solving – and as you study your set texts or explore your devising stimuli you will encounter aspects of history, sociology, psychology.

This course offers you an excellent insight into the world of theatre and you will develop skills in performance, design, analysis and evaluation. Your confidence will grow and you will discover the ability to find solutions to a wide range of problems. It is hard work but great fun.



*"One thing that I was surprised to gain from studying Drama, is the importance of empathy"*

*Quote from a Year 10 student.*

## What will I learn

### Component 1- Devising (40%)

Students devise a piece of theatre based on given stimuli, which they then will *perform*. They will record the process in a written coursework portfolio that records the creation of an original piece of drama. This component is internally marked and externally moderated.

### Component 2- Performance from a text (20%)

Students will *perform* two extracts from the same set text, which can be presented as a solo, with a partner or in a group. This is externally assessed.

### Component 3 - Theatre Makers in Practice (40%)

Students study one set text from the viewpoint of a director, performer and designer and review a contrasting piece of live theatre performance. All works are explored through practical and theoretical tasks culminating in a 105 minute written exam that is externally assessed.

## How can I support my learning

It is important to see a wide range of performances, either live or online, to support your understanding of theatrical styles, genres and contexts.

All students are also invited to join BSM's Youth Theatre and gain the valuable experience of collaborative performance to larger audiences.

*"I regard the theater as a serious business, one that makes or should make man more human, which is to say, less alone."*

*-Arthur Miller.*

## Core Subject

# English Language & World Literature

### Timetabled periods per fortnight:

7 periods per fortnight

### Brief overview

Our main aim is make the study of English exciting and purposeful for as many students as we can at all levels in school.

In doing so, we want students to:

- read a range of literature and language texts (pre and post 1914) including texts from other cultures;
- think deeply and widely;
- have the confidence to write creatively;
- learn to express themselves persuasively both orally and in writing for a variety of audiences and purposes;
- develop a 'social conscience' and sense of global responsibility, with an understanding, awareness and respect for other cultures;
- become a reflective learner;
- communicate in a confident, articulate manner in a variety of contexts;
- read critically; speak and write analytically.

We believe that the department's strength lies in its strongly held commitment to the teaching of language and literature, and in the diversity of approaches employed by its staff. As a department, we share a belief in the importance of being kind, as well as demanding, and we emphasise the building of confidence.

### What I will learn

We are currently studying the Cambridge International First Language English and World Literature specifications.

Some classes study the iGCSE First Language English and iGCSE World Literature courses whilst some classes study the iGCSE First Language English course only. The World Literature course involves reading a wide range of drama, prose and poetry, working on creative writing, empathic writing and critical analysis skills; students are encouraged to engage with how literature widens our knowledge of ourselves and the world around us. The First Language English course requires students to explore a wide range of fiction and nonfiction, learning comprehension, summary, analytical and critical skills.

### How I can support my learning

To make progress in iGCSE English, students will be encouraged to:

- read widely beyond the texts studied in class
- get involved in creative approaches to the texts - debates, book reviews, role plays, filming monologues, literary chats, book groups etc
- use the plethora of resources available on GC
- complete ongoing reflection to enact upon improvement targets
- read news websites

Students are also provided with a list of useful literacy websites and recommended reading lists.



*"The test of literature is, I suppose, whether we ourselves live more intensely for the reading of it."* Elizabeth Drew



## Option

# Geography

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

## Brief overview

Geography follows the Cambridge International GCSE Syllabus. This provides a balance between Human and Physical Geography and encourages students to develop their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of themes and issues within an international context. Students engage in a variety of learning experiences over the two years including in depth class discussion about pertinent issues, case study productions, presentations, class debates and structured research projects.

All students take part in a school funded field trip which is the basis of their coursework. Coursework is written by students in class with their teacher and is worth 27.5% of the total grade. Coursework is completed in Year 10, with Year 11 focused on knowledge and skills for the final assessment.

## How can I support my learning

Geography is about the world around you and as such there is plenty you can do to prepare. Keep up with the news, watch documentaries and discuss the things that interest you - it's all Geography!



*If you want to make a difference, and have a varied, fulfilling and well rewarded career; choose Geography!*

## What will I learn?

### THEME 1 : Population & Settlement

- Population Structure and Change
- Settlements and Urban Studies.

### THEME 2: The Natural Environment

- Earthquakes and Volcanoes
- Rivers & Coasts
- Weather, Climate & Ecosystems

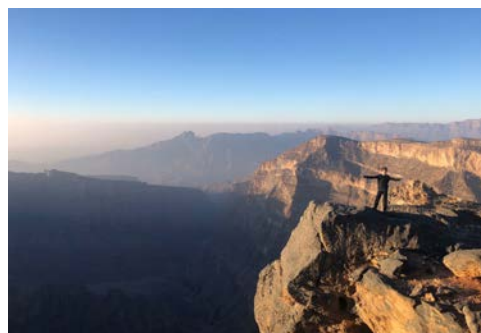
### THEME 3: Economic Development

- Industry
- Tourism
- Energy & Water
- Environmental Risks of Economic Development

Geography allows the opportunity for students to develop communication skills, graph and mapping techniques, ICT and GIS applications, debate and discussion skills, as well as honing problem solving abilities.

Geography is a study of the world at every level and as such supports almost ALL careers and supports sciences such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Maths.

The units about tectonics connect well with future paths linked to geology and careers in resource exploration (fossil fuels). The economic geography units deal with how trade and globalisation shape our world and are pertinent for careers in international business and the emerging, and advancing economies. The study of coastal and climatic hazards prepares students for work in finding answers for a warming planet, and the international development & geopolitical elements can lead to careers in international relations and finding solutions to global inequality, conflicts and ending poverty.



## Option

# History

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 30 minutes per fortnight

## Brief overview

Students will be assessed across three exam papers at the end of the course.

### Paper 1

#### **Crime and Punishment c1000 - Present**

A look at how crimes have been defined, laws enforced and punishments decided in Britain across the last millenium. Including an in-depth study into the criminal underbelly of Victorian Whitechapel.

### Paper 2 - includes 2 themes

#### **Superpower Relations and the Cold War**

An essential course for understanding differing political ideologies, the development of nuclear weapons, and diplomacy.

#### **Elizabethan England**

A depth study into the rule of the last Tudor monarch, and how society, international relations and attitudes changed over time.

### Paper 3

#### **Weimar and Nazi Germany**

A modern depth study, looking at different aspects of political, social, economic and cultural history across the years 1919-39 in Germany.

*"The past creates the present. It is utterly impossible to understand or navigate the world unless you understand History."*

**Dan Snow**

## What will I learn

You will develop skills such as analysing sources for their usefulness, as well as debating different interpretations of history.

We encourage students to become strong communicators, who are able to debate complex issues with their peers. The best historians can cope with the challenge of constructing coherent and detailed answers to difficult questions under timed conditions.

Our course is essential for those wishing to pursue the studies of Journalism, Law, Philosophy, International Relationships or Politics in the future.

## How can I support my learning

There are reading lists available - just ask your History teachers! We can also recommend a number of documentaries and podcasts.

You can find our courses on Seneca Learning, an excellent revision tool.

- <https://www.historyhit.com/>
- <https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/>



## Core Subject

# Mathematics

## Timetabled periods per fortnight

6 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: 90 minutes per fortnight

## Brief overview

Mathematics follows the Edexcel (9-1) GCSE syllabus. This course is designed to provide a thorough coverage of essential Mathematical concepts and knowledge, ensuring students have opportunity to develop problem-solving skills and gain mastery of both calculator and non-calculator methods across the two year course.

Students will engage in a variety of learning experiences including opportunities to challenge themselves against Mathematicians across the world in the Intermediate UKMT competition.

The experiences and knowledge gained from the GCSE course will position students to progress into Post 16 study for Mathematics or Further Mathematics, subject to meeting entry requirements. The GCSE Mathematics course also provides a strong foundation for a broad number of Post 16 subjects, such as Physics or Computer Science.

Students in the Accelerated GCSE group (Set 1) complete their GCSE at the end of Year 10, and will instead spend Year 11 working on the first 3 modules of the International A- Level, culminating in 3 90 minute assessments. All other groups complete their course at the end of Year 11.

*There is a strong positive correlation between independent revision  $R$  at home, in hours per week, and grade  $G$ , awarded for a GCSE qualification.*

*"Decimal numbers have a point: they may not be rational, but they are real"*

## What will I learn

In the GCSE Mathematics course, you will develop fluency in your knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts. You will be further enhancing your mathematical reasoning, and you will be expected to comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information presented to you in a variety of different ways.

The syllabus consists of five strands:

1. Number (15%)
2. Algebra (30%)
3. Ratio, proportion and rates of change (20%)
4. Geometry and measures (20%)
5. Statistics and probability (15%)

At the end of the course, there are three equally weighted written examination papers of 90 minutes each. Each paper will cover all five strands in the percentages shown above. Paper 1 is a non-calculator assessment and Paper 2 and Paper 3 are calculator assessments. Each paper has 80 marks.

## How can I support my learning

It is anticipated that students undertake independent revision over and above their homework assignments. We recommend the following websites for independent revision at home:

- Dr Frost
- Corbett Maths
- MathsBot



## Option Language

# Modern Foreign Languages

## Arabic

### Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 60 minutes per week.

### Brief overview

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1) in Arabic has been developed to help students of all abilities progress and develop a passion for languages, through culturally engaging content.

The engaging and inspirational course of study that will enable students to manipulate and use the target language effectively, independently and creatively, so that they have a solid basis from which to progress to A Level or employment

Students will be expected to produce and understand Arabic script. Students will develop their ability to communicate with Arabic native speakers in both speech and writing.

*"I enjoy using my Arabic in Oman. It helps support me in my lessons."*

### What will I learn

Students will study across a variety of contexts relevant to their age and interests and will also develop a greater awareness of the culture of Arabic-speaking countries.

The five themes are:

1. Identity and culture
2. Local area, holiday, travel
3. School
4. Future aspirations, study and work
5. International and global dimension

### How can I support my learning

To make progress in Arabic please immerse yourself in the culture, traditions and language by watching Arabic cartoons, films and television – you can find these on Arabic TV channels and on Youtube.

Being in Oman and in the Gulf, you can benefit from mingling with Arabic speaking friends. Try to read as much Arabic as possible such as road signs, leaflets and even menus. Listen to podcasts and the radio.

*Arabic is an official language in 26 countries. There are 280 million Arabic native speakers worldwide.*





## Option Language

# Modern Foreign Languages

## French

### Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 60 minutes per week.

### Brief overview

The Pearson iGCSE (9–1) in French has been developed to help students of all abilities progress and develop a passion for languages, through culturally engaging content.

The engaging and inspirational course of study will enable students to manipulate and use the target language effectively, independently and creatively, so that they have a solid basis from which to progress to A Level or employment. This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course. The assessments are clear, accessible and discriminate effectively. Our objective is to enable students of all abilities to develop their French language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

Students are assessed on their listening, reading, speaking and writing. Each skill is equally weighted.

### What will I learn

Students will study across a variety of contexts relevant to their age and interests and will also develop a greater awareness of the culture of French-speaking countries. Students study all of the following themes on which the assessments are based.

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

Each theme comprises subtopics. Students will be able to produce the language confidently.

### How can I support my learning

To make progress in French please immerse yourself in the culture, traditions and language by watching French cartoons, films and television – you can find these on international TV channels and on Youtube.

Try to read as much French as possible, make sure you are using the plethora of websites like Seneca The Language Gym and Quizlet. Listening to French radio and podcasts will also help.



*French is the official language of 29 countries*

## Option Language

# Modern Foreign Languages

## German

### Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 60 minutes per week.

### Brief overview

The Pearson iGCSE (9–1) in German has been developed to help students of all abilities progress and develop a passion for languages, through culturally engaging content.

The engaging and inspirational course of study will enable students to manipulate and use the target language effectively, independently and creatively, so that they have a solid basis from which to progress to A Level or employment. This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course. The assessments are clear, accessible and discriminate effectively. Our objective is to enable students of all abilities to develop their German language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

Students are assessed on the following skills. Each skill is equally weighted:

1. Listening
2. Reading
3. Speaking
4. Writing

### What will I learn

Students will study across a variety of contexts relevant to their age and interests and will also develop a greater awareness of the culture of German-speaking countries. Students study all of the following themes on which the assessments are based.

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

Each theme comprises subtopics. Students will be able to produce the language confidently.

### How can I support my learning

To make progress in German please immerse yourself in the culture, traditions and language by watching German cartoons, films and television – you can find these on international TV channels and on Youtube. Try to read as much German as possible, make sure you are using the plethora of websites like Seneca The Language Gym and Quizlet. Listening to German radio and podcasts will also help.

*Deutsch ist mein Lieblingsfach.*

*Germany is an economic powerhouse and is known for having world class universities.*



## Option Language

# Modern Foreign Languages

## Spanish

### Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 60 minutes per week.

### Brief overview

The Pearson iGCSE (9–1) in Spanish has been developed to help students of all abilities progress and develop a passion for languages, through culturally engaging content.

The engaging and inspirational course of study will enable students to manipulate and use the target language effectively, independently and creatively, so that they have a solid basis from which to progress to A Level or employment.

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams at the end of the course. The assessments are clear, accessible and discriminate effectively. Our objective is to enable students of all abilities to develop their Spanish language skills to their full potential, equipping them with the knowledge to communicate in a variety of contexts with confidence.

Students are assessed on their listening, reading, speaking and writing. Each skill is equally weighted.

### What will I learn

Students will study across a variety of contexts relevant to their age and interests and will also develop a greater awareness of the culture of Spanish-speaking countries. Students study all of the following themes on which the assessments are based.

Theme 1: Identity and culture

Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest

Theme 3: Current and future study and employment

Each theme comprises subtopics. Students will be able to produce the language confidently.

### How can I support my learning

To make progress in Spanish please immerse yourself in the culture, traditions and language by watching Spanish cartoons, films and television – you can find these on international TV channels and on Youtube.

Try to read as much Spanish as possible, make sure you are using the plethora of websites like Seneca The Language Gym and Quizlet. Listening to Spanish radio and podcasts will also help.



*Spanish is the official language of 21 countries and over 400 million people speak Spanish.*

## Option

# Music

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework expectations: 30 minutes of homework is set three times a fortnight. Daily practise on an instrument is expected also.

## Brief overview

GCSE Music is ideal for students with a love of the subject who would like to develop their understanding through studying a wide spectrum of music. It is a highly regarded academic subject and develops the three skills of:

**1) Performing (30%):**

assessed through coursework and performances

**2) Composing (30%):**

assessed through coursework

**3) Appraising Music (40%):**

assessed through a final written examination.

Performing can be either vocal or instrumental and a solo and ensemble piece is required. When composing, students continue to develop their skills from KS3 in composition and may use music technology programs and work in the music studio. In appraisal work, students will study a wide range of musical styles from western classical music to rock music, film music, world music and music from West End musicals.

*"Music is about communication, creativity, and cooperation, and by studying music in schools, students have the opportunity to build on these skills, enrich their lives, and experience the world from a new perspective." – Bill Clinton - Former President of the USA.*

## What will I learn

In addition to develop performing, composing and appraising skills students will gain skills that are highly transferable including:

- independent learning: having to be disciplined about practising on their instrument or voice
- team work: particularly if they're involved in weekly groups or ensembles, concerts and performances
- performance and presentation skills which are useful for any career
- listening: this is highly developed in musicians and it is an important part of the course
- analytical and essay-writing skills
- confidence and self-esteem: which has a knock-on effect in all areas of life and learning
- creativity and self-expression.

## How can I support my learning

To make progress in Music, daily practise on an instrument is important alongside regularly playing in ensembles. These are offered in school in ECA programmes and sometimes in joint ventures with other schools in Muscat and beyond. Students should listen to a wide variety of music and when they can, listen to live music in local venues like the Royal Opera House Muscat





## Core Subject

## PE

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

4 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: encouraged to attend sporting ECAs.

## Brief overview

Compulsory PE in KS4 is an options based recreational sporting programme where students will choose their activities from a wide variety of individual and team sports. All lessons are taught by the department's teaching specialists. Each half term will feature different sports that best suit the students, the climate and excellent facilities. These lessons are non-assess and focus on student health and wellbeing.

With in Compulsory PE lessons, the BSM PE department have developed, over a number of years, Sports Leaders and Dance Leaders courses. These popular options courses result in students carrying out assessments in leading younger students in activities. Key skills include: communication of skills, demonstrating skills, organising groups of students, setting up equipment (planning, executing a session) and analysing sessions.

Students must also complete a swimming test at the start of each academic year in KS4, in line with the school policy. The policy states each student must be able to swim 25m on their front and back, competently, before the end of Year 11. BSM and the PE department value this important life skill and promote/support water based activities fully.



*"I love having the choice of activity so I can work at a sport I enjoy and get together with my friends to have some fun..!"*

## What will I learn

- Conducting warm ups & cool downs;
- Basic anatomy & physiology.
- Skills related to the chosen sporting activity;
- Performance elements of the chosen activity;
- Tactics and strategy;
- Rules and regulations;
- Scoring, refereeing/umpiring/officiating;
- Analytical skills;
- Communication and leadership skills.
- Other HPL cognitive characteristics;
- Other BSM learning ethos attributes.
- DEIJB discussion.

## How can I support my learning

Attendance of all lessons in correct BSM kit is vital. Specialised equipment may be brought to school for specific options, however, school will provide all equipment needed.

Participating in physical activity inside and outside of school is encouraged, starting with BSM's ECA programme.

*Lifestyle choices at KS4 become more apparent, staying active and keeping on top of wellbeing is so important. PE helps with the physical, emotional/ mental and social aspects of this.*



## Option

# PE GCSE

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

5 lessons per fortnight

Homework Expectations: up to 60 minutes per fortnight

## Brief overview

This highly successful subject is offered as a Full Course (Certificate Level course discontinued).

The Full Course is offered over two years (covering Years 10 and 11) as a subject within the Option pools. Students have to meet the physical and cognitive standards which will be required to be successful in this subject. The Edexcel examination board will award grades from 9-1 (level 4 being a pass). Students who opt for this course must be proficient in English, Science and PE.

The Full Course has a weighting of 60% theory, 30% practical and 10% coursework element.

Students will be assessed across 3 practical activities (team and individual sports); they will be assessed in isolated skills drills and competitive situations.

The coursework involves designing a personal exercise programme and analysing it using 1500 words (essay writing).



## What will I learn

1. Fitness and body systems, including: applied anatomy and physiology, movement analysis and use of data (Exam Paper 1, 36%).
2. Health and performance, including: health, fitness and wellbeing, sport psychology, socio-cultural influences and use of data (Exam Paper 2, 24%).
3. Practical performance: skills and performance through individual and team sporting activities (3 sports assessed, 30%).
4. Personal Exercise Programme (PEP), coursework assessment: plan, collect data and analyse programme (1500 word essay, 10%).

## How can I support my learning

Attendance of all lessons is vital, as well as completion of notes and homework. Students may consider attending the GCSE PE clinic (after school session) if necessary.

Participating in physical activity inside and outside of school is imperative, particularly in the 3 assessed sporting activities. Watching and immersing yourself in the world of sport is recommended for analytical purpose.



*Choosing GCSE PE does not mean you have to enter into a 6th form sports course or follow a sports related career thereafter. Simply enjoy the subject at this level. STAY ACTIVE, STAY HEALTHY!*

*"I love being out of the classroom and being active whilst having a lot of fun...!"*

## Core Subject

# Science

## Timetabled periods per fortnight:

12 lessons (4 x lessons per subject: Biology, Chemistry & Physics)

Homework Expectations: up to 6 hours per fortnight (2 hours per subject per week)

## Brief overview

Students have specialist teachers for each of the Science subjects, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Core practicals are embedded into all 3 sciences.

In Year 10 all students follow the same scheme of learning, and in Year 11 they will be in a class that does either Separate Science or Combined Science.

The Separate Science award results in 3 GCSE's, one in each subject, whereas the Combined Science award results in two GCSE's, each GCSE being comprised of a third Biology, a third Chemistry and a third Physics. Both courses allow for students to go on to take A Level sciences should they wish to.

*"If I can do it, then you can do it. If no one has done it before you, then just go ahead and be the first,"*

*"If you're really passionate about what you're doing, then you should just work hard for it and look for opportunities."*

Noora AlMatrooshi - First Arab Female Astronaut



## What will I learn

All three science subjects follow the latest Edexcel 9-1 GCSE specification. Topics covered within each subject include:

### Biology:

Cells; Genetics; Evolution; Health, disease & immunity; Plant structure & photosynthesis; Exchange surfaces; Respiration; Animal coordination & homeostasis; Ecosystems.

### Chemistry:

States of matter and mixtures; Chemical changes; Extracting metals and equilibria; The periodic table; Rates of reaction; Fuels and Earth science.

### Physics:

Motion and forces; Conservation of energy; Waves; Light and the electromagnetic spectrum; Radioactivity; Energy; Forces; Electricity and circuits; Magnetism & the motor effect.

## How can I support my learning

- Be proactive in seeking help from other students and your teachers.
- Deliberate & focused retrieval practice until you can recall the key facts from memory.
- Practice answering exam questions and use of the mark schemes for self assessment.



# Key Stage 4: Option Snapshot

Examination Body: Subject	Core/Option	Examination/Coursework
Pearson EdExcel: Art & Design	Option	Personal Portfolio Non Exam Assessment (NEA) Only
Pearson: Creative Media Lv2 BTEC	Option	Coursework
Pearson EdExcel: Business	Option	Examination only
Pearson: Computer Science	Option	Examination only
Pearson: Dance (Performing Arts) Lv2 BTEC	Option	Coursework
Pearson: Design & Technology	Option	Examination & Coursework
Pearson EdExcel: Drama	Option	Examination & Practical Performance
CAIE: English Language & World Literature	Core	Examination & Coursework
CAIE: Geography	Option	Examination & Coursework
Pearson EdExcel: History	Option	Examination only
Pearson EdExcel: Mathematics	Core	Examination only
Pearson Edexcel MFLs: French, German, Spanish, Arabic	Option choose one MFL	Examination & Speaking Assessment
Pearson EdExcel: Music	Option	Examination & Coursework
PE	Core	N/A
Pearson EdExcel: PE GCSE	Option	Examination & Coursework
Pearson EdExcel: Science	Core	Examination only

Please remember, all students will complete the **core** compulsory subjects of study at Key Stage 4. These are then supplemented with a further four Option choices, one of which is to be a language.

Thank you



# Options FAQ

## **FAQs**

### **What are options blocks?**

When choosing options in November, all students have 'free' choice, this must include 1 language from the 4 available. This free choice is then analysed and 'Option Blocks' are created. These are designed to enable provision of desired subjects within our timetable.

A second round of options is then presented to students and parents in February. These options are now in blocks (A, B, C, D) The blocks are designed from the initial feedback gained in *November*.

The intention is to be in a position where every BSM student is able to study the subjects they want at Key Stage 4.

While every effort will be made to meet students' choices, it may not be possible to provide every combination requested. We also reserve the right to not offer a course if there is insufficient demand for it.

### **Can I change subjects after September 30th 2024?**

The end of September is a set deadline for changes to Options choices in Year 10, we understand sometimes that students experience a topic but then realise they wish to take a different pathway. The deadline is to ensure students do not fall too far behind in a 'new' subject if they change.

All changes are to be agreed by the Head of Year, Head of Department and Deputy Head of Curriculum. Parental consent is required in order to action the change.

### **How do Universities make their decisions?**

Universities make their decision to accept a student onto the course based on a variety of factors. Some of these factors include GCSE grades, predicted A Level/BTEC grades, references and extra curricular enrichment.

### **When are examinations for GCSEs?**

When completing a full linear GCSE course, the examinations are typically taken at the end of Year 11. There are some exceptions to this process which are course dependent.

Students will sit an internal BSM assessment at the end of Year 10 to assess progression and understanding within subjects. Students will sit shorter assessments which are class based throughout Year 10 and Year 11.

The larger more formal internal assessments typically take place in December of Year 11. Full details of internal and external assessments are shared annually via our Exams Officer and BSM Website.

### **Incorrect Entry/Submission/ Further information about Options**

If any errors in entry are made during the options process, please email us at [senioroffice@britishschoolmuscat.com](mailto:senioroffice@britishschoolmuscat.com) and we will support.

If you have any queries regarding your child's choices, please contact BSM via the Senior School Office.



## Contact Us

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