

Curriculum Outline Key Stage 3 and 4

Foreword

The Curriculum at the RSA Academy is not solely based on subjects and their corresponding qualifications, it focuses on their whole learning experience. Since we opened we have developed our curriculum to transform the learning of students so that it can transform their lives.

We are proud to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that provides all students with a high quality educational experience in subject areas that offers a foundation for the next stage of their education and leads to a successful future. In an increasingly competitive global employment market, it is important that you select a combination of subjects that gives you choice and control over your future.

This guide supplements the other documents available; the School Prospectus, the Key Stage 4 Options Booklet and the Sixth Form Prospectus.

Our teachers are experts in their curriculum areas so please contact us if you would like to know any more

Best wishes

Mr M Carpenter
Vice Principal for Teaching, Learning and Curriculum.

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The Aims of the Curriculum

Opportunities

Our curriculum seeks to give students opportunities to:

- o enjoy learning and see education as a life-long process;
- o develop the attitudes, understanding and skills necessary, now and in the future, to exercise independence and initiative and to work, participate and thrive in a democratic society;
- o develop lively, enquiring minds and the ability to find and use information through our opening minds competencies
- o question and debate rationally;
- o apply understanding and skills in order to address issues, solve problems and carry out practical tasks;
- o develop personal values and gain understanding of the values and ways of life;
- o understand the world in which they live and the interdependence of individuals, groups and nations;
- o develop appreciation and concern for the environment;
- o work co-operatively with others.

Curriculum Practice

The quality of learning activities must reflect these aims. We look to:

- o provide experiences which promote active and purposeful learning;
- o enable understanding and skills to be applied to issues, problems and practical tasks;
- o raise students' expectations, encourage participation and increase self-confidence and independence;
- o allow individual students to progress at a pace which provides both challenge and support;
- o give opportunities for students to work together, be well managed and supported by appropriate resources.

Arrangements for the assessment and recording of students' achievements are integrated with the curriculum and:

- o emphasize the need for a constructive response from teachers to their students' work to support the students progress.
- o aim to ensure continuity between different learning activities, between the work done by different teachers, between the School and its feeder primaries and at other stages of transfer and transition;
- o encourage students to take increasing responsibility for reviewing their own progress and determining new goals for themselves;
- o provide full information to parents and, when appropriate, to those concerned with selection for further education, training or employment.

MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR CURRICULUM PROVISION

The School aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets all statutory requirements enriched by a wide range of additional opportunities for learning and personal development.

In accordance with the requirements of the Educational Reform Act 1988 as amended by subsequent Acts The RSA Academy provides students aged between 11 and 16 with a basic curriculum (i.e. the National Curriculum plus religious education) that:

- o is balanced and broadly based;
- o promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development of all its students;
- o prepares them for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

The governing body is responsible for ensuring that these requirements are met and for drawing up the curriculum policy for the Academy. The Principal is responsible for implementing the curriculum and for taking day-to-day decisions on curriculum matters. The governing body ensures that any political or controversial issues included in the curriculum are presented in a balanced way.

The curriculum structure and associated timetables are arranged in such a way as to make best use of the available resources in order to achieve the above stated aims.

RSA Opening Minds Competences

The RSA Opening Minds Competences provide the foundations for our curriculum, developing the skills and capabilities that will develop students who have skills that will make them employable, are active citizens and lifelong learners.

Competences for Citizenship

- **Morals and ethics:** Students develop an understanding of ethics and values, how they inform personal behaviour and reflect on their application in everyday situations.
- **Social Responsibility:** Students understand how society, government and business work, the impact of global issues such as climate change and the importance of active citizenship and how to contribute to society.
- **Diversity:** Students understand and value social, cultural and community diversity, in both national and global contexts.

Competences for Learning

- **Learning approaches:** Students understand different ways of learning and how to develop and assess their effectiveness as learners.
- **Reasoning:** Students learn to think originally, systematically, and critically and how to apply these skills to their broader learning.
- **Creativity:** Students study examples of innovation and understand their own abilities and creative talents, and how best to make use of them.
- **Positive motivation:** Students learn to enjoy and love learning for its own sake and how to develop as autonomous learners.
- **Key skills:** Students are supported to achieve high standards in literacy, numeracy, ICT financial literacy and spatial understanding
- **Entrepreneurship:** Students understand what is meant by being entrepreneurial and initiative-taking, and develop their capacity to solve problems and challenges

Competences for Managing Information

- **Research:** Students develop a range of techniques for accessing, evaluating and differentiating information and have learned how to analyse, synthesise and apply it.
- **Reflection:** Students understand the importance of reflecting and applying critical judgement and learn how to do so

Competences for Relating to People

- Leadership: Students understand how to relate to other people in varying contexts in which they might find themselves, including those where they manage, or are managed by, others; and how to get things done.
- Teamwork: Students understand how to operate in teams and their own capacities for filling different team roles.
- Coaching: Students understand how to develop other people, whether as peer or teacher.
- Communication: Students develop a range of techniques for communicating by different means, and understand how and when to use them.
- Emotional intelligence: Students understand how to develop and manage personal and emotional relationships and can use a variety of means to help manage stress and conflict.
- Self-management: Students understand how to manage aspects of their own lives, including managing their own time, and the techniques they might use to do so effectively.

Competences for Managing Situations

- Coping with change: Students understand what is meant by coping with change and new challenges and develop a range of techniques for managing these situations and building up their personal resilience.
- Feelings and reactions: Students understand the importance both of celebrating success and managing disappointment, and ways of handling these.
- Risk taking: Students understand how to assess and manage risk and uncertainty, including the wide range of contexts in which these will be encountered and techniques for managing them.

Enrichment

Students learn in many ways and our role is to ensure that they experience a wide range of activities both within and beyond the classroom, which extends their learning into new areas. At the Academy all students access our Enrichment Programme which takes place during the day, and offers everyone the opportunity to follow interests in sports, arts, science, technology and outdoor activities. This is a central part of our approach to the curriculum and provides enhancement and enrichment for everyone within the Academy. It provides both flexibility and fun to our curriculum, allowing students to select the sports, clubs or additional support they require, as well as taking part in our PSHCE programme.

Sample Activities include:

- PSHCE
- Your Futures preparation for work programme
- Approaches to Learning skills development
- Sports Activities
- Cycling
- Preparation for University life
- UCAS
- Bead Craft
- Production Rehearsals
- Coursework Catchup
- Additional subject revision classes

Key Stage 3 at the Academy

Our KS3 curriculum is planned to act as a flightpath of quality learning into KS4.

At Key stage 3 curriculum, is developed around core values that to build learners who are equipt to for the 21st century, who are life ready. In the 21st century workplace, success requires more than basic knowledge and skills. We work around building the core principles of:



We aim to provide a rich curriculum to which learning is at it's center for both learners and teachers. There is a clear KS3 pedagogy, which develops our learners, to increase their resilience, to build their character. To be actively engaged within their learning and develop opportunities to manage themselves autonomously by developing collaboration and teamwork skills. This will drive learners performance at KS4.

We aim to provide a KS3 curriculum and assessment model which:

1. Is focused on developing the key concepts, knowledge and skills needed for success in KS4.
2. Is based on high expectations and challenge for all.
3. Adopts a mastery approach to teaching and learning, and uses proven, effective teaching methods.
4. Uses regular assessment and feedback which gives all students the chance to develop a secure understanding of the key ideas.
5. Incorporates high quality end of topic assessments which help students develop the skills needed to tackle GCSE examination questions.

6. Data from assessments reliably identifies what students have/have not understood and informs future teaching and learning, including intervention needs.

Across KS3 regular assessment on a termly basis allows teachers to track learners progress. The design of assessments measure pupils outcomes in steps. Within learners lessons this is referred to as a Pit Stop. These are collated into a list and each foci developed from Pixl statements, demonstrating the flightpath into KS4.

All lessons at the Academy are 1Hr 30 minutes long. Pupils complete the following subjects and number of lessons each week.

Subjects	Sessions per week	
	Year 7	Year 8
Maths	2	2
English	2	2
Science	1	2
PE	2	1
Real Projects	7	5
Creative Arts	2	2
Humanities		2

To ensure all learners needs are clearly met we use GL assessment tests in Year 7 & 8, in Maths and English. This is used to identify weaknesses in the cohorts knowledge so schemes of learning can be developed to meet the needs of the cohort. The assessments are taken on entry to Year 7, at the end of 7 and end of Year 8. Across KS3 groups are mixed ability.

Real Projects is used to both deliver pedagogy, demonstrate interdisciplinary subjects but also to aid transition into learning at the Academy, by building classroom culture. The focus behind this is that core curriculum subjects are delivered with an integrate this knowledge and prepare learners for KS4. This is why lessons adapt between Year 7 & 8.

Wherever possible at within the KS3 curriculum, we aim to provide an integrated element to allow students to combine and enhance their learning.

Real Project – Yrs 7 & 8

The Real project's curriculum develops a mastery of three fundamental areas of knowledge and skill; significant content, Literacy and RSA Opening Minds

Competencies..

The significant content is the development of the core knowledge and skills essential for the development of students and providing a platform for key stage 4 study. Literacy skills are developed in collaboration with the key stage 3 English team providing further opportunity for skill application and development. The RSA Opening Minds competencies provide context and perspective for learning.

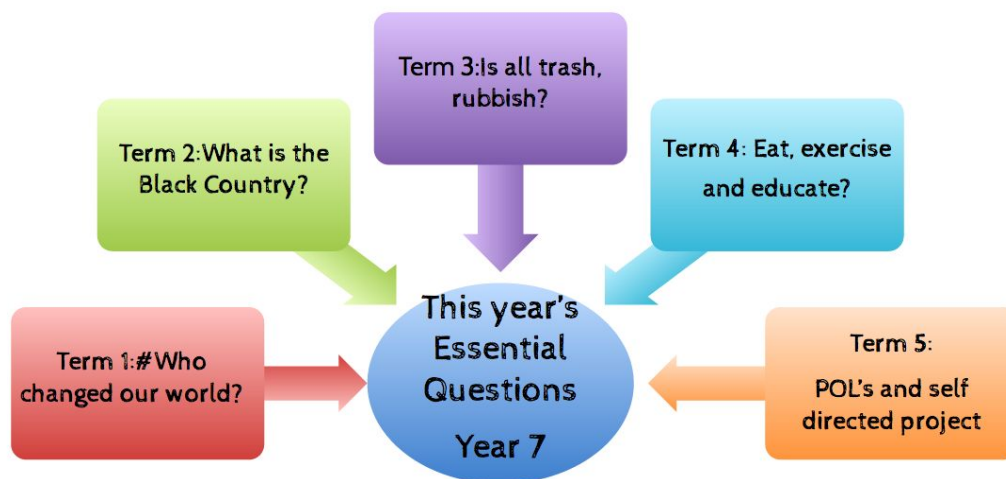
Every project is built around learning intentions which are based on these areas of knowledge and skill. Success criteria are taken to embed a cohesive curriculum in KS3 and KS4 and has been developed using PIXL statements. This is carefully mapped to ensure rigour.

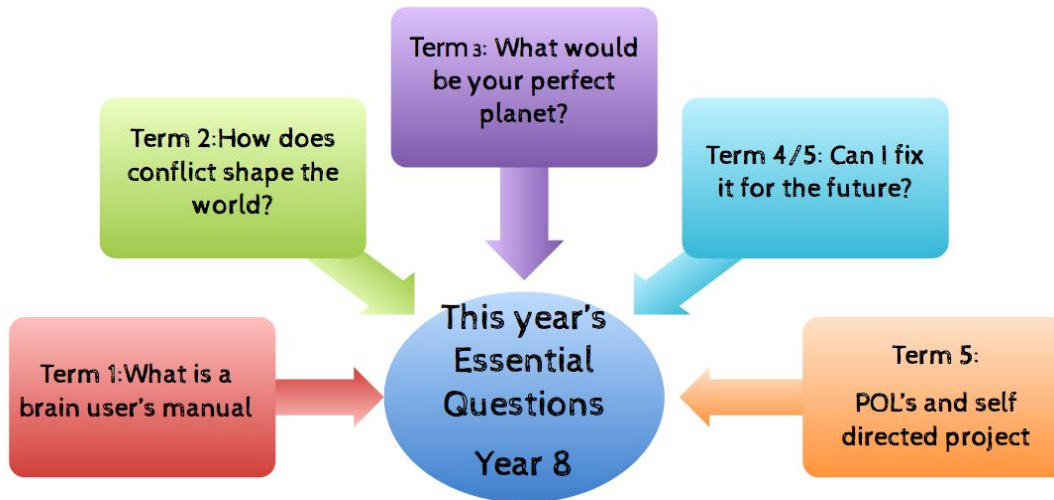
Learning through REAL Projects refers to students designing, planning, and carrying out an extended project that produces a publicly-exhibited output such as a product, publication, or presentation.

The principles behind Real Projects are:

- All pupils are capable of excellence.
- Students work should matter
- School and classrooms are communities of learners.

The projects that are completed within Year 7 and 8 are:



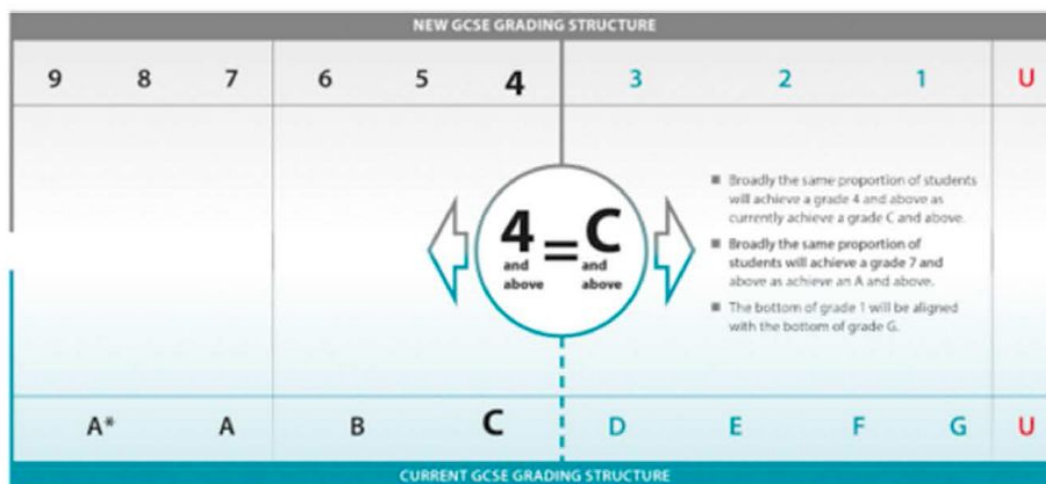


All projects have core elements which enhance learning within their design. This includes:

- A essential question
- Multiple drafts and critique
- Authentic Audience
- Public exhibition
- Student generated final outcome/product
- essential that every project has a real outcome and a real audience

New Grading System for GCSEs

Major government reforms to the GCSE examinations will see the old A* – G system replaced with a new 1 to 9 scale, with 9 being the top grade. The new grading system will mean that the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above in the new system as achieve a grade C or above in the current system. The same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above in the new system as achieve a grade A or A* in the current system but only the top 20% will receive the highest grade: 9. The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned to the current grade G.

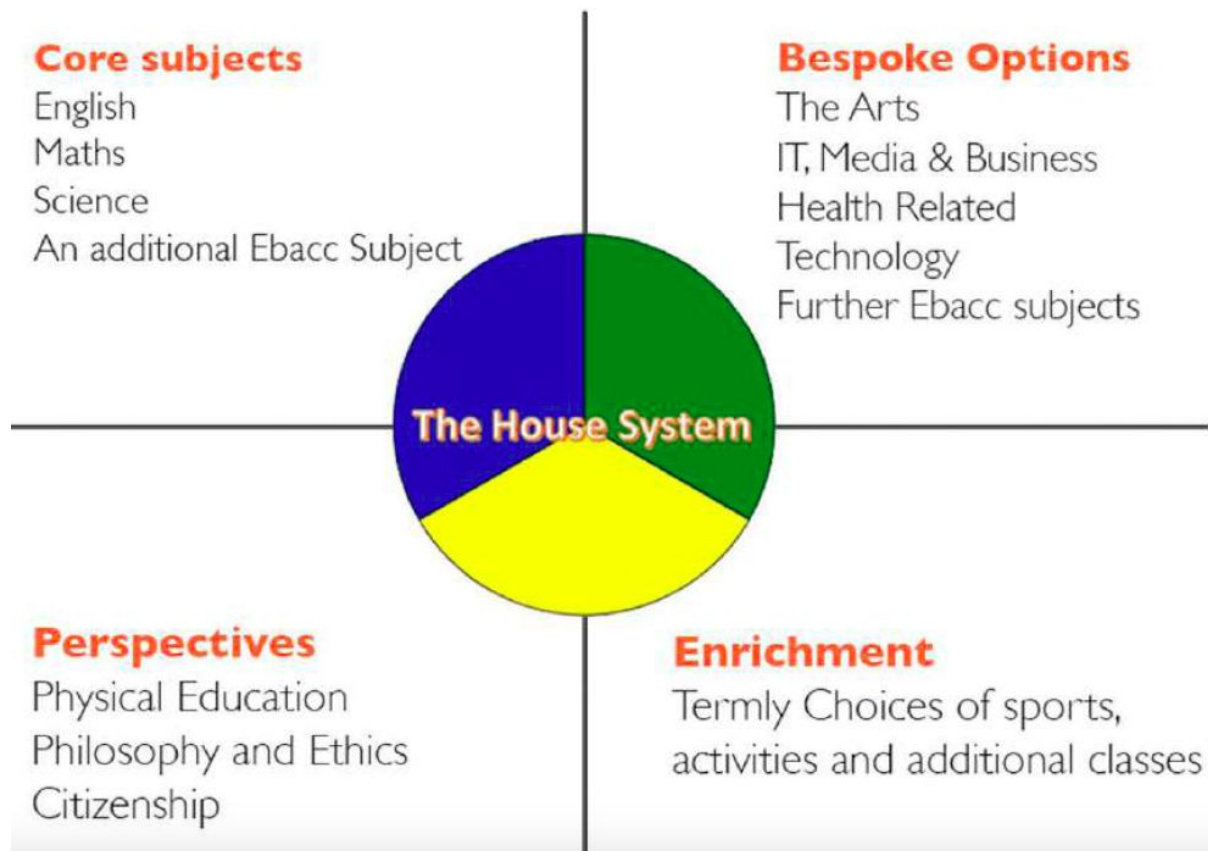


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Key Stage 4 at the RSA Academy

We are proud to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that provides all students with a high quality educational experience in subject areas that offers a foundation for the next stage of their education and leads to a successful future. In an increasingly competitive global employment market, it is important that you select a combination of subjects that gives you choice and control over your future.

Our curriculum consists of 4 elements: a core group of subjects, bespoke choices, perspectives, and the enrichment program held together by the support given by the House team.



The Core Curriculum includes the compulsory subjects: Maths, English (Literature and Language) and Science and at least one other subject that forms part of the English Baccalaureate, often referred to as 'ebacc', either a language or a humanities.

The optional subjects that we offer are shown below. You will choose at least one English Baccalaureate choice and two bespoke choices. You can also select Statistics at this point. At the end of year 9, you will be able to select from: Religious Studies, Citizenship or Physical Education in the Perspectives group.

Throughout the options process we are able to offer you a fantastic level of support. Your child's REAL project teacher and form tutor will be able to discuss the options you are considering with you. Our Director of Student Services, Mrs Jones, will be able to offer guidance for students with Additional Educational Needs.

For students aiming for A and A* grades and looking to apply to university Miss Alexander is available to support your choices to make sure you are selecting the courses that will support your aspirations.

We have an advisor from Connexions who will be on hand during the Options Evening to advise you.

Types of Course: GCSE courses usually involve one or more external examinations resulting in a GCSE grade 1 – 9, with Grade 9 being the highest grade. All Assessments will be in the final summer of study.

BTEC Firsts and OCR Nationals are assessed through on-going assignments, set and marked by your child's teacher and moderated by the exam board. BTEC Firsts also have a formal external assessment. These are more flexible during the study of the course, and award a Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Our curriculum is open for all to choose from, the following 'edits' show how the curriculum can be bundled together and the possibilities this leads to.

Subjects	Sessions per week		
	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Maths	3	3	3
English	3	3	3
Science	2	3	3
PE	2	1	1
Perspectives or Statistics	1	1	1
Additional Ebacc Subject	2	2	2
Options (Two Selected)	2	2	2

Technical: Engineering - Curriculum Edit



Engineering has always been the beating heart of the Black Country and, in recent years there has been a resurgence of jobs in engineering locally.

Our Engineering department has achieved a lot of success not only in results but, also in providing students with opportunities for employment or further training. High numbers of our students go on to work in the range of engineering firms close to the Academy, including Jaguar Land Rover and UTC aerospace.

This curriculum edit blends Engineering with Statistics to provide additional Mathematics time as well as German to support access to the global jobs market. Business Studies will encourage the entrepreneurial skills, often required to bring an Engineering product to market.

Technical: Health Related - Curriculum Edit



The aging national population and Health Care System has lead to a national need for Health Related jobs such as Nurses, Care Assistants and Occupational Therapists. This edit shows how the combination of Health and Social Care and Food courses can provide a preparation for work in this sector, when combined with good results in the core subjects, particularly Science.

Medicine - Curriculum Edit



To train to be a doctor you need a strong base of Academic courses. This combination of subjects is not for the faint hearted with a large number of terminally assessed courses. Even if you are not considering becoming a doctor this edit should be used as a benchmark for the requirements of the Russell Group Universities, regarded as the 24 most prestigious universities in the country.

Vocational - Curriculum Edit



For some students, a more narrow curriculum will allow them to focus on mastery of their knowledge and skills in the core subjects. In the vocational edit Geography and Sport and Leisure are co delivered to create a more Applied Geography course. Additional time in Maths English and Science as well as a vocational ICT course support students in becoming prepared for apprenticeships and college courses.

Arts Plus - Curriculum Edit



This edit is for students who have high levels of prior attainment and are interested in the study of 2 Art's GCSE subjects. A language and Philosophy & Ethics complement the arts subjects chosen providing a broad based of study. It could lead to the further study of these subjects at University.

Extended Learning Tasks at The RSA Academy

The rationale behind Extended learning is to reinstate the Academy belief that learning outside of the classroom is an essential part of an outstanding education. The Academy values extended learning as part of the learning cycle and remains

committed to providing students with opportunities to embed and consolidate in-class learning within their own personal and independent context

Within Year seven, eight and nine will receive up to thirty minutes per week per subject. This equates to thirty minutes each day which is half of the national average and meets the recommended limit.

Year ten and eleven will receive up to fifty minutes per week per subject. This equates to one hour a day which is the national average and recommended limit.

Whilst the Academy sees this choice as part of its teaching staff's expertise and judgement, we do suggest that the following principles are considered and outlined as part of each Independent Study:

1. Purpose: a clear academic purpose, such as practise, checking for understanding, or applying knowledge or skills.
2. Format: an activity that builds in a way to efficiently demonstrate student learning.
3. Choice: an approach that promotes ownership by offering choices and being personally relevant.
4. Challenge: an activity that students can successfully complete without assistance.
5. Engagement: a study that appears enjoyable and interesting, both in content and reward.

Core Subjects

English

Students will study the dual award English Language and English Literature qualifications. Both qualifications enable students to read a wide variety and genre of texts from a range of authors, across different periods of time. Further to this, students will have opportunities to write for different purposes and audiences, to developing their skills in using vocabulary, punctuation and sentences for effect. The courses will work to develop the vital skills needed in day-to-day communication: spoken language, reading and writing.

The courses are taught through a variety of interactive sessions, student-led learning and a range of individual, paired and group activities.

Mathematics

Our Mathematics programme of study is a three year course. The aims and objectives of this course are to enable students to:

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

Students for this qualification will be entered for either the Foundation or Higher Tier. They will sit three examination papers, equally weighted, each paper is 1.5 hours in length and all examinations will be completed in Year 11. The assessments will cover the following content:

- Number
- Algebra
- Ratio, proportion and rates of change
- Geometry and measures
- Probability
- Statistics

Questions will require knowledge of Functional Skills: applying knowledge to real life situations. In addition, students will be monitored on the quality of their written communication and the use of key mathematical vocabulary.

Double Science

Combined science is a three-year course which allows students to leave with two qualifications in Science. This can be combined with the triple science option. The topics covered are:

Biology: Cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution, ecology.

Chemistry: Atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry, chemical changes, energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis, chemistry of the atmosphere, using resources.

Physics: Forces, energy, waves, electricity, magnetism and electromagnetism, particle model of matter, atomic structure.

Students will sit two papers in Biology, Chemistry and Physics (six in total) at the end of the three year period.

Bespoke Choices

BTEC First Award in Business.

BTEC First Award in Business is a course that is specifically tailored to meeting the needs of today's

fast-moving commercial market. This course combines both theoretical and practical business concepts and work-related learning. You will learn by completing tasks and assignments that are based on realistic workplace situations, activities and demands. All units will be linked to a real business and you will work with the focus organisation in order to complete your assignment. The course introduces you to the employment area that you have chosen and provides a good basis to go on to study a more advanced qualification including IB Business Management at Post-16 and BTEC Nationals Diploma in Business at Level 3.

All units are assessed either internally or externally, and an overall grade for the qualification is awarded. You will take one online examination, which will make up 25% of your overall qualification. The remainder of the course will be assessed through the completion of coursework.

Applied ICT

In this world of ever changing technologies, ICT skills are some of the most sought after qualities that employers look for in today's job market. As a result, the ICT courses that are delivered in schools need to reflect those changes in technology and innovation.

The Applied ICT is a relevant and up to date course that aims to develop students' skills in a number of different areas. Learners are to complete a portfolio of coursework that contributes to the successful completion of the course. They will complete 2 compulsory units, a practical unit and an examination unit. The rest of the portfolio is made up of 2 other optional units that are selected to suit the students' interests and capabilities.

The coursework portfolio that you submit for each unit will be graded at either Pass, Merit or Distinction. The examination is marked solely by OCR Examiners and will be assessed in the same way.

BCS Level 2 ECDL Certificate in IT Application Skills

This course is written and authenticated by The Chartered Institute for IT. This qualification has been written to equip learners with the skills and ability to apply practical ICT skills to real life business situations.

Achievement at Level 2 demonstrates the ability to select and use relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems.

- Learners are expected to study the following units:
- Word Processing
- Presentations
- Improving Productivity
- Spreadsheets

During the course learners are expected to work independently to develop their ICT skills in the above units. When ready, they will sit assessments.

One unit will be assessed externally and the remaining three units will be assessed internally. Assessments will be graded at either Pass, Merit or Distinction.

BTEC Level 2 Engineering

This course is intended as an introduction to Engineering. It allows students to develop skills and

understanding which will be of use generally and as part of a progressive career plan. During the course, students will complete three units of work that are very much theory-based backed up with some practical skills using hand tools, Computer Controlled Machines and Computer Aided Design packages. Students will need to complete both theory and practical work that develops into a portfolio which is used to assess their performance. Students will also take a one hour exam about the engineered world using revision material from lessons.

The engineering sector continues to suffer from a skills gap and needs to keep up with rapidly developing technologies. This qualification in Engineering will give students the underpinning knowledge and specific skills needed to meet the needs of modern engineering industries. Lessons will be taught through a range of written and

practical projects that will involve wood, acrylic and metal. Projects will be linked to industry and students will need to be able to follow detailed plans and be able to evaluate manufacturing processes. Students will gain some experience in traditional hand skills and modern, computer controlled, machines including the laser cutter and CNC Router and Lathe. Students will also learn how to use Computer Aided Design packages such as Techsoft 2D and ProDesktop.

GCSE Art and Design

This is a three-year course designed to introduce you to new ways of thinking about the world. You will discover and learn about artist past and present, develop your confidence in the skills you already have and learn new ways of making art. You will be encouraged to develop into independent, resourceful and creative learners and be given opportunities to exhibit the results of your work, both within the Academy and beyond.

During the course students will be expected to:

- Record visually in a variety of ways
- Develop ideas in an experimental way
- Create final work using a wide range of materials

60% Coursework - a portfolio of practical projects produced during the entire course.

40% Examination - a practical project undertaken lasting for 10 hours in exam conditions

V Cert Art: Creative Studies

This is a three-year course, with flexible assessment, to suit the needs of students. You will learn new creative processes and how they are used in the real world, develop your confidence in the skills you already have and learn new ways of making.

This V Cert enables candidates to develop and produce personal responses that reflect a broad exploration of art, craft and design. Candidates must produce and submit practical work for the Art and Design Portfolio which reflects studies from the following units:

Unit 1: Research and investigate sources of ideas in art and design

Unit 2: Explore and use art and design materials and techniques to develop visual language

Unit 3: Produce final art and design work responding to a set brief or theme

Plus optional units.

Internally assessed: A portfolio of work from the different units studied
Externally assessed: A 30 hour project completed under controlled conditions (worth 20% of final overall grade).

GCSE Geography

Geography is a three-year course, which offers students an awareness and understanding of the

relationship between people and the environment in the world in which we live. The key themes studied include:

People and society: To include Urban Futures, Development, Resource Reliance and the UK in

the 21st century

The natural world: To include Global Hazards, Changing Climate, distinctive landscapes and sustaining eco systems.

Two written examinations - 100% assessment. One of these will focus on a fieldwork activity

GCSE History

This three-year course will help to develop analytical, research and communication skills that will be invaluable to any profession you choose in the future as well as creating a strong base for future study of History at IB or Degree level.

If you decide to take GCSE History you will study the following:

- Norman England 1066-1100
- Conflict and Tension 1990-2009
- Germany 1890-1945 Democracy and Dictatorship
- Britain: Health and Power c1000 to the present day

You will also learn and develop skills such as how to interpret and evaluate pieces of information, how to communicate and apply your knowledge, how to describe and analyse the key features of the period studied as well as critical thinking and problem solving.

The examination paper covers the full range of grades. There are two aspects to the assessment and there are two examinations worth 100% of the final grade.

BTEC Health and Social Care

The UK health sector employs some two million people across a range of public, independent and

voluntary organisations. The UK care sector employs another 1.6 million people, across care for adults and children. The social care workforce is expected to grow by 15-20% by 2020. It is a rewarding but challenging career; opportunities exist in many different areas such as: Midwifery, Play Worker, Social Worker, Occupational Therapist, Radiographer and many more.

Health and Social Care is a serious and detailed course and your skills of written communication should be high. During the course students will be expected to:

- Develop their skills of communication
- Gain hands on experience of Health and Care through visits and work placements

- Develop the skills needed to communicate effectively with people from a range of backgrounds.

Lessons will be interactive and involve you working with others. You will need to use your ICT skills to demonstrate your understanding and to present work. There will be visits, lectures, demonstrations as well as hands-on work experience. We aim to give you practical experiences of the units that you're studying. Health and Social Care is a practical subject! You will study topics such as "Communication", "Nutrition" and "Devising Health Campaigns".

Level 2 Certificate in Food & Cookery

This is a practical qualification that will allow students to gain a large range of skills that, will promote employability in the catering sector. Whilst developing their practical cookery skills, including food preparation, presentation and service skills, students will also gain an understanding of balanced diets, the function of nutrients and how to modify recipes to support the health of service users. Please note there is extensive theory knowledge in the course and it will involve an examination. The course aids to promote planning, research skills, communication, problem solving and health and safety skills as well as improving the technical skills of students. The course will also focus on:

- Job roles, employment opportunities and relevant training
- Menu planning, preparation and presentation
- Planning for functions and events
- Costing menus and events
- Customer care
- Standards of service

Lessons will be interactive and involve you working with others. You will need to use your ICT skills to demonstrate your understanding and present work. There will be visits, lectures, demonstrations as well as hands-on work experience. This will come from you assisting at a range of events, from three course meals to buffets.

GCSE Media Studies

Media Studies is an exciting course where you will learn to understand the workings of TV, films, advertising and computer games. Ever wondered how films or websites are made? Come and make your own in the practical sessions. Ever wondered how adverts for computer games are created? Learn to create and analyse them! What about how Video Games affect young people? We analyse how they are created and how they are perceived by audiences. Media Studies at GCSE is very analytical and will help you with your English assignments too!

Unit One: Investigating the Media 40% External Assessment with two tasks.

Unit Two: Understanding the Media 60% Controlled Assessment including a practical media production.

GCSE Modern Foreign Languages

French or German is a three-year GCSE course. Students are assessed in four areas of learning (Listening Speaking, Reading and Writing). Each area accounts for 25% of the final grade:

During the course students are expected to:

- Improve their skills in listening and reading with questions and responses in English and the target language. To develop literary skills within these areas also.
- Learn to write by translating into and from the target language.
- Speak fluently within in a range of scenarios and settings, ensuring accuracy and the use of appropriate French or German.

Students will have the opportunity to take tiered (Foundation or Higher) Listening, Reading and Writing external assessments in five common areas.

- Local Area
- Holiday and Travel
- School
- Future Aspirations, Study and Work

- International and Global Dimension
- Speaking controlled assessments are not tiered

GCSE Music

GCSE Music is a three-year course in which you will perform, compose and listen to music across five areas of study. The course is structured as follows: composition, listening, appraising and performing music in a variety of genres.

During the course you will be expected to:

- Sing and/or play pieces in an ensemble and as a soloist
- Evaluate your own and others' work
- Compose your own pieces
- Listen to and analyse a wide range of music
- Develop music notation skill

You will have one examination and complete practical coursework.

Composition (controlled assessment) and performance coursework accounts for 60% of the qualification. The listening examination accounts for 40%.

BTEC Performing Arts

Performing Arts is focused primarily on drama and performance. This gives students the grounding to allow them to successfully prepare and perform their drama ideas. Within this they will have the opportunity to create their own performing arts company.

Performing arts students will have the opportunity to participate in our successful annual production.

During the course students will be expected to:

- Perform
- Keep a detailed portfolio
- Work independently and in groups
- Complete coursework

Lessons will be interactive and involve you working with others. Although most lessons are practical, there will be written work as well.

GCSE Psychology

GCSE Psychology is one of the most fantastic courses you can study. In this subject you will learn many fascinating topics. You'll get to find out about what happens when the brain is damaged, what it's like to live with a mental illness and how people control your behaviour without you realising.

GCSE Psychology is a demanding and academic subject; you should be prepared for hard work and serious study. However, it's also practical and we aim to give you an insight into many of the Psychological topics that we study.

The course requires two exams to be completed, both worth 50% each towards the final grade. Both exams are 1 hour 30 minutes long and are taken at end of the year two.

GCSE Separate Sciences

Triple Science is a three-year course which allows students to leave with three qualifications.

During the course students will cover a range of topics including:

GCSE Biology

Human Biology

Organisms

The environment

Evolution

Enzymes

GCSE Chemistry themes

The uses of oils

The Earth and its atmosphere

Plastics

Chemical patterns

Organic chemistry

GCSE Physics themes

The Universe

Power

Energy production

Waves

Students will sit two papers in Biology, Chemistry and Physics (6 in total). Practical work is assessed through targeted questions in exam papers.

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Perspectives

The perspectives area of the curriculum encourages students to consider the wider issues in life and to understand their contribution as an active, healthy citizen to

society. This curriculum area includes Citizenship, Philosophy & Ethics and PE and, for some learners, this will include statistics.

In year 9, students will complete a combined Citizenship and Philosophy & Ethics course and a program in PE. For a group of learners their Citizenship course will be combined with Statistics to give a more real-world understanding of Maths.

Post 16 Curriculum

We offer a range of exciting and rigorous courses at Level 3. These include the world famous International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme, the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme (IBCP) and a vocational pathway.

For the more academic students the IB Diploma provides a challenging two-year curriculum, leading to a qualification recognised by the world's leading universities. It offers students a broad range of subjects which together provide much more breadth than traditional A Levels. The IB's combination of academic studies, community service and style of learning provides a unique qualification - welcomed by universities and employers alike.

Our students who are more 'career-minded' can choose to study the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme (IBCP). This carefully balanced curriculum is designed to enable career-minded students to further their academic studies, while becoming proficient in their chosen vocational area. For many students the IBCP provides the best of both worlds; the academic elements of the International Baccalaureate Diploma combined with the industry standard skills and competences taught through their chosen vocational subjects. The IBCP prepares students for entry to employment or entry to higher education.

We offer a range of Level 3 courses of Applied Learning and Vocational Qualifications. These can be studied either in combination or as individualised pathways, depending upon the chosen course. All these courses are 'work-related' and allow students to explore their chosen subject(s) through a range of real-world experiences, simulated job-roles, work experience and class-based study.

Our expectations of you as a Post 16 student are high! We expect you to be mature and hard working in order to succeed in your chosen course. You will be encouraged to take responsibility for your own learning and you will be given the support and advice needed to help you develop these vital skills of independent learning - so prized by universities, and employers, across the world.

You will have many opportunities to develop your interpersonal skills by becoming involved in the life of the Academy. You will be expected to take part in Academy events and also within our local community.

Find more information on our P16 page: <http://rsaacademy.org/post16/>

Special Educational Needs

The Academy has a comprehensive policy for meeting the needs of those students who have a special educational need of any kind. This broad term covers a wide range of need, from those students who may require some temporary support with their spelling or handwriting for example, to those students who have long term needs recognised in a Statement/Education and Health Care Plan issued by the Local Authority.

The RSA Academy believes that:

- o all teachers are teachers of children with special education needs and have a responsibility

to meet those needs with the advice and support of the Special Educational Needs team

- o all children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum with full access to all National

Curriculum subjects

- o students with special educational needs will be fully integrated into the life of the School,

enabling them to maximise their potential as learners and experience and contribute to the social and cultural activities of the School

The provision for students should:

- o match needs
- o take account of the wishes and feelings of the student
- o be in partnership with the student's parents

In practice this means that we try to identify at an early stage any students who are experiencing difficulty with their learning. We use information from the primary

school, listen to the concerns of students themselves and those of their parents, as well as our own observations and assessments. As required by the Government's Code of Practice, all students who have special needs are put on a List of Special Educational Needs. The Special Needs may refer to learning problems, emotional and behavioural difficulties or physical or sensory problems e.g. learning impairment or visual impairment. This confidential list is given to all staff, so that all teachers are aware of students' needs.

For many students it will simply be a matter of registering a concern and letting their teachers know that a little extra attention may be necessary. Some students, however, will need more specific help either within lessons or in small groups withdrawn from agreed subjects. In-class support may be provided in some lessons. This additional support will be given to those students by members of the special needs department.

The Special Educational Needs department monitors students' progress carefully and will keep parents informed about the help their child is receiving.

The Special Educational Needs Team are eager to talk to parents about their child's Special Needs, so that new targets can be set, and the help for the child can be developed to meet changing needs.

Each pupil with a Statement/Education and Health Care Plan also has an Annual Summary Plan which is given to all the teachers. It informs them of the student's difficulties and areas of strength. Teachers report on the progress students have made towards meeting the targets set on the plan and their views and suggestions are taken into account during the review process.

Any request for subject disapplication must be directed to the Principal.

Admission arrangements:

The admission arrangements for those students with special needs without a Statement/Education and Health Care Plan are the same as those for all students.

Students with a Statement/Education and Health Care Plan are placed by the LA, which makes every effort to comply with parent and student preference in accordance with the Authority's own admission procedures.

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If your child has a Statement/Education and Health Care Plan to visit the school. The meeting will last for approximately an hour.

Your child and their views will be an integral part of the meeting.

Careers Education and Guidance

Careers education and guidance is an integral part of the PSHCE and Curriculum programme and is conducted with the active support of the Sandwell Connexions Service and other aspirational partners from the world of business.

Our programme for careers education and guidance is centred around processes that:

- o enable students to understand themselves and develop their capabilities
- o encourage students to investigate careers and opportunities
- o facilitate the implementation of their career plans
- o widen horizons and raise aspirations

Careers Education is realised through:

- o careers education: a planned programme of activities across the whole curriculum, but which is
- o focused in the PSHE programme
- o access to information about the world of work and educational, vocational and training opportunities
- o experience of work which includes simulations, work visits, mini enterprises, classroom projects, work experience and shadowing
- o access to individual guidance from school staff or a Sandwell Connexions Advisor working with the

- o IAG lead; recording achievements and action planning for progression post-16 through
- o mentoring
- o the personal experience of the students outside of school
- o form time activities as appropriate to the year group that aims to raise aspirations.

Careers guidance provides individual support to all students and their parents in the management of transition and transfer. It is provided by:

- o use of library resources and computer programmes
- o subject staff where appropriate
- o Heads of House and the Senior Management Team during the mentoring and monitoring processes including, in particular, discussions based on Individual Learning and Career plans
- o developing an awareness of 16+ opportunities provided during interviews and information
- o sessions
- o the Sandwell Connexions representative, who provides group guidance and individual interviews with many students in Key Stages 4 and 5.

Statement of Entitlement to Careers Education and Guidance for Students and their Parents/Guardians

As a student you are entitled to expect that the staff of RSA Academy will:

- o treat and respect you as an individual
- o provide you with the opportunity to learn the skills and gain the knowledge necessary to make

- o decisions about your own future
- o offer support as you need it
- o offer you a confidential service*
- o guarantee access to Careers Information which is up-to-date, comprehensive and unbiased,
- o including computerised guidance programmes
- o ensure you have access to information about all the options in education, training and
- o employment
- o guarantee the opportunity for individual guidance with Sandwell Connexions

As a student the staff of RSA Academy expect that you will:

- o be active in helping yourself as well as expecting us to help you
- o be prepared to be realistic and adaptable in considering the range of opportunities available and in making choices about them
- o be prepared to use the information and guidance systems that are made available
- o carry out actions you have agreed to undertake
- o be considerate of others and their needs

As a parent or guardian you are entitled to expect that the staff of RSA Academy will:

- o enable you to take an active part in the processes described above, which could include:
 - attendance at Parents' Evenings, information sessions and other events
 - attendance at Careers Guidance Interviews - if you wish
- o allow you to contact them at any stage for information or advice about your child
- o promote and practise Equal Opportunities for all young people regardless of gender, ethnic origin, disability etc.

*On some occasions the Law requires that certain information is to be passed on. Such circumstances would be fully discussed with you.

Relationships and Sex Education

Sex and Relationships education is an opportunity for students to understand the emerging sexuality of themselves and others in a positive and caring environment.

The aim is to provide knowledge about the processes of reproduction and the nature of sexuality and relationships.

The intention is to encourage the acquisition of skills and attitudes which allow students to manage their relationships, both currently and in the future, in a responsible, happy and healthy lifestyle.

The teaching programme is delivered through the PSHE Personal Wellbeing programme and as discrete units in Science.

The RSA Academy recognises the requirement of the 1993 Education Act to provide sex education for all students and the entitlement of parents to withdraw students from those elements taught outside the National Curriculum Science framework. In order to do so such parents are invited to discuss their concerns in the first instance with the Head. Parents are welcome to view materials used with the students.

The RSA Academy may offer individual guidance to students within its pastoral care as necessary and in liaison with parents and appropriate agencies.

Sex education should not be regarded in isolation from the other elements of the Personal, Social and Health Education and Pastoral systems within the School, which

also make a contribution to the success of such a programme. The programme also recognises the contribution of the wider community to this process.

The course is designed to build upon the work undertaken at Key Stage 2 (relationships, caring for others, body parts and changes, gender issues, reproduction and menstruation).

The selection of topics and teaching materials will be appropriate to the needs and ages of the students. Therefore, contentious issues will tend to occur later in the course but will be dealt with sensitively if they arise earlier.

Approaches will vary according to the materials used and the objectives of the lesson will generally be student-centred and involve discussion and group work.

The RSA Academy works closely with local agencies and other support organisations to provide opportunities for students to be aware of links within the community where they can obtain additional information and support. Local agencies also provide inset training for staff to keep abreast of changes Nationally and provide staff with additional knowledge and resources to support students.

PSHCE – Sex Education framework

The PSHCE programme of sex education is implemented at every year group at an appropriate stage for the personal health, safety and development of students. The programme studied has been developed in collaboration with The Brook advisory service to include the essential information needed by students throughout their development within school.

Students will study the following areas at each stage of their school career;

Year 7

Coping with Change

Sessions are delivered by House staff highlighting the changes that are expected during puberty and growing up. Physical and emotional issues will be discussed that explain the causes and effects of the physical and emotional changes of growing up. These sessions also include the definitions and effects of bullying when linked to physical and emotional changes.

Relationships

Delivered in collaboration with outside agencies students learn about the relationships they have with others. There is specific focus on how relationships change and develop over time. Students have the opportunity to discuss scenario situations with reference to friendships and opposite/same sex relationships.

Year 8

Risky Behaviour

Workshops delivered by The Brook advisory sexual health clinic designed to educate students in risky behaviour. Topics covered include perceptions of healthy/risky behaviour, relationships, sexual health and what can be done to avoid and/or deal with risky behaviour. Sessions are also delivered by House staff on "Talking about sex and relationships".

Year 9

Sex, Love and Relationships

An A-Z programme of activities that extend the ideas and issues of APAUSE allowing students to discuss with staff and peers the pertinent issues for their age group. Academy staff are on hand to sign-post students to information that they may require or are interested in finding out more about. Within this session students are made aware of the legalities surrounding sex.

Year 10

Contraception

Student workshops delivered by outside agency 'The Brook' that guides students about prevention, transmission, symptoms and guidance in relation to STIs. Students receive added information about contraception and how to protect their sexual health.

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Students receive a session based around sexually transmitted infections with a view to students understanding the facts about infection and treatment.

A practical student workshop designed to give students an understanding of the spread of STIs and the necessity and importance of safe sex.

Year 11

Teenage Pregnancy

A discussion forum underpinned by the short film 'Four carrier bags and a buggy' that highlights the difficulties faced by young parents and the impact that this has on the life of the parents.

Mental Health and vulnerable adults

Students visit the topic of sexual health alongside mental health with specific reference to personal safety and its link with emotional well-being.

Mentoring and Guidance

Mentoring and Guidance supplements the PSHCE curriculum by providing safe opportunities for students to further explore key areas of the curriculum.

Through Mentoring and Guidance students have the opportunity to develop their knowledge, extend their understanding and use peer support as an effective tool for many aspects of the curriculum.

Tutors use effective 'circle time' tools to discuss moral and ethical issues that provide students with an opportunity to learn from older and younger students

The range of mentoring and guidance activities covers the following areas;

- Academic and behaviour monitoring and mentoring with additional meetings held with parents.
- Reading for enjoyment
- Society and the wider community
- Student led workshops and contributions
- Peer mentoring
- Active citizenship
- Current affairs and its impact

- Leadership opportunities
- Competitive spirit through House/Sport competitions

Assemblies

House assemblies provoke and encourage thought and personal reflection that underpin the PSHCE curriculum. The assemblies occur weekly through House congregation and follow a termly plan that is reviewed annually. The topics cover a variety of aspects of personal achievement, moral guidance and positive contribution. House and academic celebration assemblies occur at significant points throughout the academic calendar to showcase achievement both in and out of the classroom.

Great emphasis is placed on student involvement and action groups of students present regularly in House assembly. Volunteering is a significant part of the Academy ethos and this is promoted through students contribution in House assemblies.