

KS4 Options

Courses starting in September 2026



Countesthorpe Academy



Respect / Resilience / Success

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Introduction

This booklet has been designed to help make your move into Key Stage 4 as smooth as possible and ensure your ongoing **success** at school. It contains the information you need to make sensible choices about the courses we have on offer in Years 10 and 11. You have already started doing GCSE work in many of your lessons so you are in a good position to know what the GCSE course will contain to be able to make some well-informed choices. We also offer some new subjects at GCSE which you may be very well suited to study. Please explore all your options.

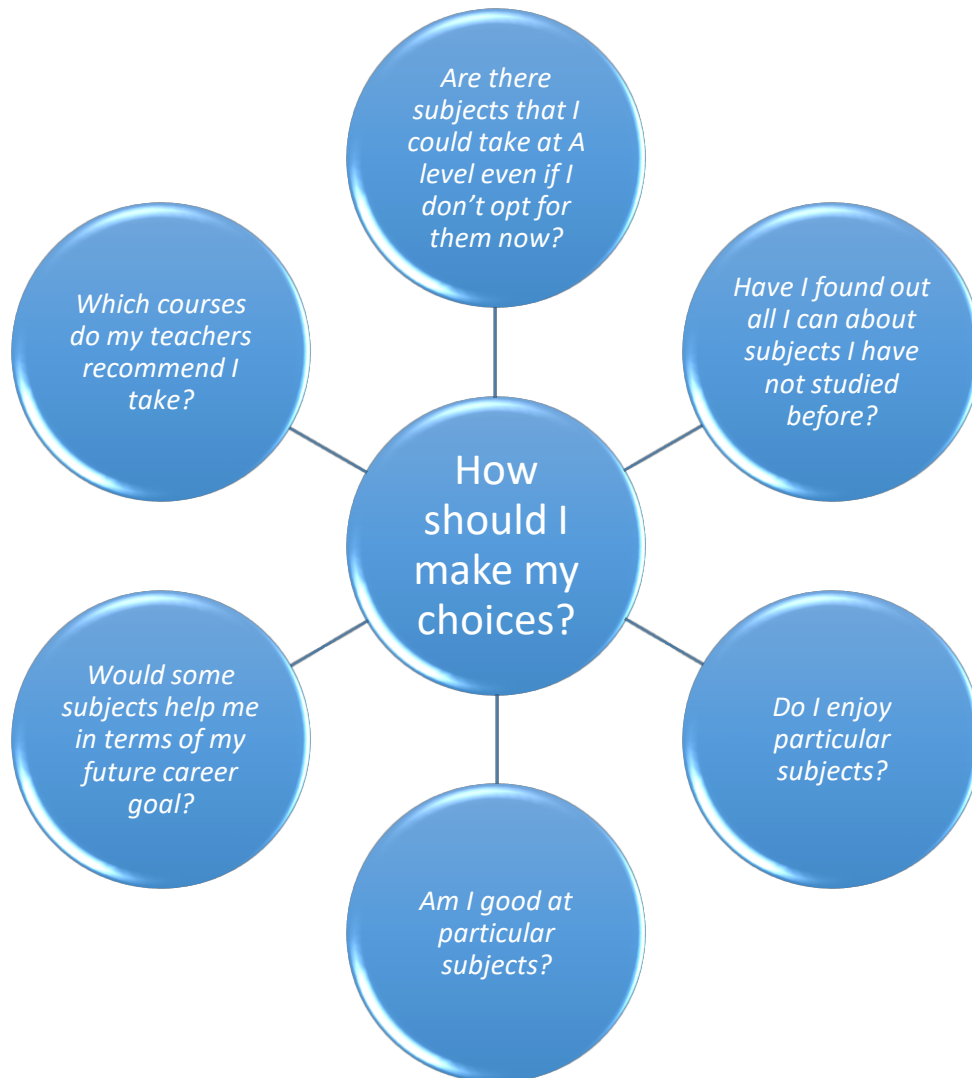
Making the right choices and being **resilient**

- GCSEs tend to be examination centred with an emphasis on the final examination at the end of Year 11. Some subjects have an element of controlled assessment or coursework. You should carefully read the subject guidance in this booklet so you know what to expect.
- Make sure you check exactly how each subject you are interested in is assessed. Some subjects are assessed with examinations whilst others have a practical element or coursework.
- GCSEs can have up to three examinations at the end of Year 11, think about how many final examinations you will have when making your choices.
- It is extremely important you think about the choices you need to make. It may be very unsettling for you if you wish to change your options once you are in Year 10 even if there were available space on an alternative course. You should aim to 'get it right first time!' There are times when we will find things tough along the way and this is where we need to show our **resilience**.

To do this, you may need to discuss your choices with:

- Your parents or carers
- Your CREW leader
- Your subject teachers
- Careers teachers
- Students already in Years 10 and 11.

Parents or students should not hesitate to contact us at the school if there are any queries or further advice is needed. In this booklet, a contact is listed for each subject should you have any queries.



Frequently asked questions

During Years 10 and 11, you will follow up to 10 examination courses.

Which examinations will I take?

Most of the courses you will follow will lead to the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). Others will lead to BTEC Awards or other nationally recognised qualifications.

What do I have to do on these courses?

Most courses are assessed through formal examinations at the end of Year 11 and have no coursework. There are however a small number of subjects where you will be asked to produce coursework (also called controlled assessment or NEA: non-examined assessment). This is where work is set over one or more lessons but cannot be taken out of the classroom. This varies with each subject but it is important that you are clear about which options have more or less coursework and whether you would prefer to be assessed more in this way or through final examination. This might affect how you choose your options.

How are the courses graded?

If you are successful on a GCSE course you will be graded on a scale from 9-1.

BTECs and Cambridge National courses use a system of Pass, Merit and Distinction.

Level 2 course grades at a pass or above are roughly equivalent to GCSE grades 9-5.

Do I have to choose a subject now if I want to do it at A level?

It is sensible to take some subjects at GCSE if you think you might want to study those subjects at A level. If you have a concern about a particular subject contact the member of staff listed in the document (or your own subject teacher if you already study the subject in Year 9).

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

The school strives to provide for all students a comprehensive learning experience which puts into practice our curriculum aims of ensuring all students build **resilience**, show **respect** and have **success** whilst keeping future educational and career opportunities as open as possible. Our curriculum has been designed to be broad and balanced and to meet your future needs in education and employment. We also believe that as you move into Year 10, you should be making informed choices about your educational pathway and this is reflected in the balance between our core provision and the amount of choice that you have.

The Core Curriculum

All students, will follow the same Core Curriculum. This consists of:

Subject	Qualification
English	GCSE English Language (Eduqas) GCSE English Literature (AQA)
Maths	GCSE Mathematics (Eduqas)
Science	GCSE Trilogy Science (two GCSEs: AQA)
Geography History Religious Studies	One (or up to three) from: GCSE Geography (Eduqas); GCSE History (Pearson); GCSE Religious Studies (AQA)
PE	Not examined
Personal Development Programme / CREW	Not examined
RE	Not examined

The Optional Curriculum

All students will make their two remaining option choices from the range of subjects on offer. If Geography, History, or Religious Studies were not chosen as part of the Core Curriculum, they can be added at this stage.

GCSE Art*	IT: Cambridge National Creative iMedia*
GCSE Business Studies	GCSE Media Studies
GCSE Computer Science*	GCSE Music*
GCSE Drama*	OCR Cambridge National: Sport Studies*
GCSE French	BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Performing Arts (Dance)*
GCSE Geography	GCSE Spanish*
GCSE History	WJEC Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering*
BTEC Level 1 / 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care	GCSE Design & Technology (Resistant Materials)*
GCSE Art & Design: Textile Design*	Triple Science: This provides additional time so students achieve three separate sciences: GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry, GCSE Physics
GCSE Religious Studies	

*In order to select this subject for Year 10 it must already be an option you study in Year 9.

Careers Education

There is a well-resourced library of material for helping you consider your future after school. This is located in the “Your Future!” section of the main school library and is open at break and lunchtimes. We run a number of events where you and your parents can seek guidance for entry onto training courses and jobs.

You will also undertake Careers research as part of our Personal Development Programme / CREW time and there will be opportunities for you to learn job-seeking skills and about modern apprenticeships, further education and higher education.

All year 10 students currently have the opportunity to complete work experience during year 10. We have close links with Further Education Colleges and over three hundred employers to give the opportunity of taster courses, mock interviews and work experience.

We also have inspirational speakers from industry and other walks of life to encourage and enthuse students about the value of education and further training. Personal Advisers come into the school regularly to provide small group and individual counselling and guidance. For further information, you can contact Mrs Challinor kchallinor@clcc.college who has oversight of our Careers provision.

Individual Education Needs

There may be times when you feel the work you do is hard going. Many of you may find at least one bit of a subject difficult, even if you can do other things easily. You may be doing extremely well and require even more challenging work to do. Whatever your particular needs there will be a number of people who can help you. Your subject teacher, CREW leader and our Care & Guidance Team will always help. Mr N. Williams and a number of other teachers who make up the Individual Educational Needs Support Team can also help and support you in a number of ways. They can help you while you are in a lesson or they can work with you in the Student Advice Area (sometimes on an individual basis, at other times in a small group).

Key contact: Mr Williams nwilliams@clcc.college

What do I need to do?

Read the next sections of the booklet carefully.

Having thought about the options you wish to study and taken advice from the relevant people you will need to complete the Options form very carefully.

Options Form

To collect options choices we are using an online options form. The link to your child's personal option form is emailed to parents on Wednesday 4th February.

Should you need this form resending please contact Mrs Thompson in the Data and Exams Office jthompson2@clcc.college

When will I know if I've got my option subjects?

Confirmation of option subjects will take place during the **summer term.**

Timeline for Options Process

Options launch with students and parents	Wednesday 28 th January 2026
Latest assessment and effort information sent to parents to help inform choices.	Wednesday 28 th January 2026
Teachers start promoting their subjects in lessons	From Thursday 29 th January 2026
Year 9 Parents' Evening	Tuesday 3 rd February 2026
Options forms sent out to parents by email	Wednesday 4 th February 2026
Options form completion deadline	Friday 13 th February 2026

Core Subjects:

GCSE English Language

Exam Board – EDUQAS

Course Outline

Virtually all students at Countesthorpe Academy are entered for exams in both English Language and English Literature, and will leave the school with two separate GCSEs in English. They will read a range of fiction texts spanning prose, poetry and drama, in addition to a range of non-fiction texts; they will learn to write for a variety of purposes. Students will also develop their skills in speaking and listening by completing one presentation.

Exams – English Language

Component 1 – 20th Century Literature Reading and Creative Prose Writing. The first section of this 1 hour 45 minute exam focuses on the understanding and the analysis of one prose extract of 20th Century literature. The second section focuses on the completion of one creative writing task, selected from a choice of four titles. This exam is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Component 2 – 19th and 21st Century Non-Fiction Reading and Transactional/Persuasive Writing. The first section of this 2 hour exam focuses on the understanding and analysis of two high quality, non-fiction extracts on the same subject from the 19th and 21st Century. The second section focuses on the completion of two compulsory transactional/persuasive writing tasks. This exam is worth 60% of the GCSE.

Component 3 – Spoken Language. This is a non-exam assessment, and focuses on the completion of one presentation/speech, including responses to questions and feedback. It carries no weighting in the final GCSE grade, but it will be reported as part of the qualification (pass, merit or distinction).

How am I assessed?

There are two external exams for this GCSE.

Analytical reading and writing skills will be developed using sample papers as preparation for the final exams, as well as opportunities to practise writing for different audiences and purposes.

Where does the course lead?

The school offers English Literature A-Level in the Countesthorpe Academy Sixth Form which has an excellent track record.

GCSE English Literature

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

Virtually all students at Countesthorpe Academy are entered for exams in both English Language and English Literature, and will leave the school with two separate GCSEs in English. They will read and study a range of literary texts from different eras spanning prose, poetry and drama.

We strongly encourage parents to buy copies of their set texts, so students can annotate them to help develop long-term memory skills.

Component 1 – Shakespeare and C19th novel.

The first section of this 1 hour 45 minute exam focuses on the understanding and analysis of one Shakespeare play: *Macbeth*. The second section focuses on the understanding and analysis of a C19th novel: *A Christmas Carol*. This exam is worth 40% of the GCSE.

Component 2 – Post-1914 Drama, AQA Poetry Anthology and Unseen Poetry.

The first section of this 2 hour and 15 minute exam focuses on the understanding and analysis of one post-1914 play: *An Inspector Calls*. The second section of this exam focuses on the understanding, analysis and comparison of poetry taken from the AQA Anthology: *Power and Conflict*. Students are provided with copies of the anthologies. The third section of this exam focuses on the understanding, analysis and comparison of unseen poetry from the 20th/21st Century. This exam is worth 60% of the GCSE.

How am I assessed?

There are two exams for this GCSE.

Analytical reading and writing skills will be developed as preparation for the final exams, as well as learning key quotations.

Where does the course lead?

The school offers English Literature A-Level in the Countesthorpe Academy Sixth Form which has an excellent track record.

Key Contact: Ms Caleb lcaleb@clcc.college

GCSE Mathematics

Exam Board - EDUQAS

Course Outline

The WJEC Eduqas GCSE in Mathematics places problem solving at the heart of mathematics learning, which helps learners tackle everyday mathematical problems whilst studying and after obtaining the qualification.

It encourages the teaching of links between different areas of the curriculum by targeting questions that cover the content from different subject areas within mathematics.

This specification is intended to promote a variety of styles of learning so that the courses are enjoyable for all participants. It will enable learners to progress to higher-level courses of mathematical studies. Following this linear course, learners could benefit from having a greater understanding of the links between subject areas, in particular graphical and algebraic representation, which are prevalent throughout A level mathematics.

How am I assessed?

GCSE Assessment: 2 exams in May/June of Year 11.

Paper 1: Non-calculator (2 hour 15 minutes - 120 marks) 50% of GCSE

Paper 2: Calculator (2 hour 15 minutes - 120 marks) 50% of GCSE

GCSE Maths can be entered at:

Higher Tier with grades 4-9 available

Foundation Tier with grades 1-5 available

The syllabus content for both exams is Number, Algebra, Geometry, Measures, Statistics and Probability.

Where does the course lead?

GCSE Maths is an important general qualification that employers and colleges require applicants to have. If you have done well in GCSE Maths you can consider studying Maths and Further Maths at A level in year 12.

Key Contact: Mrs Wiles lwiles@clcc.college

GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy)

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

What is involved in the course?

The relevance of science to our everyday lives will be emphasised to show how important it is in helping us to understand the world around us. Ample opportunity is provided for you to take up your role as informed citizens in a rapidly changing scientific and technological society. Science is a practical subject and you will carry out experiments and investigations. You will learn how science works to help humankind make progress through the essential skills of a practical subject.

The year 9, 10 and 11 courses will cover Biology, Chemistry and Physics and you will get a combined GCSE grade which represents a double GCSE qualification by the end of year 11.

You will study topics such as the heart, health, ecology, energy, motion, cells, atomic structure, radioactivity, sport-science, food, earth science and electricity.

How am I assessed?

GCSE exams will take place in May/June of Year 11. There will be two written exam papers per subject in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, all of equal weighting. Exams are taken at either higher level or foundation level and you will be awarded a grade on a scale of 9-9 to 1-1.

Where does the course lead?

We offer Level 3 Applied Science and three A Levels: Chemistry, Physics and Biology. Students then have the opportunity to go on to study the sciences at university and/or enter a science-related career such as:

- Architects & Landscape Architects
- Astronomers
- Biological Scientists
- Broadcast Engineering Technicians
- Chemists and Materials Scientists
- Computer Hardware Engineers
- Dentists
- Dieticians
- Medical Scientists
- Nurses
- Occupational Therapists
- Optometrists
- Paramedics
- Pharmacists
- Engineers
- Geo-scientists
- Mining Engineers
- Nuclear Engineers
- Petroleum Engineers

Key Contact: Mrs Fox kfox@clcc.college

Religious Studies

This course is not examined.

Course Outline

RE is an open and forward-thinking area of study involving exploration of some of the central questions for every human being. We will explore philosophical and ethical issues in ways accessible to students of every religious background, from believer to atheist.

All RE teachers work hard to challenge preconceptions and prejudice, while developing skills of critical thinking, reflection, analysis and empathy in view of a broad range of contemporary moral issues and world events from war and conflict to medical ethics.

Where does the course lead?

The study of RS is useful in any area that involves other people. We all have our own ideas, values and beliefs and this is time to understand that and the impact they have on people and how they live, so it would lead to careers which require involve other people, and logical and critical thinking, dealing with moral issues and knowing how ideas influence human behaviour. This includes professions in medicine, nursing and social care, law, policing, businesses with a range of clients, journalism, politics, PR and marketing and scientific research. We have a successful and popular A-Level to study in the Sixth Form too.

Key Contact: Mrs Howe ahowe@clcc.college

The Personal Development Programme

The Personal Development Programme reinforces the academy values of respect, resilience and success. It covers all aspects of personal, social, health, economic, careers and citizenship education. It is delivered through academic subjects; registration activities, such as weekly character building; year group assemblies; and PDP lessons. The PDP is about equipping our students with the knowledge and skills they need as an adult to navigate the world they live in. This covers a huge range of things, from understanding the political system so that they can make their vote count, to having the skills to evaluate risk and make informed choices about health and behaviour. PDP at Key Stage 4 covers:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet and personal safety
- Physical health and fitness
- Drugs and alcohol
- Prejudice and discrimination
- Critical engagement with the media, including the internet
- RSE
- Resilience
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Personal finance
- Politics

Our Community

The PDP Programme is also about promoting tolerance and respect. It looks at diversity within our local, national and global society. Students study how society functions, from laws to government. They also look at inequalities and areas of concern, such as the environment. Students will participate in community events, such as fundraising or marking significant festivals and commemorations, and have the opportunity to take on a student leadership role.

Why is the PDP so important?

We strongly believe that learning is not simply about accruing knowledge but is also the development of skills and personal qualities that will provide the basis for a happy and fulfilling life. We aim:

- To equip students for the challenges they will face as adults and build character muscles.
- To empower students, so they feel confident in their choices and in having their voice heard.
- To develop skills for assessing situations, risks and opportunities e.g. the ability to discern bias.
- To challenge prejudice and stereotypes.
- To encourage empathy for people in situations our students may not have encountered.
- To encourage students to see their role in society on a local, national and global level.
- To encourage students to bounce back after difficult times, relish challenges, and to try their best in order to realise their full potential.

Key Contact: Mrs Morris kmorris@clcc.college

Core Option Subjects

You will study one of these (but can choose up to three of them)

GCSE Geography

Exam Board - EDUQAS

Course Outline

Students follow the GCSE Geography Specification B examined by WJEC Eduqas. The course consists of three compulsory themes, split into 11 sections, which are as follows:

Theme 1: Changing Places – Changing Economies

- Urbanisation in contrasting global cities
- Urban & rural change in the UK
- A global perspective on development issues

Theme 2: Changing Environments

- Weather and climate
- Climate change- cause and effect
- Rivers and river management
- Coastal and coastal management

Theme 3: Environmental Challenges

- How ecosystems function
- Ecosystems under threat
- Water resources and management
- Desertification

At Countesthorpe Academy students learn about each section in their own unit. The order of these sections mixes the three different themes, supporting a spiral curriculum for deeper learning. Much of the learning is embedded through the study of real-life places to further embed their understanding in relation to the world around them.

In addition, students are taught fieldwork and problem solving skills that are also examined at the end of the course. To help support them with this element of the course, there are two local fieldtrips that the students are encouraged to attend.

How am I assessed?

You will take three exams at the end of year 11. This will account for 100% of your final grade. The examinations are as follows:

Paper 1 (1 hour 45mins) = 40% of the marks.

This will test your knowledge and understanding of all themes studied.

Paper 2 (1 hour 30 mins) = 30% of the marks.

This will be a problem solving paper which focuses on an issue from any of the themes you have studied.

Paper 3 (1 hour 15 mins) =30% of the marks

This is an applied fieldwork enquiry paper. It will focus on approaches to fieldwork and the conceptual framework. Students will be given the opportunity throughout the two years, to participate in fieldwork outside of the school grounds to prepare for this paper.

Where does the course lead?

Studying GCSE Geography will enable student to continue studying Geography at A level and then possibly on to a Degree.

As well as this, Geography is an important subject that develops many transferable skills that can be used in all types of careers. For example analytical skills are highly valued in I.T.and environmental science work. The Royal Geographic Society list a variety of jobs where Geography is including, transport/ town planning, environmental management, conservation and logistics.

Key Contact: Mr Kilsby tkilsby@clcc.college

GCSE History

Exam Board - EDEXCEL

Course Outline

Paper 1: Medicine through Time, c1000 to present.

In this thematic study you will have the opportunity to examine the changing ideas about the causes and treatments of disease over a period of around 1000 years. You will discover how opinions about the causes of disease changed over time, as did methods of treatment and prevention. As part of this unit you will also undertake a focused study of the trenches of World War 1 between 1914 and 1918. During this period there were developments in the treatment of the wounded, which were then developed for use in general medicine, for example plastic surgery for facial wounds

Paper 2: Early Elizabethan England, 1558-88

In this unit you will discover what England was like in 1558, when Elizabeth I became Queen. Elizabeth kept peace at home but rivalry with Spain eventually led to war between the two countries and you will have the opportunity to find out about the war, the Armada and Spanish invasion plans and the reasons for English victory. This was also a period of exploration and you will learn how new technology on ships and sailing led to the drive to expand trade and discover the world.

Paper 2: Superpower relations and the Cold War, 1941-91

In this unit you will look at the origins of the Cold War in war torn Europe. You will have the opportunity to look at key events in the Cold War such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, the building of the Berlin Wall, and Czechoslovakia as well as the role played by key individuals such as Kennedy, Khrushchev, Stalin and Gorbachev. You will learn about the ideological differences that underpinned the regimes in both the East and West and how the collapse of the Soviet Union brought about the end of the Cold War.

Paper 3: Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39

At the end of the First World War in 1918 the Kaiser was forced to abdicate and Germany became a democracy. You will have the opportunity to find out about the problems facing the new Weimar government and the reasons why the Nazis were able to take power in 1933. You will discover how, once in power, the Nazis were able to turn Germany into a dictatorship, ruthlessly removing opposition. You will also find out what life was like for different groups in Germany, from young people to those considered by the Nazis to be outsiders, such as Jews.

How am I assessed?

You will sit three exams.

Paper 1 is on Medicine through time with a focus on the trenches of World War 1, the paper contains both source and knowledge questions and is 30% of the course. Paper 2 has two topics; Early Elizabethan England and Superpower relations and the Cold War, the questions are all knowledge based and the paper is 40% of the course. Paper 3 is on Weimar and Nazi Germany, the paper contains both source and knowledge questions and is 30% of the course.

Where does the course lead?

There are many things you can do with a GCSE in History. You could choose to continue with the study of History by taking A Level History in the sixth form or at college or you could use your knowledge of history to support other A Level courses such as English Literature, Geography or Art. A GCSE in History shows that you have a high level of literacy and that you are able to analyse complex information. These skills are highly valued by colleges and employers. Employment opportunities where skills gained through the study of history are particularly valued include journalism, media, law, teaching and human resources.

Key Contacts: Mr Atherton satherton@clcc.college ; Mr Wilkins bwilkins@clcc.college Mrs Roberts aroberts@clcc.college

GCSE Religious Studies (Full Course)

Exam Board – AQA

Course Outline

GCSE Full Course is designed to allow students to explore a range of issues that affect the world and how people live everyday from a variety of perspectives and worldviews.

We study two areas:

1. Themes

Religion and life

Religion, peace and conflict

Religion, crime and punishment

Family and relationships

2. Study of religion (We choose the largest two world religions in the UK today)

Christianity – Key beliefs and practices

Islam – Key beliefs and practices

All RE teachers work hard to challenge preconceptions and prejudice, while developing skills of critical thinking, reflection, analysis and empathy in view of contemporary moral issues and world events.

How am I assessed?

The course is assessed through two examinations at the end of the course.

Where does the course lead?

Studying Religious Studies Full Course GCSE with AQA gives students the chance to explore some of the most important questions about belief, ethics, identity and the modern world. It helps them develop critical thinking skills, balanced arguments, and cultural awareness which abilities that are valued in many future pathways. The course encourages students to understand different viewpoints, reflect on their own ideas and engage thoughtfully with real-world issues such as human rights, relationships and moral decision-making.

RS is highly regarded by colleges and employers because it strengthens skills in analysis, communication and empathy, making it a strong foundation for subjects like law, sociology, history, politics and health-related careers. We have a successful and popular A-Level to study in the Sixth Form too.

Key contact: Mrs Howe: ahowe@clcc.college

Option Subjects

GCSE Art

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

Art GCSE develops your creative and imaginative skills by looking at and exploring ideas in different ways. You will improve your understanding of the visual world by improving your observation and drawing skills. You will also be introduced to a variety of new materials and techniques which will develop your understanding of what Art is and can be.

The areas you will cover are:

- Developing ideas through looking at artists' work.
- Exploring and experimenting with ways of making 2 dimensional & 3 dimensional art pieces.
- Recording ideas and observations using a variety of media.
- Producing a personal and meaningful response demonstrating an understanding of visual language and artists' work.
- These can be explored through: drawing, painting, sculpture, installation, photography, mixed media, printmaking.

Component 1:

Portfolio

In Year 10, the autumn and spring terms are spent on a coursework project- 'Art Movements'. This will enable you to learn and develop your drawing skills and ability to use other media and techniques such as 3D, mixed media and print making. This work will be included in your coursework portfolio. In the summer term you will complete a second project -" Life".

In Year 11- the autumn term you will complete an individual project where you have a choice from 5 starting points. This develops independent thinking and creativity and enables you to direct your own work and use of materials.

Component 2:

Exam Unit

Students will be issued with the exam paper in January and will have 10 weeks of preparation and sketchbook work followed by a 10 hour exam where they complete a final response.

How am I assessed?

- Coursework Portfolio - This counts for 60% of your GCSE grade.
- Exam Project - This counts for 40% of your GCSE grade.

Where does the course lead?

Students have the opportunity to go on to study Fine Art A level or Art and Design. Possible career opportunities are:

- Architect
- Art Therapist
- Art administrator
- Artist
- Community Arts worker
- Graphic designer
- Illustrator
- Photographer
- Set designer
- Interior designer
- Fashion designer

Please note that due to the similarity of the courses, students can study either Art OR Textiles but not both.

Key contact: Mr Herickx aherickx@clcc.college

GCSE Business

Exam Board - EDEXCEL

Course Outline

This course intends to develop enterprising minds and focusses on:

- How a business is set up.
- What are the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs?
- How marketing, human resources and finance management contribute to successful businesses.
- Why some businesses succeed where others fail.
- How the external environment impacts businesses.

How am I assessed?

Two equally weighted exams are taken at the end of year 11.

Where does the course lead?

Some students opt for GCSE Business as it is an ideal step towards A level Business. In addition, the skills learned in writing longer, analytical answers are a good foundation to any A Level course. Alternatively, for those who choose not to continue to A Level a GCSE in Business is a good introduction to how businesses work and therefore is good introduction to an Apprenticeship. Remember that whatever you plan to do in the future, everyone works within a business, so a Business qualification is a great starting point.

Key Contact: Mr Lee mlee@clcc.college

GCSE Computer Science

Exam Board - OCR

Course Outline

Computing is of enormous importance to the economy, and the role of Computer Science is growing rapidly. The growth in the use of mobile devices and web-related technologies has exploded, resulting in new challenges for employers and employees. For example, businesses today require an ever-increasing number of technologically-aware individuals. GCSE Computer Science will give you an insight into programming and computing fundamentals.

During the course you will learn and cover a range of technologies, from cyber security and networks to binary and hexadecimal. These topics along with fundamentals such as ethics, computer hardware and programming, will prepare you for any role within the computing industry.

How am I assessed?

Computer systems (01)

80 marks: 1 hour and 30 minutes - Written exam (50% of course)

Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02)

80 marks: 1 hour and 30 minutes - Written exam (50% of course)

Programming project (03/04)

Totalling 20 hours (Subject to change by OCR)

Where does the course lead?

This course will allow you to go on and study computing, engineering and science and will provide job opportunities in a number of areas.

Key contact: Mr Ford nford@clcc.college

BTEC Level 1 / 2 Tech Award in Performing Arts (Dance)

Exam Board – Pearson / EDEXCEL

Course Outline

The current BTEC course is validated by Pearson and provides students the opportunity to gain the BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Award in Performing Arts. In order to achieve this qualification students, must complete a range of practical assessments and written coursework tasks. These are divided into 3 components.

Students will study the work of various choreographers and techniques as well as learning set dances. Students will also develop their own choreography skills in a range of styles, learn how to appreciate their own and others work. Written tasks include a comparative essay and analysis of performance. In component 3 students will respond to a brief set by the exam board.

How am I assessed?

Component 1 – This is internally assessed and externally moderated by the exam board. Component 1 is an extended written task whereby students will research and develop their knowledge and understanding of existing work by leading choreographers in the dance arena. Students will then compare and contrast the choreographies in a critical evaluation of the techniques and styles of dance. (36 Guided Learning Hours)

Component 2 – This unit is also internally assessed and externally moderated. This component leads on from component 1. Students will now perform using a range of dance styles and techniques including Contemporary, Jazz, Cultural, Lyrical and Modern. They will replicate set tasks from existing work and perform in front of an audience for assessment. Students will also create their own choreography to demonstrate their understanding of a range of techniques and styles of dance. (36GLH)

Component 3 – This unit is externally assessed and includes responding to a brief set by the exam board. Students will be given controlled examination time to respond to the brief this will include written and performance tasks.

Where does the course lead?

- Progression on to the BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Dance
- Advanced Level Study
- Employment in the Dance/Performing Arts industry
- University courses in Musical Theatre, Performing Arts, Dance

Key contact: Mrs Hunt ahunt@clcc.college

Cambridge National Creative iMedia

Exam Board - OCR

Course Outline

Course Outline The Creative iMedia course has been designed to engage and enthuse young people with an interest in creative computing. It is aimed at students aged 14-16 years and will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that would be used in the media industry, where you will use your learning in practical, real-life situations, such as:

- developing visual identities for clients
- planning and creating original digital graphics
- planning, creating and reviewing original digital media products.

How am I assessed?

Students will be assessed in three units continually over the two-year course. At the end of the course students will be awarded a Level 1 or Level 2 qualification equivalent to one GCSE. This course is more suited to students who prefer practical based modes of assessment, with a good command of English literacy, imaginative and creative skills.

You will study 2 mandatory units and choose 1 optional unit.

The two mandatory units are:

Unit R093: Creative iMedia in the media industry. This is assessed by taking an exam.

Unit R094: Visual identity and digital graphics. This is assessed by completing a set assignment.

Plus any one other unit from: Characters and Comics, Animation and audio, Interactive digital media, Visual imaging, Digital games.

Where does the course lead?

The knowledge and skills you develop will help you to progress onto further study in the media industry. This may be other vocational qualifications including the Level 2 or Level 3 OCR Cambridge Technicals in Digital Media and/or Information Technology; the T Level Qualification in Digital Production Design and Development or Media, Broadcast and Production; or the Media and Broadcast Assistant Pathway Apprenticeship. The qualification also helps to develop other transferable skills including creative thinking, digital presentation, planning and problem solving that will be valuable in other life and work situations.

Key contact: Mrs Sheikh nsheikh@clcc.college

GCSE Drama

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

This course is the study of Theatre Arts looking at practical and design options.

The GCSE Drama specification is designed to give you a broad and balanced experience of Drama. You will be given the opportunity to develop not only your performance skills but also your design skills in areas such as: Lighting design, Sound design, Set design, Costume, Hair and Make-Up Design You will collaborate in devising your own piece of theatre and perform in a performance from a text. You can choose to concentrate on acting or design. You will explore a range of texts and view a variety of live theatre productions. The AQA GCSE Drama specification has three components: Understanding Drama, Devising Drama and Texts in practice

Component 1: Understanding Drama- Written Exam 1hr 45 mins

For this component you will study a set text over two years. You will learn about the play practically. This component is assessed through a written exam at the end of the two years and will involve you understanding the play from various specialism viewpoints. You are allowed to take a copy of the set text into the exam. You will also analyse and evaluate at least one piece of live theatre viewed during the course, so you must be prepared to go to the theatre. At least one trip will be organised by the department for you to attend.

Component 2: Devising Theatre Internally assessed performance and performance log-externally moderated

This will be completed in the first year of the course. The aim of this component is to allow you to study the techniques of one theatre practitioner or company then apply your knowledge practically in performance. You can work as an actor or designer and you will be working as part of a group on creation, development and performance. In addition to your performance, you will produce a portfolio – a written and visual account of your process in making the work, research about the practitioner/company and how you applied this knowledge. This component encourages you to see yourself as a theatre maker being inspired by professional theatre practice.

Component 3: Texts in practice

This is another practically assessed unit, this time by a visiting examiner and will be completed in the second year of the course. You will work in a small group to produce performances from the perspective of actor or designer. The performances will be an two extract's from a text These two performances will be on a text of our choice. You will gain a deeper understanding of how to interpret a text for performance and realise artistic intentions.

How am I assessed?

The course is split into three units:

Component 1

Understanding Drama

Written Examination- 1 hour 45 minutes

40% of qualification

80 marks

Component 2

Devising Drama

Practical performance and log- internally assessed externally moderated

40% of qualification

80 marks

Component 3

Texts in Practice

Practical performance- Assessed by a visiting examiner

20% of qualification

40 marks

Where does the course lead?

GCSE Drama can lead on to A level Theatre Studies which would open up the possibilities for a career in film, or theatre. However, it is important to realise that Drama isn't just a performance-based subject. A lot of its content focuses heavily on collaboration, and therefore teamwork. It is a subject that encourages self-discovery, and provides students with a platform on which to build confidence. It requires imagination, employs problem-solving strategies, and demands commitment. These are skills necessary to all professions.

Key Contact: Mrs Richards srichards2@clcc.college

GCSE French

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

GCSE French is an academic and enjoyable course where you will develop five skills - reading, listening, speaking, writing and translation throughout the two years. You have the chance to develop your knowledge of topics such as holidays, travel, leisure and future plans. In class you will have the chance to work individually, in groups and in pairs. In preparation for the Reading & Listening exams you will have access to a variety of authentic reading and listening materials such as magazine articles, web pages, quizzes, questionnaires, brochures, and video material. We will also provide you with booklets to guide you through each aspect of the final exams.

For the Speaking Assessment you will learn how to present ideas, ask and answer questions and give opinions in role-plays, describing a photograph, reading a text aloud and answering questions on the content of this text and the issues it raises. For writing you will learn to write material of varying length including short, full sentences, describing a photo, emails and web pages.

You will also learn the skill of translating both into, and from, English.

How am I assessed?

Reading: Reading tasks with non-verbal and written responses including one translation task from French into English (25% of final mark).

Listening: Listening comprehension tasks with non-verbal and written responses. Dictation. (25% of final mark).

Speaking: One role play, one photo card discussion, one read aloud and discussion task (25% of final mark).

Writing: Foundation: Write 5 descriptive sentences in response to a photo, a short response to 5 bullet points, 5 sentences relating to knowledge of grammar, translation of sentences into French, and a longer response to 3 bullet points. Higher: Translation of sentences into French, write a response to 3 bullet points, write an extended response to 2 bullet points. (25% of final mark)

Speaking is assessed in early May of Year 11. Listening, Reading and Writing assessments take place in mid-May.

Where does the course lead?

Studying GCSE French will enable you to continue your study of the language at A -level and then at degree level if you wish. Even if you do not pursue your studies beyond GCSE, studying a foreign language brings many advantages when you eventually start work. They open up a number of careers even those not directly connected to languages. Many employers are looking for people with knowledge of another language even if it's only at a basic level. Think of all the extra opportunities of working abroad that having a language could bring. In some cases, there is the possibility of a higher salary.

Armed forces, accounting, education, journalism, leisure, health, interpreting, media, tourism, marketing, social care, law, finance, IT, ...the possibilities are endless!

Key Contacts: Mr Pelton jpelton@clcc.college or Mrs Chamberlain kchamberlain@clcc.college

BTEC Level 1 / 2 Tech Award in Health & Social Care

Exam Board – PEARSON

Course Outline

This course underpins knowledge and understanding of the health and social care industry whilst practical vocational skills learnt will also enhance and support the progression to a relevant competency based course, such as the Pearson Level 3 in Health and Social Care. Once students have completed this Level 2 course, it offers the perfect platform to access higher education and further studies within this subject.

This course is made up of three coursework based units and one externally based exam and covers a range of topics including:

- Job roles in health care, social care and early years services
- Barriers that prevent access to services
- Care values
- Service provision
- Factors and life events that affect health and well-being
- Health improvement planning
- Growth and development throughout life stages

How am I assessed?

- Learning based in the classroom followed by a formal assessment window for Components 1 and 2.
- Class submission and moderation sample sent to Pearson for external verification.
- Observations in class
- End of topic tests
- Final exam for Component 3

Where does the course lead?

- Progression to Level 3 Health and Social Care.
- Apprenticeships in the Health & Social Care field.

Key contact: Miss Jepson ljepson@clcc.college

Level 1 / 2 Vocational Award in Hospitality & Catering

Exam Board - WJEC

Course Outline

The WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering is made up of two mandatory units:

Unit 1 The Hospitality and Catering Industry

Unit 2 Hospitality and Catering in Action

Students must complete both units.

This structure has been designed to develop in learners the knowledge and understanding related to a range of hospitality and catering providers; how they operate and what they have to take into account to be successful. There is the opportunity to learn about issues related to nutrition and food safety and how they affect successful hospitality and catering operations. In this qualification, learners will also have the opportunity to develop some food preparation and cooking skills as well as transferable skills of problem solving, organisation and time management, planning and communication.

How am I assessed?

The course is assessed through an externally marked examination (Unit 1) and internally assessed controlled assessment (Unit 2).

Unit 1 The Hospitality and Catering Industry – Examination lasting 1 hour 20 minutes.

Unit 2 Hospitality and Catering in Action - 12 hour controlled assessment – this includes 8.5 hours of theory and a 3.5 hour practical element.

Where does the course lead?

The WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering has been designed to support students who want to learn about this vocational sector and the potential it can offer them for their careers or further study. The course provides learners with the opportunity to develop a range of specialist and general skills that would support their progression to employment. Employment in hospitality and catering can range from waiting staff, receptionists and catering assistants to chefs, hotel and bar managers and food technologists in food manufacturing.

Students can study the WJEC Diploma in Food Science and Nutrition at Countesthorpe Academy Sixth Form and then go on to study a wide variety of food-based degree courses at university in Hospitality, Food and Nutrition, and Food Technology.

Key Contact: Mrs Jagjivan Rjagjivan@clcc.college

GCSE Media Studies

Exam Board - OCR

Course Outline

Media studies is a fascinating, enjoyable, creative & academic subject.

During the first term in Year 10 you will be involved in developing the skills you will need to progress in the subject. You will study a variety of different media forms (TV, print media, digital media, film) and look at how they are targeted at audiences. You will develop skills of textual analysis that will also be needed in the final exams at the end of Year 11.

Learners will also be engaged in developing practical skills in digital video and print production. Depending on your choice of NEA coursework brief you will learn graphic design, web design & video editing. In your production work you will put the ideas you have learnt in the analysis into practice, you will try to make your work follow the conventions of real media to produce an authentic, creative practical production in a media area of your choice (video production, web design, radio or print work). The practical production briefs are very flexible to enable you to work in an area that interests and inspires you. This creative, practical production will be worth a 30% of the overall GCSE.

At the end of Year 11, students will sit two exams, worth 35% each. The first exam is on TV (The Avengers & Vigil) & Promoting Media: The Lego Movie. The second exam is on Music (music videos, Radio 1 Live Lounge and music magazines) and newspapers.

How am I assessed?

GCSE Media Studies has three parts:

1. Practical media production (NEA) – worth 30% of the GCSE.
2. Exam 1 - TV Drama and Promoting Media is worth 35% of the GCSE.
3. Exam 2 – Music and Newspapers is worth 35% of the GCSE.

Where does the course lead?

Many students continue to study Media at A level, and recent students have gone on to study a wide range of university degrees in different areas including media studies, film production, games design, marketing, advertising, animation & journalism.

Key Contacts: Mr Ford nford2@clcc.college

GCSE Music

Exam Board - Eduqas

Course Outline

In GCSE Music you will learn about:

- Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices
- Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble
- Area of study 3: Film Music
- Area of study 4: Popular Music

How am I assessed?

Component 1: Performing

- Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes
- 30% of qualification
- A minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance of at least one minute duration. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble.

Component 2: Composing

- Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes
- 30% of qualification
- Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by the board. Learners will choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The briefs will be released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief.

Component 3: Appraising

Written examination: 1 hour 15 minutes (approximately)

- 40% of qualification
- This component is assessed via a listening examination.
- Eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study.

Where does the course lead?

GCSE music is a great way to develop and build upon musical skills already learnt and allows students time to hone their instrumental abilities. It also provides an excellent foundation for further study of Music and Music Technology at A-Level.

Key Contact: Mr Larsen slarsen@clcc.college

GCSE Design and Technology – Resistant Materials

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

The GCSE is delivered over 3 main areas:

Core technical principles

In order to make effective design choices students will need a breadth of core technical knowledge and understanding that consists of: new and emerging technologies, energy generation and storage, developments in new materials, systems approach to designing, mechanical devices, materials and their working properties. All of this section will be assessed as theory.

Specialist technical principles – focusing on Resistant materials

In addition to the core technical principles, all students should develop an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the following specialist technical principles (resistant materials): selection of materials or components, forces and stresses, ecological and social footprint, sources and origins, using and working with materials, stock forms, types and sizes, scales of production, specialist techniques and processes, surface treatments and finishes.

Designing and making principles

Students should know and understand that all design and technology activities take place within a wide range of contexts. They should also understand how the prototypes they develop must satisfy wants or needs and be fit for their intended use. For example, the home, school, work or leisure. They will need to demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of designing and making principles in relation to the following areas: investigation, primary and secondary data, environmental, social and economic challenge, the work of others, design strategies, communication of design ideas, prototype development, selection of materials and components, tolerances, material management, specialist tools and equipment, specialist techniques and processes.

How am I assessed?

- Written exam: 2 hours, 100 marks, 50% of GCSE
- Non-exam assessment (NEA): 30–35 hours approx., 100 marks, 50% of GCSE.

Students will have end of unit exams in each area to test their knowledge.

Where does the course lead?

By gaining a good grade at GCSE, you can progress on to a Design related A Level course to explore and develop your skills further. We have many students who then successfully progress to university.

Key Contact: Mrs Rose nrose@clcc.college

GCSE Triple Science (separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics)

Students will need to opt in to do Triple Science (three GCSEs: Biology, Chemistry, Physics). All students study Trilogy Science (worth two GCSEs). This options gives more time and enables three GCSEs to be achieved.

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

You will be taught the three Sciences separately: Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

The courses will provide a more thorough and deeper grounding in Science, enabling the transition at A Level and Level 3 qualifications to be made more swiftly should that be chosen. Students will receive three separate GCSE grades for Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

How am I assessed?

GCSE exams will take place in May/June of Year 11. There will be two written exam papers per subject in Biology, Chemistry and Physics, all of equal weighting. Exams are taken at either higher level or foundation level and you will be awarded a grade on a scale of 9-1 for each separate subject.

Where does the course lead?

We offer Level 3 Applied Science and three A Levels: Chemistry, Physics and Biology. Students then have the opportunity to go on to study the sciences at University and/or enter a science-related career such as:

Architects & Landscape Architects
Astronomers
Biological Scientists
Broadcast Engineering Technicians
Chemists and Materials Scientists
Computer Hardware Engineers
Dentists
Dieticians
Medical Scientists
Nurses

Occupational Therapists
Optometrists
Paramedics
Pharmacists
Engineers
Geo-scientists
Mining Engineers
Nuclear Engineers
Petroleum Engineers

Key Contact: Mrs Fox kfox@clcc.college

GCSE Spanish

Exam Board - AQA

Course Outline

GCSE Spanish is an academic and enjoyable course where you will develop five skills - reading, listening, speaking, writing and translation throughout the two years. You have the chance to develop your knowledge of topics such as holidays, travel, leisure and future plans. In class you will have the chance to work individually, in groups and in pairs. In preparation for the Reading & Listening exams you will have access to a variety of authentic reading and listening materials such as magazine articles, web pages, quizzes, questionnaires, brochures, and video material. We will also provide you with booklets to guide you through each aspect of the final exams.

For the Speaking Assessment you will learn how to present ideas, ask and answer questions and give opinions in role-plays, describing a photograph, reading a text aloud and answering questions on the content of this text and the issues it raises. For writing you will learn to write material of varying length including short, full sentences, describing a photo, emails and web pages.

You will also learn the skill of translating both into, and from, English.

How am I assessed?

Reading: Reading tasks with non-verbal and written responses including one translation task from Spanish into English (25% of final mark).

Listening: Listening comprehension tasks with non-verbal and written responses. Dictation. (25% of final mark).

Speaking: One role play, one photo card discussion, one read aloud and discussion task (25% of final mark).

Writing: Foundation: Write 5 descriptive sentences in response to a photo, a short response to 5 bullet points, 5 sentences relating to knowledge of grammar, translation of sentences into Spanish, and a longer response to 3 bullet points. Higher: Translation of sentences into Spanish, write a response to 3 bullet points, write an extended response to 2 bullet points. (25% of final mark)

Speaking is assessed in early May of Year 11. Listening, Reading and Writing assessments take place in mid-May.

Where does the course lead?

Studying GCSE Spanish will enable you to continue your study of the language at A -level and then at degree level if you wish. Even if you do not pursue your studies beyond GCSE, studying a foreign language brings many advantages when you eventually start work. They open up a number of careers even those not directly connected to languages. Many employers are looking for people with knowledge of another language even if it's only at a basic level. Think of all the extra opportunities of working abroad that having a language could bring. In some cases, there is the possibility of a higher salary.

Armed forces, accounting, education, journalism, leisure, health, interpreting, media, tourism, marketing, social care, law, finance, IT, ...the possibilities are endless!

Key Contacts: Mr Pelton jpelton@clcc.college or Mrs Chamberlain kchamberlain@clcc.college

OCR Cambridge National- Sport Studies

Exam Board - OCR

Course Outline

Students will be assessed in four units continually over the two year course. At the end of the course students will be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction equivalent to one GCSE. This course is more suited to students who prefer coursework modes of assessment.

The units studied are:

R184: Contemporary Issues in Sport

R185: Performance and leadership in sports activities

R186: Sport and the media

How am I assessed?

R184: Contemporary Issues in Sport- 1 hour 15 minute written exam.

R185: Sports Leadership- Coursework and practical assessment. This unit will allow students to learn how to lead, plan and evaluate their session plan. Students will be practically assessed in two sports of their choice. They also create a training programme that develops two areas of weakness.

R186: Sport and the media- Coursework based unit where students will learn about how sports is covered in the media, learning the positives and negative effects it has on sport.

Where does the course lead?

Cambridge Nationals Sports Studies can help you take your first steps towards a career in sport and fitness. You'll learn the essential skills such as leadership roles, officiating and participating in a range of sports, as well as learning how sport is shown through the media. The course will allow students to understand how to support and encourage others within sport. After studying the Cambridge National Sports Studies course, students will be able to continue their studies taking the Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate in Sport and Physical Activity at Level 3 here at Countesthorpe Academy.

Key Contact: Mr Armstrong karmstrong@clcc.college

GCSE Art and Design: Textiles

Exam Board – AQA

Course Outline

Art and Design Textiles is designed to inspire and bring out the best in all students, whilst equipping them with the skills to continue the subject with confidence at GCSE, A-level and beyond. The flexibility within the course means that it works with students' interests and strengths. The course is designed to inspire, challenge and motivate every student, no matter what their level of ability and provides scope for innovation and development, providing the opportunities to tailor the development of projects to the individual needs of students. Decorative textiles might have a functional or non-functional purpose.

Areas of study In Component 1 and Component 2 students are required to work in one or more area(s) of textile design, such as those listed below:

- art textiles
- fashion design and illustration
- costume design
- constructed textiles
- printed and dyed textiles
- surface pattern
- stitched and/or embellished textiles
- soft furnishings and/or textiles for interiors
- digital textiles
- installed textiles.

How am I assessed?

The GCSE comprises of two components, comprising a 'Portfolio' selected from the course of study and an 'Externally set assignment'.

Portfolio. This will represent 60% of the GCSE marks.

Work selected for the portfolio should be presented in an appropriate format and could include: mounted studies, sketchbooks, visual diaries, journals, design sheets, design proposals, models, maquettes, prototypes, storyboards, video, photographic or digital presentations, records of transient and site-specific installations.

Externally set assignment. This will represent 40% of the GCSE.

The externally set assignment provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate, through an extended creative response, their ability to draw together different areas of knowledge, skills and/or understanding in response to their selected starting point. Students complete the assignment in 10 hours of supervised time.

Where does the course lead?

By gaining a good grade at GCSE, you can progress on to a Design or Art related A Level course to explore and develop your skills further. We have many students who then successfully progress to university.

Please note that due to the similarity of the courses, students can study either Art OR Textiles but not both.

Key Contact: Mrs Ward nward@clcc.college



Social media

Search for Countesthorpe Academy



Countesthorpe Academy

Winchester Road,
Countesthorpe,
Leicestershire,
LE8 5PR

Tel: 0116 2771555

Email: admin@countesthorpe.org.uk

www.countesthorpe.org.uk

Term time opening hours

Monday	08:00 to 15:30
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