



Thirsk School & *Sixth Form* *College*

Key Stage 4 Curriculum Information Booklet

2026



Key Stage 4 Curriculum Information Booklet Contents

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Introduction

This handbook is designed to give students and parents/carers information about our Key Stage 4 curriculum which will support them to make option choices for years 10 and 11. This is the first time that students are involved in planning their own course of study, so it is important to read this handbook carefully.

At Thirsk School and Sixth Form College, our aim is to guide students in making choices which allow them to make the most of their individual interests, aptitudes and talents and to encourage them to achieve at the highest level. To make this possible, we must provide opportunities for students to make informed choices based on their personal strengths and developing career aspirations. We do this through our Careers programme and by providing students and parents/carers with detailed information about what is on offer and by being available to discuss alternative choices until a final decision is reached.

There has been a great deal of change in the educational landscape over recent years, with the introduction of new courses and qualifications. Major reforms to GCSE were introduced in 2015, with most GCSE qualifications being assessed by end-of-course examinations, rather than coursework or controlled assessment (except in certain practical/vocational subjects). Following the recent Curriculum and Assessment review, further changes are proposed for future cohorts. The review emphasised the need to provide better support for young people in relation to exam stress. Over half of students polled for the report said they experienced difficulty in coping with exam stress. Students in the UK are among the most tested in the world, with between 24 and 31 hours of examination at the end of their Key Stage 4 courses. As a school, to ensure that we do not place our young people under unnecessary strain, we have decided to reduce the total number of qualifications students are entered for from ten to nine. This brings us in line with the national average, whereas previously our students were entered for more qualifications than the national average.

At Thirsk School and Sixth Form College, we continue to offer a wide range of subjects, to meet the varied needs and interests of our young people. For example, in addition to traditional GCSE courses, students can choose from a range of vocational courses, which cater for students with a particular interest, for example in Sport, Health and Social Care, Engineering or Hospitality and Catering. All these courses are approved by Ofqual, the government regulator, and allow students access to further education courses. Our Key Stage 4 curriculum is designed to provide students with the best combination of courses in order to make the most of their individual interests, aptitudes and talents and to encourage them to achieve at the highest level.

All GCSE qualifications are graded on a 9-1 scale, with 9 being the highest grade. A grade 5 represents a 'strong pass' and a grade 4 represents a 'standard pass'. Vocational courses are graded differently. The awards for these qualifications are Level 2 Distinction*, Level 2 Distinction, Level 2 Merit, Level 2 Pass, Level 1 Distinction, Level 1 Merit and Level 1 Pass. Although these qualifications are graded differently, they are the equivalent value of GCSE qualifications and are accepted in the same way as GCSEs for progression onto further education courses and apprenticeships.

The Key Stage 4 Curriculum

Core Subjects

There is a common core of subjects which make up 35 hours of the 50 hours of lessons across the fortnightly timetable. **All** students will attend lessons in **all** the following subjects:

- English Language
- English Literature
- Maths
- Science
- Religious Studies
- Core PE
- PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education)

Optional Subjects

In addition to the core curriculum, students may choose three subjects, known as their 'options'. All students must choose one GCSE qualification from a specified list, to ensure they are following an appropriately academic curriculum. The remaining two options are entirely free choice.

OPTION 1: Choose **one** from the following list:

- Computer Science (GCSE)
- French (GCSE)
- Geography (GCSE)
- German (GCSE)
- History (GCSE)
- Triple Science (GCSE)

OPTIONS 2 and 3: Choose **two** from the following list:

- Art, Craft and Design (GCSE)
- Business (GCSE)
- Computer Science (GCSE)
- Design Technology (GCSE)
- Drama (GCSE)
- Engineering (Level 1/2 Award)
- French (GCSE)
- Geography (GCSE)
- German (GCSE)
- Health and Social Care (Level 1/2 Cambridge National)
- History (GCSE)
- Hospitality and Catering (Level 1/2 Award)
- Music (GCSE)
- Physical Education (GCSE)

- Sports Studies (Level 1/2 Cambridge National)
- Triple Science (GCSE)

Students will also be asked to select reserve choices. Reserve choices may be used if students' first choices are unavailable. Every effort will be made to give students their first choices, but we cannot guarantee a particular combination of subjects. In cases where we are unable to offer a requested combination of subjects, students will be interviewed individually to resolve the matter. It is therefore important that students think carefully about their reserve choices, as in a small number of cases a reserve choice may become part of a student's Key Stage 4 curriculum.

To support students in making their choices, information, advice and guidance has been provided as follows:

- A copy of this handbook has been given out to all parents/carers attending the year 9 options evening. Those unable to attend can access the handbook on our website (www.thirskschool.org) or can request that a copy be sent home via their child.
- Appointments were available with subject staff at our Year 9 Parents' Evening on 19th January. If any parents were unable to make appointments and would like feedback from a particular subject teacher, please contact your child's form tutor in the first instance.
- As part of the assembly programme, students have heard presentations from subject leaders to find out more about the option subjects. The slides for these presentations can also be access on our website.
- Parents/carers can contact key staff to ask for more information or advice. Please see the key staff section at the end of this booklet for contact details.

On Wednesday 28th January, an e mail will be sent to priority 1 contacts of all students in year 9. The e mail will contain a link to a webpage where you will be asked to input your child's preferred option choices, plus reserve choices. The deadline for completing option choices is **Monday 9th February**.

English Language

All students will follow the English Language and English Literature courses, ensuring breadth and depth of study and meaning that they will achieve two separate GCSE grades. A grade 5 or above in English is of great importance to employers and college admissions teams.

There is no Controlled Assessment in English Language.

Course Title	English Language GCSE
Overview	A linear course in English Language.
Limitations	Compulsory for ALL students.
Most suitable for	All students.
Qualification gained	GCSE.
Awarding Body and	AQA English Language 8700.
Grading	9 – 1 where 9 is the best grade.
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>Reading: Engage with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts, developing the ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate writers' choices. Students learn how language, structure and form shape meaning, viewpoints and responses.</p> <p>Writing: Develop the ability to write accurately, clearly and effectively for a range of purposes and audiences. Learn how to craft ideas, structure responses, and use vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation confidently in Standard English.</p>
Assessment	<p>Paper 1: Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing 1 hour 45 minutes 80 marks 50% of GCSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section A: Reading (40 marks) <p>One unseen text, assessed through a combination of short and extended written responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section B: Writing (40 marks) <p>One extended creative writing task.</p> <p>Paper 2: Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives 1 hour 45 minutes 80 marks 50% of GCSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section A: Reading (40 marks) <p>Two linked unseen non-fiction texts, assessed through short and extended written responses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section B: Writing (40 marks) <p>One extended non-fiction writing task.</p> <p>Non-exam assessment: Spoken Language (Speaking and Listening)</p>
Allows progression to	<p>A-Level English Literature and/or English Language. Students will be required to achieve a Grade 5 or higher to progress to sixth form or most post-16 courses.</p> <p>GCSE English Language at Grade 5 or above allows students to progress to most post 16 courses or employment.</p>
Expenses involved	None unless a text is lost by a student as a replacement would be required.
Curriculum Leader	Mrs Z Adams

English Literature

All students will follow the English Literature and English Language courses, ensuring breadth and depth of study and meaning that they will achieve two separate GCSE grades. A grade 5 or above in English is of great importance to employers and college admissions teams.

There is no Controlled Assessment in English Literature.

Course Title	GCSE English Literature
Overview	A linear course in English Literature.
Limitations	Compulsory for ALL students.
Most suitable for	All students.
Qualification gained	GCSE.
Awarding Body and	AQA English Literature 8702
Grading	9 – 1 where 9 is the best grade.
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>Reading: Students will develop skills of literal and inferential comprehension and will evaluate writers' choices of vocabulary, grammar and structural features, considering how these shape meaning and reader response.</p> <p>Writing: Students will produce clear, coherent and well-structured responses to literary texts, using apt quotations and relevant textual references. Students will use accurate Standard English.</p>
Assessment	<p>All examinations are closed book.</p> <p>Paper 1: Shakespeare and the 19th-Century Novel 1 hour 45 minutes 64 marks 40% of GCSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section A: Shakespeare – Macbeth <p>One question requiring detailed analysis of a set extract and links to the play as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section B: The 19th-Century Novel – A Christmas Carol <p>One question requiring detailed analysis of a set extract and links to the novel as a whole.</p> <p>Paper 2: Modern Texts and Poetry 2 hours 15 minutes 96 marks 60% of GCSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section A: Modern Drama – An Inspector Calls <p>One question from a choice of two on the set text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section B: Poetry <p>One comparative question on two poems from the Power and Conflict anthology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section C: Unseen Poetry <p>One question analysing an unseen poem and one comparative question linking it to a second unseen poem.</p>
Allows progression to	A-Level English Literature and/or English Language.

	<p>Students will be required to achieve a Grade 5 or higher to progress to sixth form or most post-16 courses.</p> <p>GCSE English Language at Grade 5 or above allows students to progress to most post-16 courses or employment.</p>
Expenses involved	<p>None unless a text is lost by a student as a replacement would be required. We encourage students to buy their own copies of the text as they can then annotate them. Revision guides for the set texts will also be available to purchase during the course.</p>
Curriculum Leader	Mrs Z Adams

Mathematics

You will prepare for ***one of two levels of*** GCSE exam, depending on how much progress you have made in Mathematics so far:

FOUNDATION LEVEL

Covers the Maths you need for everyday life such as arithmetic, measurement, handling money and reading graphs and tables. This level also includes the basics of algebra and trigonometry and provides a broad general Mathematics education.

HIGHER LEVEL

Involves study of Mathematics in more depth and prepares you for continuing with Mathematics-related subjects after GCSE.

Course Title	GCSE Mathematics
Overview	A linear course in Mathematics
Limitations	Compulsory for ALL students
Most suitable for	All students
Qualification gained	GCSE
Awarding Body and specification	AQA Specification 8300
Grading	Higher Level: Grades 9 – 4 (where 9 is the best grade) Foundation Level: Grades 5- 1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	All students will study the following topic areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number• Algebra• Ratio, proportion and rates of change• Geometry and measures• Probability• Statistics
Assessment	3 written papers at the end of Year 11 (for higher and foundation) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper 1: Non-Calculator (1 hour 30 minutes)• Paper 2: Calculator (1 hour 30 minutes)• Paper 3: Calculator (1 hour 30 minutes)
Allows progression to	AS Level in Core Mathematics (grade 5 or above) A-Level Mathematics (grade 7 or above recommended) A-Level Further Mathematics (grade 8 or above recommended)
Expenses involved	You need to provide yourself with basic Mathematical instruments and a suitable calculator. You can also purchase past paper revision packs in year 11 (approx. £5)
Curriculum Leader	Mrs S Plumbridge

Combined Science

Course Title	GCSE Combined Science
Overview	The GCSE Combined Science course is for learners of all abilities. We will be following the AQA Trilogy specification that presents Biology, Chemistry and Physics in separate units, all of which are compulsory in order to ensure all students have a broad and balanced curriculum in Science.
Limitations	Compulsory for ALL students
Most suitable for	All students
Qualification gained	GCSE Combined Science (Trilogy route). This is a double award and therefore results in the equivalent of 2 GCSEs.
Awarding Body and specification	AQA Combined Science (Trilogy) 8464
Grading	Higher Level: Grades 9 – 4 Foundation: Grades 5 - 1 As Combined Science is equivalent to 2 GCSEs, it will have a 17-point grading scale from 9-9, 9-8 through to 2-1, 1-1.
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>The course is designed to encourage students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop scientific knowledge and conceptual understanding of science • develop understanding of the nature, processes and methods of science • develop and learn to apply observational, practical, modelling, enquiry and problem-solving skills, in the laboratory, in the field and in other learning environments • develop their ability to evaluate claims based on science through critical analysis of the methodology, evidence and conclusions, both qualitatively and quantitatively • Biology topics include cell biology, organisation, infection and response, bioenergetics, homeostasis and response, inheritance, variation and evolution and ecology. • Chemistry topics include atomic structure and the periodic table, bonding, structure, and the properties of matter, quantitative chemistry; chemical changes and energy changes, the rate and extent of chemical change, organic chemistry, chemical analysis and chemistry of the atmosphere and using resources. • Physics topics include energy, electricity, particle model of matter, atomic structure, forces, waves and magnetism and electromagnetism. <p>Integrated into the content and investigative work all of these subjects are the skills, knowledge and understanding of Working Scientifically.</p>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are 6 exams papers (2 Biology, 2 Chemistry, 2 Physics), all of which are taken at the end of the course (May/June) in year 11. • All papers are 1 hour 15 minutes and have a total of 70 marks available. They are equally weighted and each is worth 16.7% of the grade. • Each paper will consist of multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response questions. <p>Students will carry out 21 Required Practicals. These will be assessed as part of the written exams with at least 15% of the marks coming from questions related to these Practicals.</p>
Allows progression to	Students who achieve good grades on the Higher tier at GCSE can progress onto A level sciences (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
Expenses involved	We strongly recommend that you purchase the revision guides offered through the school in year 10.
Curriculum Leader	Dr G Griffiths

Social and Religious Studies (SRS)

Social and Religious Studies is a programme which includes GCSE Religious Studies as well as some aspects of the Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education programme. Students begin to study SRS at the start of year 9 and complete the course at the end of year 11.

Course Title	Social and Religious Studies
Overview	The SRS programme combines GCSE Religious Studies with aspects of PSHCE.
Limitations	Compulsory for all students
Most suitable for	All students
Qualification gained	GCSE Religious Studies
Awarding Body and specification	AQA Religious Studies A (8062)
Grading	No tiers so students can access all grades from 9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>Within the 'Religion' units, students learn about key religious questions, practices and philosophical beliefs from two religious traditions – Christianity and Buddhism.</p> <p>Within the 'Thematic' units, students learn about a wide variety of philosophical and ethical issues and consider possible responses. The thematic units are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights and Social justice • Religion and Life (medical ethics) • Crime and Punishment • War and Violence <p>Throughout all units, students are encouraged to adopt an enquiring, critical and reflective approach to their learning.</p>
Assessment	<p>Two written papers at the end of year 11, one on the study of religions and the other on thematic studies.</p> <p>Each paper is 1hr 45mins long and is worth 50% of the final grade.</p>
Allows progression to	Students who complete this course with a good grade can progress to GCE A Level Religious Studies. GCSE Religious Studies at grade 5 or above will allow students to progress to most post 16 courses or employment.
Expenses involved	None
Curriculum Leader	Mr A MacMillan

Physical Education – Core PE Lessons

The Physical Education Department aims to promote and provide a learning environment whereby pupils become healthy, knowledgeable and physically literate via active participation, enjoyment, enriched opportunity and experience. PE lessons and extensive extra-curricular clubs aim to encourage physical, aesthetic, creative, cognitive and ethical development as well as personal awareness.

In years 10 and 11 the programmes of study delivered are a progression of the work taught in KS3. All pupils will cover various activities including team sports, athletics and fitness-based units of work. Students will also be given the opportunity to choose from a selection of sports for some of their modules of work. Students will continue to follow the school's vision and values to encourage life skills such as teamwork, resilience and leadership.

There are opportunities for students to compete at School, Area, County and National Level in many activities. In addition, clubs in recreational areas exist and students are encouraged to take part for fitness or leisure as well as for excellence. There are also strong links with the community and students are positively encouraged to attend some of the many clubs within the Thirsk area.

Core PE is compulsory for all students and we aim to give them the confidence to participate in sporting activities beyond school and to lead a healthy lifestyle.

The main areas covered within PE lessons are: Health and Fitness, the benefits of participation in sport, methods and principles of training, rules, regulations and techniques of a wide variety of sports.

Please speak to Mr J Wharton, PE Curriculum Leader, for further information on Core PE lessons.

PSHCE and Careers Education

As part of their PSHCE programme, all students follow national PSHCE Association guidelines and the North Yorkshire County Council PSHCE and Citizenship Guidance for schools at Key Stage 4. During the course, students will develop a range of skills and qualities and will develop their knowledge and understanding of a wide variety of issues. Drop down events explore revision skills and thriving in examinations in Year 11 and Risky Behaviour – Making the Right Choices in Year 10, which discusses drugs, county lines, the teenage brain, and child exploitation.

This is not an externally examined course.

The PSHCE units covered include the following:

- Mental Health
- Safeguarding Issues
- British Values
- Healthy Relationships on and offline
- Contraception (RSE)
- Parenting (RSE)
- The danger of alcohol and illegal drugs - managing risks
- Financial planning and security
- Cultural diversity
- Political systems
- Consent
- Radicalisation and extremism
- Knife crime, Hate Crime and the Equality Act 2010
- Health aspects such as depression, anxiety and stress and how to identify and manage these
- Managing a Crisis and Suicide Prevention

The Careers units covered include the following:

- Preparation of a CV
- Choosing a placement for work experience
- Exploring future career options matched to students' skills and qualities
- Interview techniques
- Application forms
- Problem-solving
- Research

GCSE Art, Craft & Design

At the start of the GCSE course students will visit the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and study the work of a variety of artists. Using the trip as inspiration, they then go on to develop their own work in a range of media including 2D and 3D techniques and processes. Following on from this they start a new project with the theme of **Identity** where they build upon the portrait drawing skills covered in Key Stage 3 and they are introduced to a broader range of techniques and materials. Students are encouraged to become more independent as the course moves into year 11 when they choose their own theme for their work and develop more personal responses using their preferred methods of working.

The development of appropriate preparation is key to the course. This includes artist studies, media trials, drawing from observation, contextual work and photography. Students spend most of their time working out ideas within sketchbooks and gradually refining them to enable them to develop a finished piece of work using suitable materials.

Course Title	GCSE Art, Craft & Design
Overview	Students will develop their skills within drawing, painting, mixed media, printmaking, photography, and 3D.
Limitations	Students should have a good track record in Art and should have maintained focus throughout KS3 with a good Year 9 sketchbook of work and homework.
Most suitable for	Students who have a keen interest in Art and Photography and enjoy being creative. Students who take pride in their work and have produced a well-presented sketchbook during Year 9.
Qualification gained	GCSE
Awarding Body and specification	AQA GCSE in Art and Design: Art, Craft and Design.
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	Over the course, students develop practical skills within painting, drawing, mixed media, printmaking, photography, and 3D. Students develop research skills and the ability to work independently.
Assessment	Each project will be formally marked as a whole, with an assessment sheet explaining your strengths and areas for development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Portfolio (120 guided learning hours) = 60% • Externally Set Assignment (Exam - 10 hours over 2 days, with 20 hours approx. for prep) = 40%
Allows progression to	A Level Art, A Level Photography or other college-based creative courses. The creative industries are one of Britain's most successful industries. If a student wants to be part of film, fashion, advertising, fine art, photography, design, or publishing, it starts here.
Expenses involved	All students will have access to basic equipment in lessons and will be provided with one A3 sketchbook for their coursework and one for the externally set assignment.
Curriculum Leader	Mrs Jenny Fenwick

Business

If you are interested in how to set up a business, how businesses organise their workforce, manage production, sell products and create financial records, then this is the right course for you. In addition, you will investigate external environment issues and their effect on business behaviour, how the law and Government decisions affect businesses and how business decisions can affect you, as a customer, an employee and as a member of the local community.

Course Title	GCSE Business
Overview	Students apply their knowledge and understanding to different business contexts ranging from small enterprises to large multinationals and businesses operating in local, national and global contexts. Students develop an understanding of how these contexts, as well as internal and external influences, impact on business behaviour.
Other requirements to support success:	High level of written English required, as there is a significant amount of writing involved. The ability to carry out relevant calculations is also required (Maths skills).
Most suitable for	Students with an interest in business and the study of businesses, and a willingness to develop their written analytical and evaluative skills.
Qualification gained	GCSE
Awarding Body and specification	AQA GCSE Business (8132)
Grading	Grades 9 to 1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	Build Knowledge of: Business in the real world Influences on Business Business Operations Human Resources Marketing Finance Skills: AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues. AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to a variety of contexts. AO3: Analyse and evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity, make judgements and draw conclusions.
Assessment	External Exam Paper 1: Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes; 90 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses: Business in the real world; Influences on business; Business operations; Human resources External Exam Paper 2: Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes; 90 marks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses: Business in the real world; Influences on business; Marketing; Finance The two exams will be sat in the summer term of Year 11.
Allows progression to	A-level Business Studies, Vocational Studies in Business, or A-level Economics; It also prepares you to set up your own business or for work in any business environment.
Expenses involved	Revision guides/ Exam practice workbooks, or visit expenses as appropriate
Curriculum Leader	Mr Ward

Computer Science

Course Title	OCR GCSE Computer Science
Overview	OCR's GCSE in Computer Science will encourage learners to understand and apply fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science. Students will analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including designing, writing and debugging programs using the Python programming language.
Limitations	It is recommended that students have good Maths skills.
Most suitable for	Students with an interest in programming and computational theory, with a passion for computing and coding. Students who enjoy problem solving and logical challenges. There is a lot of theory (written work), to cover as well as more practical programming and mathematical skills.
Qualification gained	GCSE Computer Science
Awarding Body and specification	OCR J277
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>Systems Architecture – Unit 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System architecture • Primary Memory • Storage • Wired and wireless networks • Network topologies, protocols and layers • System security • System software • Ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns <p>Computational thinking, algorithms and programming – Unit 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Algorithms • Programming techniques • Producing robust programs • Computational logic • Translators and facilities of languages • Data representation <p>Programming project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programming techniques • Analysis • Design • Development <p>Testing and evaluation and conclusions</p>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer systems (Unit 1) Written Paper. 1 hour 30 minutes. 50% of the overall assessment. • Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (Unit 2) Written Paper. 1 hour 30 minutes. 50% of overall assessment. • Programming project 10 hours in total. Non-exam assessment.
Allows progression to	A-Level Maths, A Level Sciences, Level 3 IT courses
Expenses involved	None
Curriculum Leader	Mr Ward

Design and Technology

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

Course Title	GCSE Design and Technology
Overview	An opportunity to study and understand core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. This course also includes the study of specialist technical principles in greater depth. The material through which we will deliver the specialist technical principles is timbers.
Limitations	Suitable for all students. Access to a home computer is useful but not essential.
Most suitable for	Students who enjoy designing and being creative. Design and Technology is suitable for students who are interested in problem solving and can think outside the box. Those students who are interested in how things work. Students who enjoy working in wood, metals, plastics and textiles and who are increasingly confident in their handling of these materials.
Qualification gained	GCSE Design and Technology
Awarding Body and specification	AQA 8552
Grading	9 to 1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>Core Technical Principles Students will gain technical knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and emerging technologies • Developments in new materials • Systems approach to designing • Mechanical devices • Energy generation and storage • Materials and their working properties <p>Specialist Technical Principles Students will gain an in-depth knowledge and understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of materials and components • Forces and stresses • Ecological and social footprint • Surface treatments and finishes • Sources and origins • Stock forms, types, and sizes • Scales of production • Specialist techniques and processes • Using and working with materials <p>Designing and Making Principles Students will need to demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of designing and making principles in relation to the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design strategies • Investigation of data • Environmental, social, and economic challenge

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work of others • Communication of design ideas • Prototype development • Selection of materials and components • Specialist tools and equipment • Specialist techniques and processes • Evaluate and modify designs
Assessment	<p>2-hour written examination (50%)</p> <p>Non-examined assessment (50%). This will include a portfolio of evidence and a final product</p>
Allows progression to	Gives good grounding for post-16 study in Product Design
Expenses involved	All course materials are provided. Should students wish to create larger items materials will need to be sourced and paid for by the student.
Curriculum Leader	Miss C Hullah

Drama

Course Title	GCSE Drama
Overview	Drama encourages students to explore and actively engage in a wide range of creative and stimulating activities to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds. Drama develops and demonstrates competence in a range of practical, creative and performance skills. Drama encourages students to work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts, generating and communicating ideas.
Limitations	Students need to be prepared to work with and perform in front of their peers. There is considerable written content which accompanies the practical work.
Most suitable for	Students with an interest in the performing arts and who prefer a practical approach to their work.
Qualification gained	GCSE Drama.
Awarding Body and specification	AQA 8261
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	The subject content is divided into three components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding Drama • Devising Drama • Texts in practice
Assessment	<p>Component 1: Understanding Drama. Written Exam. 40% of GCSE. Students will be assessed on their knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre, to include questions on the set play studied and the analysis and evaluation of live theatre.</p> <p>Component 2: Devising Drama (practical). 40% of GCSE. Students will be assessed on the process of creating, performing and evaluating their own devised drama. They will produce a devising log which will be marked.</p> <p>Component 3: Texts in practice (practical). 20% of GCSE. Students will perform two extracts from a free choice of plays.</p>
Allows progression to	A Level Theatre Studies; enhanced vocational and career pathways as well as any situation where communication and career skills are vital.
Expenses involved	Compulsory visits to external theatres each year. These are vital for students to be able to access live theatre exam questions
Curriculum Leader	Mrs L Dickson

Engineering

Course Title	WJEC Level 1/2 Vocation Award in Engineering
Overview	An opportunity to study and understand the principles of engineering practices in real life scenarios. Your studies will involve research, development, product and testing engineered products.
Limitations	Suitable for all students. There is a large amount of theory, and it is important to understand that writing forms a large part of the course.
Most suitable for	Those students who have an interest in the Maths and Physics of engineered products as well as the design and manufacturing and development of engineered products and are seeking further education or employment in the engineering sector.
Qualification gained	WJEC Level 1/2 Vocation Award in Engineering
Awarding Body and specification	WJEC 603/7019/1
Grading	Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction * Level 1 Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction *
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	This course will develop students' knowledge and understanding of the engineering sector and provide them with opportunities to develop associated practical skills. It covers manufacturing engineering products, designing engineering products and solving engineering problems which focuses on how modern engineering has had an impact on modern day life at home, work and in society in general.
Assessment	<p>Unit 1: Manufacturing Engineering Products Internally controlled assessment 20 hours 40% of qualification</p> <p>Unit 2: Designing Engineering Products Internally controlled assessment 10 hours 20% of qualification</p> <p>Unit 3: Solving Engineering Problems Written exam – externally assessed 1 hr 30 mins 40% of qualification</p>
Allows progression to	College courses such as BTEC Level 3 Engineering. Also provides a good grounding for those who wish to seek employment in the engineering sector, apprenticeships and A-Level courses.
Expenses involved	All course materials are provided. Should students wish to remove pieces a nominal charge will be made.
Curriculum Leader	Miss C Hullah

Modern Foreign Languages – French/German

Learning a language isn't just about ticking a box – it's about discovering new ways to communicate and connect with the world. French is one of the languages offered at Thirsk School, and most of our students have the ability to achieve excellent grades at GCSE.

The GCSE French and German courses help you to understand and use the language in real-life situations, express yourself confidently in speaking and writing, and master the grammar that makes your language skills stand out. You'll also explore French culture – from music and film to traditions, festivals, and daily life in French and German speaking countries.

Why study a language? Being able to speak another language is a huge advantage in our global world. Employers and universities value it, and it opens doors to careers in business, media, travel, technology, journalism, education, and much more. Studying French or German shows that you are committed, curious, and ready to communicate – skills that are useful in school and in life.

If you enjoy learning French or German now, GCSE is the perfect next step to challenge yourself, have fun with the language, and build skills that could take you anywhere in the world. Students currently studying both French and German in year 9 may choose to pick both languages if they wish to.

Course Title	GCSE French/GCSE German
Overview	This course aims to provide students with the ability to communicate in the French/German language.
Limitations	Students must have studied French in Lower School to study GCSE French. Students must have studied German in Lower School to study GCSE German.
Most suitable for	Students who have experienced some success in their Lower School French studies.
Qualification gained	GCSE
Awarding Body and specification	AQA GCSE French Full Course 8652/AQA GCSE German Full Course 8662
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	The GCSE course in French/German is a continuation of the topics and skills learnt in years 7, 8, and 9. Topics include: family, new technologies, hobbies, school, social problems, environmental issues and home town and area.
Assessment	This is through 4 units; Unit 1: Listening Examination (25%) This takes place at the end of the course. Unit 2: Reading Examination (25%) This takes place at the end of the course. Unit 3: Speaking Examination (25%) The speaking test includes a role play, a read aloud task and a discussion of a photo card. It is normally at the end of April / early May of year 11. Unit 4: Writing Examination (25%) This takes the form of three to five pieces of writing at the end of the course.
Allows progression to	GCE A-Level French/German
Expenses involved	We recommend you buy some revision guides which the department can recommend.
Curriculum Leader	Mr A Acheson

Geography

This course highlights the critical importance of Geography for understanding the world and for stimulating an interest in various places. It will inspire students to become global citizens by exploring their place in the world and their values, as well as their responsibilities to other people and to the environment.

Course Title	GCSE Geography
Overview	GCSE Geography increases knowledge and confidence in dealing with complex matters of both the physical and human environment. It examines several case studies from a variety of scales and countries at different stages of development. Emphasis is placed on social and oral communication skills through small group work, role play, etc. to encourage an active rather than passive learning experience, as well as 'place' knowledge and map skills.
Limitations	Suitable for all students.
Most suitable for	Students with an interest in current issues, the wider world and those wishing to retain their future options in their career path.
Qualification gained	GCSE
Awarding Body and specification	AQA specification 8035
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>The content focuses on current issues designed to inspire and motivate students to study Geography. A modern and engaging approach covers key ideas and debates such as climate change, globalisation, economic progress, urban regeneration and management of world resources within the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 Topics: Weather, Climatic Hazards and Tectonic Hazards. River and Coastal Landscapes. Ecosystems with case study locations in Tropical Rainforests and Hot Desert environments. • Paper 2 Topics: Changing Urban Environments, Changing Economy and Quality of living, Resource management with a focus on Water resources. <p>GCSE allows us to offer students an improved educational experience based on evaluative and progressive fieldwork and map work, synopticity and deeper understanding of topics.</p>
Assessment	<p>There are THREE exams in total.</p> <p>There will be two papers based on specification learning, worth 70% of the overall assessment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 is the Physical Units (as above). • Paper 2 is the Human Units (as above). <p>In addition, two Geographical Enquiries (one physical, one human) will be completed, and a pre-release Geographical Issue booklet will be issued. Both the Enquiries and the pre-release booklet will be the basis of Paper 3, which is worth 30% of the overall assessment.</p>
Allows progression to	A Level Geography, alongside Science, Maths, Business and Arts courses (RS, Psychology, Art, Law, English, Nursing).
Expenses involved	We recommend you purchase a GCSE revision guide at the outset to assist in homework and assessments throughout the course. Through school the cost is approx. £3.50, from retailers the cost is £6+.
Curriculum Leader	Mr C Hansen

Health and Social Care

If you are interested in working in a health or social care setting, or with children, then this course could be right for you. You will conduct your own research on a case study, conduct an assessed interview and you will look at the physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of individuals at different life stages, and how they can be supported through different life events. It will develop your personal skills in areas such as teamwork and communication. You will also develop your practical knowledge of delivering creative therapy to a case study and be assessed in your real application of this. You will learn in a varied way including written assessments, assessed role play, assessed interviews of your own case study and coursework. There is one external examination at the end of Year 11 (40% of the qualification). The rest of the qualification is gained in Year 10 by producing two units of coursework which will be internally assessed by your teachers and then externally verified by a moderator.

Course Title	Cambridge National (Level 1/2) Certificate in Health and Social Care
Overview	This is a vocationally related qualification that builds knowledge and skills for potential health and social care sector careers.
Limitations	Suitable for all students.
Most suitable for	Students with an interest in this vocational area and the ability to work independently to deadlines.
Qualification gained	Cambridge National Certificate (Level 1/2)
Awarding Body and specification	OCR J835
Grading	L2 Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* L1 Pass/Merit/Distinction
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>One mandatory examined unit, marked externally by OCR <i>Principles of Care in Health and Social Care Settings (unit R032)</i> Topics include: The rights of service users; person centered values; effective communication; safeguarding procedures; infection control; conducting risk assessments; safety and security measures.</p> <p>One mandatory coursework unit <i>Supporting Individuals through life events (unit R033)</i> Topics include: Life stages; Impacts of life events; Sources of support</p> <p>One mandatory coursework unit <i>Creative and therapeutic activities (unit R034)</i> Topics include: Therapies and their benefits; creative activities and their benefits; how to plan, deliver and evaluate a creative activity for individuals in a HSC setting.</p>
Assessment	One externally assessed written exam; two coursework units assessed by teachers, externally verified.
Allows progression to	Level 3 Cambridge Technical in the Sixth Form
Expenses involved	None
Curriculum Leader	Mrs T Fletcher

History

GCSE History offers students a wide variety of content so that no two lessons are the same. From blood leech treatments and the discovery of germs to the Native Americans and the Wild West; from the invasion of William the Conqueror to the Rise of Adolf Hitler, we have something for everyone.

Course Title	GCSE History
Overview	This course allows students the opportunity to study History in a variety of ways – in depth, through time, in a local context and from different cultural perspectives. Students will therefore appreciate the diversity of the societies studied and the experiences of the people in these societies.
Limitations	We welcome students of all abilities
Most suitable for	Students with a genuine interest in exploring the past, asking questions and forming opinions.
Qualification gained	GCSE History
Awarding Body and specification	Edexcel 1HI0
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>Paper 1 – Thematic study and historic environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicine in Britain, c1250-present • The British sector of the Western Front, 1914-1918 <p>Paper 2 – Period study and British depth study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, C1060-88 • The American West, c1840- c1895 <p>Paper 3 – Modern Depth Study</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-1939 <p>Students will focus on developing skills of investigation, communication and organisation. They will be asked to extend their knowledge and understanding through independent learning. Above all, we want to encourage our students to become confident in thinking for themselves.</p>
Assessment	<p>Three written examinations:</p> <p>Paper 1 - 1 hour 20 minutes. 30% of final grade</p> <p>Paper 2 - 1 hour 50 minutes: 40% of final grade</p> <p>Paper 3 – 1 hour 30 minutes: 30% of final grade</p>
Allows progression to	A-Level History
Expenses involved	Field trips are likely to be offered as part of the GCSE History course, the cost of which would need to be covered.
Curriculum Leader	Mr C Hansen

Hospitality and Catering

Course Title	Level 1/2 Award in Hospitality and Catering
Overview	This is a vocational course which is appropriate for learners of all abilities (students should be aware that the course does involve theory work, a written examination and coursework. It is not solely a practical course).
Limitations	Students need to have good organisational skills. Ingredients for weekly practical lessons are brought from home.
Most suitable for	Students with a love of cooking and the food preparation process, including the theory relating to this process. Students with an interest in the hospitality and catering industries.
Qualification gained	Level 1/2 Award
Awarding Body and specification	WJEC Specification A
Grading	Level 2 Pass / Merit / Distinction / Distinction* Level 1 Pass / Merit / Distinction / Distinction*
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	Two units will be studied as part of this course: Unit 1: The Hospitality and Catering Industry and Hospitality and Unit 2: Catering in Action. As part of Unit 1, students will study all aspects of the vocational sector, including job opportunities within the sector, laws that need to be considered and safety aspects relating to the industry. In the second unit, students will learn how to plan, prepare, cook and present nutritional dishes. As part of this, students will need to consider and understand the nutritional needs and dietary requirements of a range of client groups and will develop skills in safe and hygienic food preparation, cooking and presenting.
Assessment	Unit 1 is externally assessed through examination. This represents 40% of the overall qualification. Unit 2 is internally assessed and externally moderated. The assessment takes the form of 'controlled assessment' (or coursework).
Allows progression to	More specialised college courses within food technology, for example: WJEC Level 3 Award in Food Science and Nutrition, Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Advanced Professional Cookery, Level 3 NVQ Advanced Diploma in Food Preparation and Cookery Supervision. Job possibilities include: Food Technologist, Nutritionist, Chef, jobs within hotel management, jobs within food and beverage management. Opportunities in corporate and institutional catering.
Expenses involved	It is essential that you provide your own ingredients for every practical lesson.
Curriculum Leader	Miss C Hullah

Music

This is a course which helps students to develop subject knowledge, understanding and skills, through listening to a variety of music, playing music and creating their own music. There is a strong emphasis on practical aspects of music, with choices catering for a wide range of interests and abilities. In addition, the course provides the opportunity for students to develop valuable transferable skills such as self-confidence, concentration, creativity, evaluation and teamwork.

Course Title	GCSE Music
Overview	Music GCSE enables candidates to enjoy and appreciate the benefits of being involved in playing music, making music and understanding music.
Limitations	None
Most suitable for	Students with an instrumental or vocal skill of about grade 3 ABRSM and higher.
Qualification gained	Music GCSE
Awarding Body and specification	EDUQAS MUSIC 8271
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	Four Areas of Study: 1. Musical Forms and Devices 2. Popular Music 3. Music For Ensemble 4. Popular Music
Assessment	Unit 1: Understanding Music. 1 hour 30 minutes exam. 40% of GCSE marks Unit 2: Performing Music. 30% of GCSE marks. Teaching staff mark the final performance. The assessment will be subject to moderation by EDUQAS Unit 3: Composing Music. Composition 1: Composition to a brief (36 marks) Composition 2: Free composition (36 marks) 30% of GCSE marks. Teaching staff will mark the final compositions. The assessment will be subject to moderation by EDUQAS
Allows progression to	A Level Music
Expenses involved	School gives a contribution to instrumental lessons provided by the county music service.
Curriculum Leader	Mrs L Dickson

Physical Education

The course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established in Key Stage 3 Physical Education. It will give you exciting opportunities to be involved in a number of different physical activities, promoting an active and healthy lifestyle. You should have an interest in physical education and sport, enjoy being active and appreciate the benefits of keeping fit and healthy.

You will:

- develop your knowledge and practical skills in a range of physical activities
- examine the effects of exercise and how training can improve performance
- find ways to improve your own performances in a variety of roles
- identify ways to develop and maintain a healthy and active lifestyle through participation in physical activity
- appreciate the benefits of promoting 'sport for all'.

Course Title	GCSE Physical Education
Overview	This is a GCSE Qualification. 40% of the course is coursework based. This includes your practical performance in three different areas and the completion of a personal exercise programme. 60% of the course is assessed through examination. There are 2 exams: Fitness and Body Systems – 1hr 45mins and Health and Performance – 1 hr 15mins
Limitations	This course is open to all students, however an interest in sport is essential and students who are regular attendees to extra-curricular practices are well suited.
Most suitable for	All students with a strong interest in sport who are keen to improve their sporting performance, as well as develop their knowledge of the contributing factors to a healthy active lifestyle.
Qualification gained	GCSE Physical Education
Awarding Body and specification	EDEXCEL
Grading	9-1
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	Fitness and Body Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied Anatomy and Physiology • Movement Analysis • Physical Training • Use of Data Health and Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports Psychology • Socio-Cultural influences • Health, Fitness and Wellbeing • Use of data Practical performance in 3 sports.
Assessment	Component 1 – Exam 1hr 45mins – 36% - Fitness and Body Systems. Component 2 – Exam 1hr 15mins – 24% - Health and Performance. Component 3 – Practical Performance – 30% - Performance in 3 sports. (One must be a team activity + one must be an individual activity) Component 4 – Personal Exercise Programme – 10%
Allows progression to	A-level Physical Education or Level 3 BTEC
Expenses involved	We will run an optional climbing trip, approximate costs = £210
Curriculum Leader	Mr J Wharton

Sports Studies

The OCR Level 1 /Level 2 Cambridge National in Sports Studies qualification aims to develop learning and practical skills that can be applied to real life situations and work situations. Students will understand topical and contemporary issues in sport, including why people do and do not participate in sport, the promotion of ethics and values, the roles that National Governing Bodies and high-profile events have in sport, as well as how technology is used within sport. It will give students a broad introduction to the sector, as well as developing useful personal skills to enhance individual confidence and to help prepare for successful entry into employment. Students will develop their practical skills in 2 different sports as well as planning and delivering a session as a sports leader. Students will also develop the skills of working as a team, research, planning and understand that sports performance goes far beyond just the simple physical activity of sport.

Sport Studies builds upon the skills developed at Key Stage 3. The Sport Studies course is practical and work-related. You learn by completing projects and assignments that are based on realistic work situations and demands with one unit out of 3 assessed through examination.

Course Title	Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Sports Studies
Overview	The course will offer an excellent opportunity to gain an understanding of real work-related scenarios allowing you to develop the skills needed within these situations. If you are interested in pursuing a career in sport and feel that working unit by unit rather will be of benefit to you this course may suit you best.
Limitations	You should have an interest in many aspects of sport including participating in it. This subject is largely coursework based so good attendance and organisation are essential.
Most suitable for	This course is open to all students, however an interest in sport is essential and students who are regular attendees to extra-curricular practices are well suited.
Qualification gained	Level 1 or Level 2 Cambridge National
Awarding Body and specification	OCR 603/7107/9
Grading	Level 2 Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction* Level 1 Pass, Merit, Distinction
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	Lessons will be both practical and classroom based and you will be taught the following units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary Issues in Sport • Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities • Sport and the Media
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary Issues in Sports is assessed by a 1 hour 15 minutes examination. It is worth 80 Points. • Performance and Leadership in Sports Activities is assessed using centre assessed tasks (coursework) and is worth 80 Points. • Sport and the Media is also assessed using centre assessed tasks and is worth 40 Points.
Allows progression to	A-Level Physical Education/BTEC Level 3/Cambridge Technical Level 3
Expenses involved	N/A
Curriculum Leader	Mr J Wharton

Triple Science

Course Title	GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry, GCSE Physics
Overview	This option will be studied in addition to the compulsory Combined Science double award. In the additional time offered through this option, the students will study further content, expanding on the 25 topics covered in Combined Science. This will enable the Combined Science double award to be converted into GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics, i.e. convert 2 Combined Science GCSEs into the 3 separate Science GCSEs.
Limitations	Entry requirement of Grade 5 or above in Science by the end of year-9 with a view to entering students for the higher-level GCSE papers only (grades 9 – 4). Due to the nature of the content, this course is not recommended for those who will be entered for Foundation papers (grades 5 – 1), i.e. those who are not working at a minimum of Grade 5 by the end of year 9.
Most suitable for	Students should have a strong interest in Science and in working scientifically. They may already be considering the possibility of continuing with the Sciences beyond KS4 e.g. A Level.
Qualification gained	GCSE Biology GCSE Chemistry GCSE Physics
Awarding Body and specification	AQA Biology – 8461 AQA Chemistry – 8462 AQA Physics - 8463
Grading	Higher Level: Grades 9 – 4 Students who do not achieve a grade 4 will receive a ‘U’ grade (unclassified).
Main areas of knowledge understanding and skills	<p>Triple Science consists of the 25 topics studied in Combined Science but these will be studied in more detail. There is an additional topic of Space in the Physics GCSE.</p> <p>In Biology, additional content includes developing microbiology skills, knowledge of plant diseases and defences, the eye, the brain, the kidney, DNA structure, protein synthesis and how food security can be achieved.</p> <p>In Chemistry, additional content includes learning about transition metals, nanoparticles, titrations, chemical and fuel cells, reactions of alcohols and alkenes, polymers and the Haber process.</p> <p>In Physics additional content includes learning about static electricity, nuclear fission and fusion, pressure, lenses and space.</p>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 2 exam papers per Science, i.e. 2 Biology, 2 Chemistry, 2 Physics, all of which are taken at the end of the course (May/June) in year 11. All papers are 1 hour 45 minutes and have a total of 100 marks available.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The papers are equally weighted. Each is worth 50% of the separate Science grade. • Each paper will consist of multiple choice, structured, closed, short answer and open response questions. • Students are also required to do 28 Required Practicals (10 in Biology, 8 in Chemistry and 10 in Physics). These will be assessed as part of the written exams with at least 15% of the marks coming from questions related to these.
Allows progression to	It is not essential for students to study Triple Science in order to study A-Level Sciences. However, there is no doubt that the additional content and skills will benefit students, particularly if they are considering continuing with sciences post-18.
Expenses involved	We strongly recommend that you purchase the revision guides offered through the school in year 10.
Curriculum Leader	Dr G Griffiths

Careers Education and Guidance

It is normal to not know 100% which subjects you want to take in KS4. However, you have many resources to hand to help you make decisions. Firstly, you will be able to use your *Xello* account to explore the careers that the different subjects will lead to. It also explains what courses you can pursue after GCSEs. If you haven't yet accessed Xello, get in touch with Ms Fulford and request your login details again.

You can also access icould.com. This is a fantastic website where you can explore a wide variety of careers by searching for your favourite subject and then seeing what careers your chosen subject leads to, for example search for Science and watch a video of someone talk about their profession as a Nuclear Medicine Technologist. Search for construction and watch a video of someone talking about their profession as a drone pilot.

Just make sure that you choose a balanced combination of subjects so that you keep your options open. Choose subjects in which you feel you have made good progress over years 7, 8 and 9. For new subjects, read the subject pages carefully and decide if you think you would be likely to enjoy the subject content. It is also important to have an interest in the subjects you choose. Don't be tempted to choose a subject because a friend is choosing it, or because you get on with your current teacher of that subject. Next year you may be in a different group from that friend, or you may have a different teacher. Remember, these are **your** options and **you** are the one making the choices, but make sure you pick subjects for the right reasons!

At Thirsk School and Sixth Form College, Careers Education currently takes place within PSHCE. In addition, a Careers Advisor is available in school to offer support and expert advice.

The Careers Programme aims to help you:

- Become more aware of your own strengths and interests.
- Learn action planning strategies.
- Find out about the world of work.
- Understand the post-16 education and training routes available.

The key elements of the Careers Programme are:

- A work experience placement in year 10.
- A chance for some students to visit further education college or university in year 10. In year 11 students prepare a CV, make applications for their Post 16 options, take part in a mock interview and discover about opportunities in Higher Education and Apprenticeships.
- Visits from Further Education colleges and employers.
- A careers guidance interview with a qualified and independent careers advisor.

Where can I get help with options or career choices?

- Your Form Tutor, who will discuss career ideas in lessons, will give you the information you need, and will help you develop the skills you need; who knows you as a person and will help and support you.
- Use the websites suggested above for independent research at home.
- Curriculum Leaders and subject teachers, who know your strengths and also what careers link with their subjects.

- Head of Careers, **Ms Fulford**, who is available for practical help and support in the Careers Office, D5, B1 at lunchtimes, on Teams and via email kirsty.fulford@thirskschool.org
- The Work Experience Coordinator, **Mrs Gill**, who will ensure that you are given an appropriate placement.
- Your Head of Year, **Ms Dolan**, or Head of Upper School, **Mrs Stimson**.

Key Dates

Event	Date
Options Information in Assemblies	Throughout January
Year 9 Parents' Evening	Monday 19 th January
Curriculum Information and Options Evening	Tuesday 27 th January
Link to options choices form sent via e mail to parents/carers	Wednesday 28 th January
Deadline for submitting option choices	Monday 9 th February

Key Staff and Contact Details

The following staff will be able to offer you help and advice.

Subject	Name	E-mail Address
General Guidance	Mrs J Dickinson Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum)	jo.dickinson@thirskschool.org
General Guidance	Mrs N Stimson Assistant Headteacher (Head of Upper School)	nicola.stimson@thirskschool.org
General Guidance	Ms G Dolan Head of Year 9	gillian.dolan@thirskschool.org
General Guidance	Mrs J Hudson SEND CO	julie.hudson@thirskschool.org
Careers Education and General Guidance	Ms K Fulford Head of Careers	kirsty.fulford@thirskschool.org
GCSE English Language GCSE English Literature	Mrs Z Adams Head of English	zoe.adams@thirskschool.org
GCSE Mathematics	Mrs S Plumbridge Head of Maths	sarah.plumbridge@thirskschool.org
GCSE Combined Science GCSE Biology/Chemistry/Physics	Dr G Griffiths Head of Science	gary.griffiths@thirskschool.org
GCSE Religious Studies	Mr A Macmillan Head of SRS	alan.macmillan@thirskschool.org
Core Physical Education GCSE Physical Education Level 1/2 Cambridge National in Sports Studies	Mr J Wharton Head of PE	john.wharton@thirskschool.org
PSHCE	Mr M Mars Head of PSHCE	michael.mars@thirskschool.org
GCSE Art, Craft and Design	Mrs J Fenwick Head of Art	jenny.fenwick@thirskschool.org
GCSE Business GCSE Computer Science	Mr A Ward Head of Business and Computing	andrew.ward@thirskschool.org
GCSE Design Technology WJEC Engineering WJEC Hospitality and Catering	Miss C Hullah Head of Technology	charlotte.hullah@thirskschool.org
GCSE Drama GCSE Music	Mrs L Dickson Head of Performing Arts	louise.dickson@thirskschool.org
GCSE French GCSE German	Mr A Acheson Head of Languages	andrew.acheson@thirskschool.org
GCSE Geography GCSE History	Mr C Hansen Head of Humanities	chris.hansen@thirskschool.org
Cambridge National Certificate in Health and Social Care	Mrs T Fletcher Head of Health and Social Care	tori.fletcher@thirskschool.org

Curriculum Information Evening.

Department	Subject	Location	Name	E-mail Address
English	GCSE English Language GCSE English Literature	D6	Mrs Z Adams – Head of English	zoe.adams@thirskschool.org
Maths	GCSE Mathematics	D14	Mrs S Plumbridge – Head of Maths	sarah.plumbridge@thirskschool.org
Science	GCSE Combined Science GCSE Biology/Chemistry/Physics	C1	Dr G Griffiths – Head of Science	gary.griffiths@thirskschool.org
RS	GCSE Religious Studies	E2	Mr A MacMillan – Head of RS	alan.macmillan@thirskschool.org
Physical Education	GCSE Physical Education Sports Studies Core Physical Education	Gym	Mr J Wharton – Head of Physical Education	john.wharton@thirskschool.org
Art and Design	GCSE Art and Design	B6	Mrs Fenwick – Head of Art	jenny.fenwick@thirskschool.org
Business	GCSE Business	D7	Mr A Ward – Head of Business	andrew.ward@thirskschool.org
IT / Computing	GCSE Computer Science	D18	Mr A Ward – Head of IT	andrew.ward@thirskschool.org
Design Technology	GCSE Design and Technology	B7	Miss Hullah – Head of Technology	charlotte.hullah@thirskschool.org
Engineering	WJEC Level 1 / 2 Award Engineering	B7	Miss Hullah – Head of Technology	charlotte.hullah@thirskschool.org
Performing Arts	GCSE Drama GCSE Music	FS2 F2	Mrs Dickson - Head of Performing Arts	louise.dickson@thirskschool.org
Modern Foreign Languages	GCSE French GCSE German	A4	Mr Acheson – Head of MFL	andrew.acheson@thirskschool.org
Humanities	GCSE Geography	C7	Mr Hansen – Head of History	chris.hansen@thirskschool.org
	GCSE History	C7	Mr Hansen – Head of History	chris.hansen@thirskschool.org
Health and Social Care	Cambridge National Certificate in Health and Social Care	E5	Mrs Fletcher – Head of Health and Social Care	tori.fletcher@thirskschool.org
Hospitality and Catering	WJEC Level 1 / 2 Award in Hospitality and Catering	D9	Miss Hullah – Head of Technology	charlotte.hullah@thirskschool.org