



Options e-booklet

Shirley High School

2026

[#strivingforexcellence](#)

Introduction

Dear Year 9s

Welcome to one of the most critical stages of your academic journey! The choices you make during the options process will not only decide the subjects you study for the next two years, but they could also determine your future.

Some of you are more confident in your path than others. The options process is designed to guide you all into making the very best choices.

Here are some questions to help your decisions:

1. Do I enjoy the subject?
2. Can I handle the demands of the subject?
3. Will this subject support my career path?
4. Do my choices give me a broad experience of learning?

Please do your research, talk to the adults around you, be mindful of future opportunities and most of all, trust your instincts.

We are excited to see where your choices will take you, and we are here to support you every step of the way.

Yours faithfully



Mr T Myton
Principal



Mrs S Thomas
Assistant Principal

The Curriculum

The curriculum at Shirley High School is designed to be **broad, balanced** and **ambitious** while giving pupils as much choice as possible.

All pupils will still study the **core subjects**:

1. English Literature
2. English Language
3. Mathematics
4. Science
5. Core PE
6. Personal Development

You will **pick four additional subjects** based on the option blocks.

The option blocks:

Core All pupils	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Reserve 1	Reserve 2
Mathematics English Lit English Lang Science Core PE PD	French* Geography History Spanish* Religious Studies	Any option subject below	Any option subject below	Any option subject below		

The option subjects:

Art & Design	Business Studies	Child Development	Computer Science
Dance	Design Technology	Drama	Food Prep & Nutrition
French*	Geography	Health & Social Care	History
Media Studies	Music	Photography	GCSE PE
Psychology	Religious Studies	Sociology	Spanish*

* You can **only** select the language you have predominantly studied in Shirley High School. Reasonable requests will be considered.

Reserve subjects

Please list a reserve subject **option blocks 3 & 4**. Make sure you list the subject in order of your preference (the first subject in each is your **preference**). We do our best to ensure you get your preferences, but you will be placed in your reserve option on rare occasions.

The option blocks:

Core All pupils	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Reserve 1	Reserve 2
Mathematics English Lit English Lang Science Core PE PD	French* Geography History Spanish* Religious Studies	Any option subject below	Any option subject below	Any option subject below		

The option subjects:

Art & Design	Business Studies	Child Development	Computer Science
Dance	Design Technology	Drama	Food Prep & Nutrition
French*	Geography	Health & Social Care	History
Media Studies	Music	Photography	GCSE PE
Psychology	Religious Studies	Sociology	Spanish*

Progress 8

Here's a brief explanation of how Progress 8 works:

1. Progress 8 **measures pupil's** progress across their best 8 subjects including the subject from option 1, English, Maths, Science and three additional subjects.
2. Your child's progress in these subjects is **compared** to the average progress made by pupils who had the same starting point (as measured by their KS2 results) in the same subject.
3. Each pupil's score is then **calculated** based on their progress in these subjects.
4. These scores are then averaged across all pupils in the school to give an overall **Progress 8 score** for the school.

Progress 8 Score:

- A score of **0** means the pupils in the school have made **progress in line with the national average**.
- A score **above 0** means the pupils in the school have made **better progress than the national average**.
- A score **below 0** means the pupils in the school have made **less progress than the national average**.

It's important to note that Progress 8 is not the only measure we use to assess your child's progress. We also consider their strengths, weaknesses, and individual circumstances.

However, Progress 8 is a valuable tool that helps us identify areas where your child may need extra support and allows us to track their progress over time.

Key dates

Date	Event
March	Options assemblies
23 April	Year 9 Parents Evening
W/c 6 May	Taster day
14 May	Options Evening
15 May	Application Window Opens
22 May	Application Window Closes
SUMMER 2	Options confirmation letter sent out

Key staff

Mrs S Thomas	Assistant Principal
Mrs S Boothe	Head of Year 9
Ms V Murawski	Careers Lead

Art & Design

Examination board: Edexcel

Subject description:

Art and Design equips pupils with the skills to enjoy, produce and engage with the visual arts throughout their lives, and it has immense value as a GCSE subject. GCSE Art and Design provides the opportunity for pupils to:

- Explore both contemporary and historical sources of art, craft and design first hand through, for example: visiting museums, galleries, art shows and fairs .
- Experiencing audio-visual productions, including still and moving imagery of their surroundings and environments.
- Take an individual approach to their art, craft and design making
- Develop the skill of selecting their best and most appropriate work for presentation

Skills required:

- Artist research and analytical skills.
- Developing ideas.
- Experimenting with Ideas, materials and techniques skills
- Recording and presenting ideas.
- Evaluation skills.
- Making connections.
- Drawing skills.
- Creativity.

Assessment:

Unit 1: Personal Portfolio

Internally set and marked; assessed through controlled assessment.

Unit 2: Externally Set Task in Art and Design

Externally set theme and internally marked.

Title > General Research > Artist research > Idea developments > Final idea > Final Outcome

Career opportunities:

Fine Artist, Printmaker, Textile Designer, Fashion Designer, Film Maker, Prop Maker, Set Designer, SFX Make up Artist, Architect, Graphics Designer, Games Designer, Marketing, App Designer, Film Editor, Photographer, Commercial and Advertising Photographer, Corporate Photographer, Editorial and Press Photographer, Fashion Photographer, Fashion and Photographic Stylist, Fine Art Photographer, Wedding Photographer.

Business Studies

Examination board: Edexcel

Subject description:

The Business course aims to equip pupils with an understanding of the business environment, how businesses operate within it, and the influence of external factors on business decisions and strategies. It encourages pupils to develop as commercially minded and enterprising individuals and helps them to understand the practical implications of business concepts.

Skills required:

- Problem solving
- Communication
- Numeracy
- Research Skills
- Critical thinking
- Time management
- Digital Literacy
- Entrepreneurial mind-set

Assessment:

You will sit 2 papers

Each paper:

- Is worth 50% of the GCSE
- Is worth 90 marks
- Lasts 1 hour 45 minutes

Focus:

- Theme 1 - investigating small business
- Theme 2 - Building a business

Career opportunities:

- Business Management
- Marketing and Advertising
- Finance and Accounting
- Retail Management
- Hospitality and Tourism Management

Child Development

Examination board: OCR Cambridge National

Subject description:

The Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Child Development is aimed at pupils aged 14-16 years and will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills that would be used in the Childcare sector. You may be interested in this if you want an engaging qualification where you will use your learning in practical, real-life situations. This qualification will complement other learning that you're completing for GCSEs or vocational qualifications at Key Stage 4 and help to prepare you for further study.

Skills required:

- Research skills: Within the NEA set assignment, pupils will need to complete research for equipment to help make decisions on which to choose and explain why.
- Communication skills: Pupils will regularly engage in group work to complete tasks set.
- Practical cooking skills: One of the NEA includes a practical cooking lesson. Pupils will prepare a bottle feed or meal for a child.

Assessment:

This course consists of three components. Two components are non-exam-assessed units (NEA). One component is an exam-assessed unit.

- **R057** Health and well-being for child development - Exam assessed.
- **R058** Create a safe environment and understand the nutritional needs of children from birth to five years - NEA.
- **R059** Understand the development of a child from one to five years - NEA.

Career opportunities:

Pupils will be able to select from a wide range of careers in childcare and the health and social care sector such as:

- Social Worker
- Primary School Teacher
- Nursery Nurse
- Counsellor
- Pediatrician
- Midwife
- Obstetrician
- Nursery Manager
- Youth worker

Computer Science

Examination board: OCR

Subject description:

Computers are changing every part of our lives at an ever increasing rate – why not drive the future?

In this GCSE:

- Experience programming and create new software
- Find out how hackers attack computers
- Discover how computers work
- Solve logical problems

Skills required:

- How do I know if I am suited to this course?

This course is for someone who:

1. Thinks in a logical manner, has the resilience to keep trying and enjoys solving problems and puzzles.
2. Applies Computational thinking, code tracing, problem-solving, programming concepts including the design of effective algorithms and the designing, writing, testing and refining of code.

Assessment:

You will sit 2 papers.

Each paper:

- is worth 50% of that GCSE
- is worth 80 marks
- lasts 1 hour 30 minutes.

Focus:

- Paper 1 - Computer Systems
- Paper 2 - Computational Thinking Algorithms and Programming

Career opportunities:

- Computer science pupils have excellent graduate prospects as Computer Scientists are needed in every type of industry.
- From Games Developer to Manager of IT and Communications Services, Computer Science has a range of opportunities open.
- Application Analyst
- Business Analyst
- Data Analyst
- Database Administrator

Dance

Examination board: AQA

Subject description:

In Dance we look for passionate people who would like to study 6 pieces of work by 6 different choreographers over the 2 year course. We analyse these, perform sections and create choreography inspired by the styles of dance studied. We also write about these practitioners within the written exam. You will practice different dance techniques and have workshops in many different styles such as contemporary, Hip Hop, Modern, Jazz, Samba, Ballet, etc. We will aim to create pieces for shows/performances both at Shirley and other venues as well as you creating your own choreography.

Skills required:

- The ability to work with abstract ideas, research and selection skills.
- Expression and Communication skills
- Working with others.
- Pupils must have an interest in the subject both practically and theoretically
- Dancers must be prepared to appear in regular performance to build confidence and skill
- Dancers are expected to be committed to rehearsals in their own time, including lunch and after school for at least one hour per week

Assessment:

Component 1: Performance & Choreography

- Solo and duet/trio performance - 30% of GCSE
- Solo or group choreography – 30% of GCSE

Component 2: Dance appreciation

- 90 minute Written Paper – 40% of GCSE

Career opportunities:

- Professional Dancer
- Choreographer
- Teacher
- Dance Therapist
- Community Practitioner
- Dance Company Manager
- Dance Administrator
- And many more!

Design & Technology

Examination board: AQA

Subject description:

GCSE Design and Technology will prepare pupils to participate confidently and successfully in an increasingly technological world. Pupils will gain awareness and learn from broader influences on Design and Technology, including historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic factors. Pupils will be able to work creatively when designing and making and apply technical and practical expertise. GCSE Design and Technology allows pupils to study core technical and designing and making principles, including a broad range of design processes, materials techniques and equipment. They will also have the opportunity to study specialist technical principles in greater depth

Skills required:

- Ability to create and write design briefs and specifications.
- To undertake and explore independent research in and around your project.
- Exploring the work of other designers and being influenced and inspired by them to create and develop your own individual design style.
- To design and create individual and innovation design using an iterative design process, which involves continually developing, analysing and evaluating your work.
- Using evaluation methods and to suggest further improvements and development through further testing, investigations and iterations.
- Creating various prototype models using different materials and showing development of ideas.
- Being able to understand and apply:
 - core technical principles;
 - specialist technical principles
 - designing and making principles

Assessment:

- One Written Exam Paper (2hrs):
Written Paper = 100 marks, worth 50% of GCSE. The written paper covers:
Core technical principles;
Specialist technical principles;
Designing and making principles
- One Piece of NEA (Non-examined Assessment) (30-35hrs):
NEA = 100 marks, worth 50% of GCSE.
The NEA is a substantial design and make task, the criteria covers: Identifying and investigating design possibilities; Producing a design brief and specification; Generating design ideas; Developing design ideas; Realising design ideas; Analysing & evaluating.

Career opportunities:

1. Materials: Jewellery maker; Ironmonger; Blacksmith; Material Scientists; Materials Research and Development; Costume Maker.
2. Web & devices: Web Designer; UX designer; App designer; OS developer; Programmer; Program designer; Video Game Designer.
3. Electronics & Mechanics: Sound Engineer; Robotics; Automation Designer; Electronic Design Engineer; Communications Systems Designer.
4. Design: Graphic Designer; Industrial Designer; Costume Designer; Fashion Designer; Set Designer; Jewellery Designer; Exhibition Designer; Architect.

Drama

Examination board: Edexcel

Subject description:

The Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9–1) in Drama consists of two non-examination assessment components and one externally examined paper. This course is designed to provide you with a thorough understanding of Theatre and the roles within. You will devise your own performance, learn skills to create original content and experiment with different approaches to devising. You will perform from a script and analyse a popular script from the point of view of a director, actor and theatre technician. You will demonstrate several skills by completing two practical exams and one written paper.

Skills required:

- Create original drama to portray your intention to the audience.
- Use vocal and physical skills to portray meaning to an audience.
- Understand drama and the different roles in the theatre
- Understand how to portray meaning to an audience
- Effectively bring a script to life using prior knowledge from the course.

Assessment:

You will sit 1 paper in year 11 as well as two practical performances. You will have 2 practical performances, assessed on one of the following:

- Actor
- Costume/Set Designer
- Light Technician
- Sound/Technician

You will hand on one piece of coursework; a devising log.

Career opportunities:

- Theatre Director, Technician, Actor, Stagehand, Makeup Artist, Costume Designer, Producer.
- Theatre Manager
- Studio Manager
- Producer, Director, Actor TV/Film
- Drama Therapist
- Lawyer
- Presenter
- Teacher
- Script writer and Journalist: pupils who enjoy writing and communicating ideas.
- And more.

Food Preparation & Nutrition

Examination board: AQA

Subject description:

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition will help you to develop a greater understanding of nutrition, food provenance and the working characteristics of food materials. You'll also learn about food from around the world, through the study of British and international culinary traditions as well as developing an understanding of where food comes from and the challenges surrounding food security. You'll master culinary skills and appreciate the science behind food and cooking.

Skills required:

- Demonstrate effective and safe high level cooking skills by planning, preparing dishes using a variety of cooking techniques and equipment.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties, chemical processes and nutritional content of foods.
- Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of different diets and health.
- To undertake and explore independent research in and around your project.
- Using evaluation methods and to suggest further improvements and development through further testing, investigations and iterations.
- Creating various recipes menu using different ingredients and showing developing technical skills when planning for specific diets

Assessment:

- **One Written Exam Paper (1 hrs 45 minutes):**
Written Paper = 100 marks, worth 50% of GCSE.
The written paper covers:
 - Food Preparation Skills
 - Food Nutrition and and Health
 - Food Science
 - Food Safety
 - Food Choice
 - Food Provenance
- **TWO Pieces of NEA (Non-examined Assessment)**
NEA 1 Food Science Investigation + **NEA 2** Food preparation involving a 3 hour session for candidates to produce their final 3 dishes. = 100 marks, worth 50% of GCSE.
These are written report and portfolios (1500-2000 word count)

Career opportunities:

Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE provides an excellent grounding in practical food skills and nutrition that you will use every day, no matter what career choice.

Careers are plentiful in such a huge and diverse industry. Opportunities may include jobs in

- Food manufacture such as product development
- Marketing and Business
- Quality control jobs
- Health and safety such as environmental health work,
- Nutrition and dietetics.
- Hospitality industry e.g chef, barrister, sous chef
- Sports trainer
- Food Technologist

GCSE PE

Examination board: OCR

Subject description:

Our GCSE in Physical Education equips pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills to develop their own performance in sport. They develop their understanding of socio-cultural influences on participation in sport, and the benefits of physical activity to health, fitness and well-being.

They learn about anatomy, physiology, injury prevention, improving personal fitness through appropriate training and diet, and the role of psychology in improving performance.

Skills required:

- To be able to analyse performance through movement analysis.
- To be able to analyse performance in relation to strengths and weaknesses.
- To be able to relate knowledge of anatomy and physiology to sporting examples.
- Carry out accurate and valid fitness tests.
- Use data to demonstrate knowledge of performance.

Assessment:

GCSE PE
Paper 1 – Anatomy & Physiology 60mins (worth 30% of final grade)
Paper 2 – Social-cultural issues and sports psychology 60 mins (worth 30% of final grade)
Coursework – worth 10% of final grade
THREE practical sports worth 10% each.

Cambridge National Sports Science

1 Written paper (60 mins)
3 centre assessed tasks (10 hours should be spent on each task)

Career opportunities:

- Allied Health Professional
- Dietician
- Fitness Instructor
- Masseuse
- Nutritionist
- PE Teacher
- Personal Trainer
- Physiotherapist
- Policy Advisor
- Professional Sports person
- Sports Coach/Consultant
- Sports Science

Geography

Examination board: AQA

Subject description:

This course follows the AQA GCSE Geography specification and tackles the complexities of the natural and human world. You will study a range of physical and human topics, investigate real-world case studies from the UK and beyond, and develop key geographical, analytical, and fieldwork skills. As part of this, you will critically evaluate complex global issues and consider competing viewpoints about sustainable futures, using evidence to justify your conclusions.

Skills required:

You will develop the ability to think critically about contemporary geographical challenges at local, national and global scales. You will plan and carry out geographical fieldwork, present and analyse data effectively, evaluate methods, and suggest improvements and further investigations. You will build strong analytical skills by interpreting graphs, maps and a variety of data sources, including developing confidence in map reading. You will also develop decision-making skills through evaluating geographical issues and reaching justified conclusions.

You must be prepared to write extended answers under exam conditions, apply detailed case study knowledge accurately, and interpret unfamiliar data with confidence. Geography requires consistent revision and the ability to explain processes clearly using specialist terminology.

Assessment:

You will sit 3 Exam papers:
All exams are taken in year 11.

Paper 1 Living with the physical environment (1 hour 30 mins exams (35%))

Paper 2 Challenge of the human environment (1 hour 30 mins exams (35%))

Paper 3 Geographical Applications (1 hour 30 mins exam (30%))

Career opportunities:

Geography develops transferable skills in analysis, decision-making, data interpretation and problem-solving that are valued across many industries. As such, it opens doors to a wide range of careers in sustainability, urban planning, hazard management, global development, and more. Examples include:

- Climate and Sustainability: Climate Change Analyst, Environmental Consultant
- Data and Geographical Skills: GIS Specialist, Cartographer, Environmental Analyst
- Global Development and Aid: Aid Worker, Diplomat, UN Roles
- Hazards and Risk: Meteorologist, Flood Risk Officer, Emergency Planner
- Urban and Environmental Management: Town Planner, Coastal Manager, Conservation Officer
- Travel and Tourism: Tour Guide, Eco-tourism Specialist

Health & Social Care

Examination board: Pearson BTEC

Subject description:

The Pearson BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge through vocational contexts by studying human lifespan development, health and social care services and values, and health and wellbeing as part of their Key Stage 4 learning. The qualification recognises the value of learning skills, knowledge and vocational attributes to complement GCSEs. The qualification will broaden learners' experience and understanding of the varied progression options available to them.

Skills required:

- Digital skills: making use of the internet for research
- Teamwork skills: working with others to expand knowledge
- Communication skills: supporting people with a diverse range of needs

Assessment:

This course consists of three components.

Two components are internally assessed through Pearson Set Assignments. One component is assessed externally via an Exam.

1. Human Lifespan Development -Internal
2. Health and Social Care Services and Values - Internal
3. Health and Wellbeing - External

Career opportunities:

- Medical professions in health care such as Nurse, Doctor, Pharmacist, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist.
- Professions in social care such as Social Worker, Care Worker, Probation Officer, Nursery Nurse and Youth Worker, Primary School Teacher.

History

Examination board: Edexcel

Subject description:

This comprehensive programme is designed for pupils with a mixture of short- and long-answer questions. Questions will focus on a variety of historical areas, such as what happened, the impact of key events, how far you agree with a view. Pupils also analyse historical sources and develop ideas for tackling an historical investigation.

Skills required:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the key features and characteristics of the period studied.
- Explain and analyse historical events and periods studied using second-order concepts.
- Analyse, evaluate and use sources (contemporary to the period) to make substantiated judgements, in the context of historical events studied.
- Analyse, evaluate and make substantiated judgements about interpretations (including how and why interpretations may differ) in the context of historical events studied.

Assessment:

You will sit 3 papers. It is worth 1 GCSE

Paper 1: Thematic Study

Crime and punishment through time, c1000-present day. This paper is worth 30% of your GCSE and is out of 52 marks
This paper is 1 hour 20 minutes.

Paper 2:

British Depth Study

Anglo-Saxon and Norman England, c1060-88.

Period Study

Superpower Relations and the Cold War, 1941-91. This paper is worth 40% of your GCSE and is out of 64 marks
This paper is 1 hour 50 minutes.

Paper 3:

Modern Depth Study

Weimar and Nazi Germany, 1918-39.

This paper is worth 30% of your GCSE and is out of 52 marks
This paper is 1 hour 30 minutes.

Career opportunities:

GCSE history is a great basis for many A Level subjects and is highly regarded by colleges, universities and employers.

- Writing and journalism
- Law
- Politics
- TV, media and broadcasting
- Travel and tourism
- Museums and libraries
- History teaching
- Archaeology
- Archivist

Media Studies

Examination board: Eduqas

Subject description:

Media Studies requires learners to explore key concepts; representations, audiences, industries and media language and to explore nine different media industries including film, television and online. Learners will also deconstruct different media texts and explore their historical, sociological, cultural and political contexts.

Skills required:

- Deconstructing different media texts in terms of engaging audiences and positioning audiences.
- Analysing different media industries.
- The ability to use digital technology to create media.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills when undertaking paired work; presentations.
- Applying theories to extended writing tasks.

Assessment:

You will sit two examinations and follow a non-examination (coursework) brief which changes yearly.

- Paper 1 Exploring The Media (40%).
- Understanding Media Forms (30%).
- NEA (coursework 30%).

Career opportunities:

- Working in broadcasting; film, TV or radio.
- Working in developing or publishing; video games, websites or social media.
- Working in journalism or public relations.
- Designing; posters, billboards or media campaigns.
- Audience research/targeting for media companies.

Modern Foreign Languages

Examination board: AQA

Subject description:

This GCSE is designed to give pupils the ability to confidently communicate in either French or Spanish in real-life situations as well as giving pupils a broad cultural awareness of life in a French or Spanish speaking country. Pupils will develop their linguistic knowledge in the following four areas; listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Skills required:

- The ability to spot and recognise patterns and rules in language.
- To demonstrate a variety of tenses and sophisticated language skills in your work.
- To be confident in all four key areas; listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- To consistently meet deadlines.

Assessment:

You will sit 4 separate papers.

Each paper is worth 25% of the GCSE

- The listening paper lasts 45 mins
- The reading paper lasts 45 mins
- The writing paper lasts 1 hour
- The speaking exam lasts 10 mins

Career opportunities:

- The tourism industry such as Hotel Manager, Club Rep, Cabin Crew, Pilot, Tour Guide
- Translator, Interpreter, Teacher, Tutor
- Marketing, sales, advertising or business for an international company such as Dior, Chanel, Garnier, Santander
- Travel writing or journalism
- Charity work

Music

Examination board: OCR

Subject description:

This course is designed to provide you with a thorough understanding of Music theory and listening. You will demonstrate several skills by completing four practical exams and one written paper. You will compose your own song, write another to a set brief, you will perform a solo and work as part of an ensemble. You will study a total of 16 genres through four areas of study (AoS). AoS2 Concerto through Time: this covers music from 1600 - 1910 through Baroque, Classical & Romantic. AoS3 Rhythms of the World: covers music from South America, Europe & the Middle East and music from India. AoS4: Film Music AoS5: Conventions of Pop covers music from 1950s Rock to Roll to solo artists of the present day.

Skills required:

- Understand different musical genres and be open and ready to learn more
- Play an instrument or sing (or start getting lessons in year 10)
- Be prepared to perform to an audience
- Compose your own music on GarageBand music software or through traditional instruments
- Organisation - You will need to practice your instrument regularly

Assessment:

- Solo Performance 15%
- Group ensemble performance 15%
- Composition 1 15%
- Composition 2 (to a set brief) 15%
- Listening exam 1 80 minute paper 40%.

Career opportunities:

- Music Producer
- Sound Technician,
- Composer
- Session Musician
- Peripatetic Teacher
- Score Writer/Arranger
- Teacher
- Conductor

Psychology

Examination board: AQA

Subject description:

Psychology is a broad discipline which includes many areas of study such as cognitive development, and clinical and social behaviour. During the course of your GCSE Psychology you will study memory, research methods, perception, development and social influence in the first year, and language thought and communication, brain and neuropsychology and psychological problems in the second year. Studying GCSE Psychology is an excellent way to give yourself a foundational knowledge of how the human mind works, understand social behaviour and human development. GCSE Psychology will also give you the basis upon which to build deeper knowledge in the form of A Level Psychology and an undergraduate degree.

Skills required:

- Communication - Communication is essential in any field, but even more so in psychology.
- Active listening
- Critical thinking
- Ethical understanding
- Organisation
- Analytical Skills
- Research
- Numeracy
- Commitment to learning

Assessment:

You will sit 2 papers.
Each paper is worth 50% of the GCSE.
Each paper is 100 marks.
Each paper is 1 hour 45 minutes.

There are 4 sections worth 25 marks in each paper that have the following style of questions:
-Multiple choice
-Short answer
-Extended writing.

Career opportunities:

- Medical and health professions such as Psychologists, Doctors, Wellbeing Practitioners , Therapists and Counsellors.
- Research Specialists (Social Researchers/Market Researchers)
- Education (Teachers, Consultants)
- Law
- Neuroscience and study of the human brain.
- Human resources officers and career advisors.

Photography

Examination board: Edexcel

Subject description:

Photography is defined here as the practice of producing images using light-sensitive materials such as photographic film, or digital methods of development and production to create static or moving images. GCSE Photography provides the opportunity for pupils to:

- Explore both contemporary and historical sources of Fine Art Photography first hand through, for example: visiting museums, galleries, art shows and fairs .
- Experiencing audio-visual productions, including still and moving imagery of their surroundings and environments.
- Take an individual approach to their photography.
- Develop the skill of selecting their best and most appropriate work for presentation

Skills required:

Use photographic techniques and processes, appropriate to pupils' personal intentions, for example:

- Lighting
- Viewpoint
- Aperture
- depth of field
- shutter speed and movement
- use of enlarger
- chemical and/or digital processes

Assessment:

Unit 1: Personal Portfolio
Internally set and marked; assessed through controlled assessment.

Unit 2: Externally Set Task in Art and Design
Externally set theme and internally marked.

Title > General Research > Artist research
> Idea developments > Final idea > Final Outcome

Career opportunities:

Fine Artist, Printmaker, Textile Designer, Fashion Designer, Film Maker, Prop maker, Set Designer, SFX Make up Artist, Architect, Graphics Designer, Games Designer, Marketing, App Designer, Film Editor, Photographer, Commercial and Advertising Photographer, Corporate Photographer. Editorial and Press Photographer. Fashion Photographer. Fashion and Photographic Stylist. Fine Art Photographer. Wedding Photographer.

Religious Studies

Examination board: Eduqas

Subject description:

Eduqas GCSE Religious Studies takes a distinctive issues based approach to the study of religious, philosophical and ethical studies in the modern world. The course will also enable you to gain knowledge and understanding of two religions. You will deepen your understanding of the relationship between people. You will learn about common and various views within two religious traditions, in the way beliefs and teachings are understood and expressed. You will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the fact that religious traditions of Great Britain are, in the main, Christian, but you will also understand that religious traditions in Great Britain are diverse and include the religion of Islam, as well as non-religious beliefs, such as atheism and humanism.

Skills required:

- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- The ability to work with abstract ideas, research and selection skills.
- Making decisions about moral problems.
- Expression and Communication skills
- Working with others, problem solving.

Assessment:

You will sit 3 papers for Component 1, 2 and 3.

Paper 1 is worth 50% of that GCSE

Papers 2 & 3 are worth 50% of the GCSE

Paper 1 is worth 126 marks: 2 hours

Paper 2 is worth 66 marks: 1 hour

Paper 3 is worth 60 marks: 1 hour

- Philosophy and Ethics
- Christianity
- Islam

Career opportunities:

- Education, youth, social work, and social services
- NHS, Medicine & Nursing
- Law, Politics, Publishing and Journalism
- International Business, Diplomacy & Religious professions of various kinds.
- The Civil Service; Advertising, the Charity Sector and NGOs (non-government organisations)

Sociology

Examination board: AQA

Subject description:

Studying GCSE Sociology gives pupils valuable knowledge and understanding of today's society through studying families, education, crime and deviance and social stratification. It also allows pupils to develop critical and evaluative thinking skills.

Skills required:

A01 Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.

A02 Apply knowledge and understanding of sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods.

A03 Analyse and evaluate sociological theories, concepts, evidence and methods in order to construct arguments, make judgements and draw conclusions.

Assessment:

Paper 1 The sociology of families and education.

The sociology of families
The sociology of education
pupils will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

100 marks

50% of GCSE

Paper 2 The sociology of crime and deviance and social stratification.

The sociology of crime and deviance
The sociology of social stratification
pupils will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.

Written exam: 1 hour 45 minutes

100 marks

50% of GCSE

Career opportunities:

GCSE Sociology is a great basis for many A Level subjects and is highly regarded by colleges, universities and employers.

- Writing and Journalism
- Law
- Politics
- TV, Media and Broadcasting
- Social Workers
- Social Sciences

FAQs

How many subjects can I choose?

You will choose four subjects, one from each options block. You will also pick a reserve subject in option blocks 3 & 4.

What do I do if I miss the application window?

Contact one of the key staff members as soon as possible.

Will I get my top choices?

We will do all we can to ensure that you get your choices in order of preference but we cannot guarantee this for all pupils.

What if I change my mind?

Please contact the school as soon as possible. Any changes will need to be submitted in writing.

Do I have to pick all of the core subjects?

To ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils will study the following core subjects:

- English Literature
- English Language
- Mathematics
- Science
- Core PE
- Personal Development

The core subjects sit outside of your options.

Careerpilot

Website: www.careerpilot.org.uk

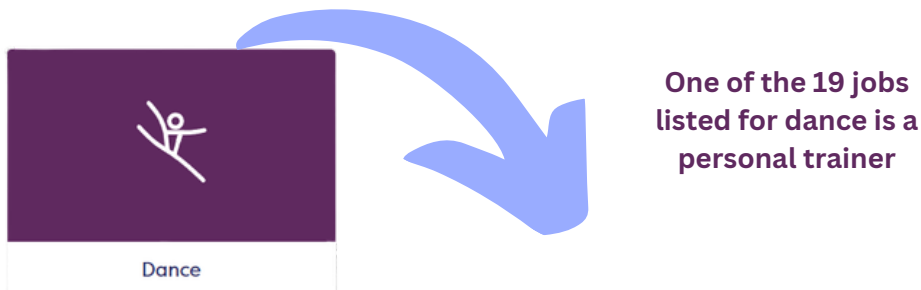
What is it?

A website with all the information and tools you need to explore your future career.

1. Select a subject that you love.
2. You will get a list of possible jobs that use that subject.
3. Select a job to read about:

- The annual salary
- Working hours
- Future employment prospects
- Day-to-day tasks
- Routes into the job (e.g. University entry requirements.)
- Number of people employed in each region in the UK
- And many more

An example of some of the information:



Personal trainer

Personal trainers work with clients to improve their health and fitness.

<p>£ ANNUAL SALARY</p> <p>£14,000 to £22,000</p> <p>Average UK salary in 2019 was £30,378 (source Office for National Statistics)</p>	<p>🕒 WORKING HOURS</p> <p>32 to 34 variable</p> <p>You could work: evenings / weekends / bank holidays, as customers demand</p>	<p>📈 FUTURE EMPLOYMENT</p> <p>There will be 0.7% more Personal trainer jobs in 2027.</p> <p>0.7%</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Unifrog

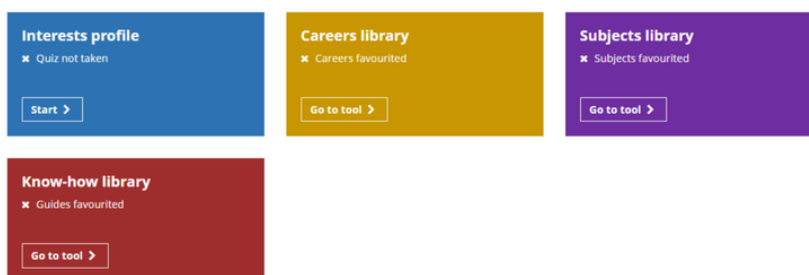
Website: www.unifrog.org

What is it?

Unifrog is a one-stop careers website that will help and guide you throughout your careers choices, from picking your options to applying for university.

Unifrog allows you to investigate subject areas and the corresponding jobs that relate to them. You can do quizzes and questionnaires to help you think about the types of careers you may be suitable for and then you can explore the different sectors.

Exploring pathways



You can search by jobs, subjects, interests and skills:

By subject area

- Arts (11) >
- Business (10) >
- Earth and Animal sciences (6) >
- Engineering and Construction (10) >
- Health (8) >
- Humanities (13) >
- Mathematical Sciences (6) >
- Modern Languages (15) >
- Sciences (9) >
- Social Sciences (12) >

By characteristics

- Fewest students (33) >
- Least competitive (8) >
- Least study (30) >
- Most competitive (5) >
- Most students (17) >
- Most study (20) >

By interests

- Arguing (16) >
- Computers (18) >
- Food (6) >
- Helping people (17) >
- Making things (20) >
- Numbers (18) >
- Sports (5) >
- Travelling (26) >
- Words (35) >

By skill

- Accountability (6) >
- Adaptability / Personal effectiveness (7) >
- Artistic skills (9) >
- Attention to detail / Observation (36) >
- Caring (8) >
- Communication (23) >
- Confidence (14) >
- Creativity / Innovation (17) >
- Critical thinking (27) >

- Digital literacy (8) >
- Independence (9) >
- Inquisitiveness (37) >
- Listening (24) >
- Numeracy (19) >
- Open-mindedness (4) >
- Organising / Time management (7) >
- Physical abilities (5) >
- Planning / Aiming high (9) >

- Practical skills (30) >
- Problem solving (18) >
- Reading (38) >
- Resilience / Staying positive (9) >
- Speaking (21) >
- Teamwork (19) >
- Technical skills (20) >
- Working under pressure (4) >
- Writing (22) >

All pupils should know how to log on to Unifrog. If not please contact Mrs Murawski on murawski@shirley.croydon.sch.uk

Staff emails

Art & Design	bush@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Business Studies	routledge-brown@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Child Development	frimpong@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Computer Science	kiabi@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Dance	fairweather@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Design & Technology	khera@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Drama	shiamtanis@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Food Preparation & Nutrition	divecha@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
GCSE PE / CAM Nat	noirette@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Geography	davies@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Health & Social Care	frimpong@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
History	attenborough@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Media Studies	mallie@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
MFL	murawski@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Music	saunders@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Photography	bush@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Psychology	powellc@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Religious Studies	kalanzi@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Sociology	kasprzak@shirley.croydon.sch.uk



2026

#strivingforexcellence