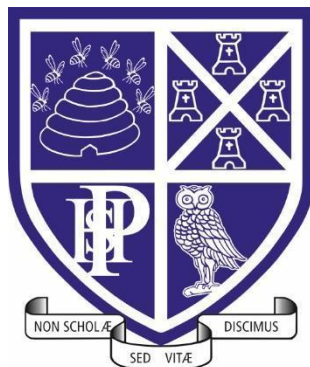


Plymouth High School for Girls

"For life, not school, we learn"



Year 10 GCSE Expectations

Information Booklet

A Guide for Parents and Students

September 2026



Contents

- Key Stage 4 Course Information
- Subject Leader Contact Details and School Calendar
- Communications - Accessibility of Staff and Response Times
- Charging
- Overview of Assessment
- Year 10 Curriculum
- Work Experience
- Important Work Experience Deadline Dates
- Student Support
- Attitude to Learning Descriptors for Reports
- 10 Tips for Parents

KS4 Course Information

The purpose of this section of the booklet is to give students and their parents/carers some indication of the course requirements and demand in the different KS4 subjects.

Curriculum Leaders have indicated information such as what proportion of the total marks are awarded specifically for coursework and assessments, the nature of the tasks which are required from students, how time is made available to complete the work and, where appropriate, approximate dates when the students can expect to be doing assessed work for particular subjects.

Students and parents should gather from this that the amount of assessment in year 10 remains significant in some subjects. It is essential that both parents and students are aware that any absence from school for whatever reason will have a direct impact on the number of hours available to spend on some assessments. While we will endeavour to provide supervised catch-up sessions for time missed, this may not be possible when this time is busy, and the absence was avoidable.

Centre assessed work, or coursework, can make significant demands on students' time outside of lessons, but it should not be excessive. As indicated in the following pages, subject staff devote a mixture of classwork and homework time to preparing for this assessment work and this is largely dictated by the level of control on the work i.e. exactly what tasks the examination board allow you to carry out at home and what has to be done in school under higher levels of control.

The homework time allocation is about one hour per subject per week (but two hours for English, and 40 minutes per science teacher), and it should be possible for students to complete work in the homework time allocated to it by teachers. If it seems to be taking much longer, then students should talk to their teacher, to make sure they are not doing more than is intended. A list of contact emails for all subject leaders is included in this booklet.

Also, bear in mind that in some subjects the demand on time is less obvious than in others. For example, preparing for language oral examinations is just as important as submitting an essay on time. If they have taken a Technology option, particular attention needs to be paid to students pacing their work, as this will have large elements of classroom-based assessment.

We hope that you will find the information interesting and helpful. If you have any queries, please discuss them with subject teachers in the first instance.

Mrs P Hatfield
Head of Year 10

Contact Details

Parents and students are encouraged to communicate with the school if they have any concerns or questions about courses. The school switchboard can be contacted on 03333 602230 where a message can be left for a particular member of staff to phone you when they are not teaching. As there may be some inevitable delay in receiving a response through this route it is often more efficient to contact staff via email.

To help with this I have listed the email addresses of subject leaders and key staff below with an indication of their role:

Role	Name	Email Address
Head of Year 10	Mrs P Hatfield	Philippa.Hatfield@phsg.tsat.uk
Assistant to Heads of Year	Mrs N Gill	Nichola.Gill@phsg.tsat.uk
Year 10 Form Tutors	10T Mr M Thackray 10K Miss C Crouch 10L Mrs H Brownbridge & Mrs J Gilchrist 10A Mrs A Carter & Mr R Mallard & Mr D Watson	Matt.Thackray@phsg.tsat.uk Claire.Crouch@phsg.tsat.uk Helen.Brownbridge@phsg.tsat.uk Jade.Gilchrist@phsg.tsat.uk Anna.Carter@phsg.tsat.uk Richard.Mallard@phsg.tsat.uk Darren.Watson@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for English	Mrs S Blunden-Currie	Siobhan.Blundencurrie@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for Mathematics	Mrs G Freeman-Alford	Geogina.Freemanalford@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for Science	Mr A Waite	Adrian.Waite@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for Design and Technology	Mrs G Young	Gemma.Young@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for MFL	Mrs H Walsh	Heidi.Walsh@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for History/Law/Politics	Mr R Mallard	Richard.Mallard@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for Geography	Mr L Graves	Leon.Graves@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for Religious Studies	Miss T McAuliffe	Tanya.Mcauliffe@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for Art	Mr T Varrall	Tom.Varrall@phsg.tsat.uk
Subject Leader for Music	Ms K Marcer-Griffiths	Kristy.Marcergriffiths@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for Drama	Miss C Crouch	Claire.Crouch@phsg.tsat.uk
Subject Leader for PE	Miss L Jones	Lowenna.Jones@phsg.tsat.uk
Curriculum Lead for PSHE	Mrs S Lee	Sophie.Lee@phsg.tsat.uk
Subject Leader for Computing	Mr P Richards	Peter.Richards@phsg.tsat.uk
Learning Support	Mrs P Simister	Patricia.Simister@phsg.tsat.uk

Key dates for Year 10 Students. School calendar 2026-2027

[Plymouth High School for Girls - Term dates & KS3,4 5 overview](#)

Communications - Accessibility of Staff and Response Times

At Plymouth High School, we believe that good communication between school and home is essential. Children and young people achieve more when school and parents/carers work together. Parents/carers can help more if they know what the school is trying to achieve, and how they can help.

In recent years' communications between home and school have shifted quite dramatically from pen and paper to email; with email becoming the preferred and predominant mode of communication. Email provides us with a quick, cheap and easy means of communication. The ease of communication via email has many advantages but with it comes problems as the expectation for almost instantaneous reply, in a well-informed, considered and timely manner, appears to be on the increase with complaints following when this has not been the case.

As a school, our first priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning and we must make sure that email as a means of communication doesn't distract teachers from their primary focus: teaching. On any one day a teacher will have a plethora of demands on their time including up to five lessons teaching (and tutor time, lunch duties, clubs and other activities, and after school practices). Teachers cannot and are not expected to monitor and manage their inbox during lessons or at other times in the day, when they should be planning and preparing for lessons, assessing student work or carrying out school duties. The school (and you) expect teachers to be fully prepared, focused and engaged with students and supporting their learning. We would never wish to discourage parents from communicating with staff, establishing a relationship and working together. Parental communication is essential; we do not always get it right and we need your feedback to help us to continue to improve.

However, the school has a duty of care to staff, as it does to students. This includes a responsibility to ensure that the staff's workload is manageable and does not unreasonably intrude into their private life. We have an incredibly dedicated team of staff at Plymouth High and we want to make them feel valued. It is therefore essential that we respect them and help them to maintain a sustainable workload.

The following outlines important considerations when using email communication between home and school.

All communication must respect the dignity of the recipient.

1. Within 48 hours - receipt of an email will be acknowledged (during term time only but not after 5pm nor over a weekend)
2. Within 5 working days - provide a response to the email by telephone or in writing (including an email). This may include informing the sender that more time is required to provide a full response. If this is the case, staff should indicate a time frame in which a response should be expected.
3. If a member of staff is not able to deal with the email directly then they will pass it on to the most appropriate person and inform the sender that they have done so.
4. Staff will not be expected to monitor or respond to emails out of their normal working hours (including weekends and published school holidays). Whilst parents may compose emails at hours to suit their own needs, we would ask that emails are not normally sent outside of a member of staff's normal working hours.

Mobile phones and other electronic devices that enable staff to access their school emails when away from school can make it difficult to 'ignore' a message from a parent, leading to unnecessary worry and anxiety on the part of the member of staff.

5. Whilst this is extremely rare, if a member of staff receives an email which is of an aggressive tone, sets unreasonable demands or could otherwise be interpreted as harassing, they will refer this to a senior line manager in the school, who will decide if consideration needs to be given to dealing with further communication under our Complaints Policy.

If you have any thoughts as to how we can improve communication between school and home, please do let me know.

Charging

As our students embark on their new courses, we would like to highlight a few points around costs and charging beyond what is already provided by the school.

All students receive a photocopy allowance which enables them to print and copy work up to a set limit. Once they exceed that limit, they will need to purchase more credits in school.

Textbooks are provided in all subjects where they are required, but to keep costs down, these are often provided as a class set which are kept in school and used by more than one student. Where students wish to take a book home, make notes and annotations in it, and generally have ownership of the text we are able to sell the book at cost price to the student. As we often get large reductions on sets of books this may be cheaper than buying the book oneself. The department will advise by letter when these are available and the price.

In addition to these common themes across Departments, some subjects have very specific items and costs which parents should be aware of when students embark on these courses.

Art and Design Technology subjects require materials to produce the various artefacts that are made. In line with the school's charging and remissions policy, and because these finished items are all in the ownership of the students, parents are asked to contribute towards the cost of the items in the ways described below:

Art

A kit of required materials for the course which includes three (or more if required) high quality sketchbooks, paintbrushes, an A3 art folder and other key materials: £15.00

Design Technology

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition: i) requires a navy-blue apron ii) students provide their own ingredients.

GCSE Design & Technology; Graphics, Resistant materials and Textiles: a once only voluntary charge of £15 towards materials across the two-year course. There may be additional charges if certain expensive materials need to be purchased for the student's project/ students may be required to provide their own fabric/ components for their final projects.

English

The set texts for English Literature will be offered to students to purchase in the usual way. Buying in bulk means that we can secure all three texts at an excellent discounted price. Owning a copy of each allows students to annotate the text fully. Typically, the cost of all three texts ranges from £12-16. Confirmation of 2026/2027 costs will be sent in a letter in September with the balance to be paid in full by April 2027.

Geography

All students require a clipboard for their fieldwork. These can be purchased at most superstores for around £2. We endeavour to try and take every year group out on a fieldtrip each year. To make this financially viable for the school we may ask for a small donation in the region of about £3 per student. Non-payment does not mean the student cannot go on the trip, but without the continued support of donations further trips would be cancelled in the long run.

Maths

A scientific calculator is required and will be used in almost all lessons for year 10. We would hope your child already has a Casio FX-83GTX and should be familiar with their own equipment as this will be taken into their GCSE examinations in year 11. We write in pencil in mathematics lessons. A mathematics set is also required containing a pair of compasses and a protractor as a minimum. Students should also have a purple pen for self-assessing and editing and a mini whiteboard with at least one white board pen (these can be purchased for less than a pound for the board and pen in the school library).

MFL

AQA online Kerboodle is used in lessons and for homework as well as textbooks being available in lessons. AQA revision guides are highly recommended. Vocabulary learning through Quizlet, Memrise, Seneca, LanguagesOnline, Duolingo or any other online app should be considered as habitual work throughout the course and not just when set as homework.

PE

GCSE Physical Education students are required to purchase an A4 lever-arch file (or similar folder) to store and organise all course materials. This file should be brought to every lesson to ensure that notes, worksheets and assessments are readily available.

The EverLearner and the PE Classroom are online learning platforms that will be used throughout the course for homework, independent study and revision. Students are expected to access these platforms regularly and use the resources provided to support their learning and preparation for assessments over the two-year GCSE course.

The Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)

A natural display calculator is required. We would recommend the same calculator as recommended by the Mathematics Department.

A Guide to Year 10 Assessment and Reporting at Plymouth High School for Girls.

GCSE's are assessed and graded using a numerical system from 9 to 1, with 9 being the top grade available to students.

We want ALL students to:

- Make progress and excel
- Know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
- Know that they can achieve.
- Celebrate their progress, whatever their starting points

How do we report on the progress of our students?

We will send reports home to you three times in year 10. In the autumn, spring and summer terms. All of them will include attitude to learning and predicted grades. The final report in year 10 will also include the end of year 10 Mock results.

Predicted Grade – this is the grade your child is most likely to achieve at the end of her GCSE studies in a given subject.

We have reported your daughter's progress in the following way:

Subject	ATL	Predicted Grade
Maths	1	9-
Art	2	8-
History	3	6
Chemistry	4	5-

- 7 + means that a grade 7 is the most likely grade but your daughter could achieve a grade 8
- 7 means that a grade 7 is the most likely grade
- 7 - means that a grade 7 is the most likely grade but your daughter could slip to grade 6

In reports your child will also be given information regarding their Attitude to Learning.

The first is a statement that is based on how well your child is engaging with the content being covered in lessons and how well they are learning.

Your child will receive A, B or C that relates to one of the three statements below:

A.

Your child has been successful in both the learning and application of the content taught to date. They have successfully met the demands of the content that they have been presented with in class.

B.

Your child has at times found some of the content difficult. They must try to work through these difficulties and keep applying themselves to gain full understanding and make progress.

C.

Your child has found a considerable amount of the content to date difficult. We would recommend that they use their knowledge organisers to learn key terminology, facts and processes to help support their

learning journey and to take up the ongoing support that teachers offer in class to ensure that these difficulties are dealt with quickly to improve understanding and confidence.

The second piece of information is a number and will outline your child's attitude, effort and behaviour in lessons. This will fall into one of four categories:

1	Outstanding: a student who is consistently highly motivated and ambitious, with an excellent work ethic. A student who takes responsibility for their learning and is proactive and goes beyond the expectations of the teacher.
2	Good: a student who is motivated and has a good work ethic. They are keen to work and to learn, and is usually enthusiastic , participating actively in lessons. They make use of opportunities to reinforce learning and can be independent.
3	Requires improvement: a student whose motivation, and work ethic, is inconsistent
4	Cause for Concern: a student who is rarely motivated and has a poor work ethic.

Categories 3 and 4 are further broken down to allow teachers to highlight the specific area that a child might need to improve in; effort, attitude or homework.

3a. **Requires improvement:** a student whose motivation, and work ethic, is inconsistent. Is not always actively **engaged** with the lesson and may need prompting to keep focussed on a task. Does not make the most of opportunities to reinforce learning beyond lessons.

3b. **Requires improvement:** a student whose has repeated produced homework late or that is not up to the standard expected. on a task.

3c. **Requires improvement:** a student whose behaviour in lessons has had to be challenged on more than one occasion, this may include repeatedly talking when the teacher or another student is speaking or calling out or not listening.

3d. **Requires improvement:** a student whose behaviour in lessons has had to be challenged on more than one occasion and whose homework is often late or not up to standard.

4a. **Cause for Concern:** a student who is rarely motivated and has a poor work ethic. Shows **little enthusiasm** for learning, needing constant supervision, and prompting. Gives up easily, especially if work is challenging or if low marks are received; shows **little resilience**; may refuse, or take steps to avoid, advice or requests to improve the work.

4b. **Cause for Concern:** a student whose behaviour is not appropriate and has had to be moved seats or removed from the lesson so that the lesson can proceed without distraction or interruption.

End of Year examinations for year 10 will take place in the weeks commencing 15th and 22nd June 2026.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs P Hatfield
Head of Year 10

Thinking, Teaching and Learning

At Plymouth High School for Girls, we integrate cognitive science and metacognition into our teaching and learning approach. Collaborating with the University of Exeter, we are currently working towards becoming an accredited 'Thinking School'.

Cognitive science is about understanding how the brain learns and retains information. Making this the focus of our classroom practice allows us to tailor our learning activities to maximise your child's potential. Metacognition empowers your child to think about their thinking and developing essential habits like self-awareness, goal-setting and regular reflection.

We use a variety of thinking, teaching and learning strategies which benefit from proven cognitive science and metacognitive research, including:

- **Edward De Bono's Thinking Hats** encourage students to approach problems from different perspectives, enhancing creativity, decision-making, and fostering a well-rounded approach to learning.
- **Tony Ryan's Thinkers Keys** unlock creative thinking by encouraging students to generate alternative ideas, explore different possibilities, and think outside the box, leading to innovative problem-solving and the development of a flexible mindset.
- **David Hyerle's Thinking Maps** are helpful tools that help students visually organise their thoughts, make connections between ideas, and think more clearly
- **Art Costa's Habits of Mind** introduce important skills like problem-solving, critical thinking, and effective communication, helping students become confident and adaptable learners who are ready to succeed in school and in life.

Aligning perfectly with our motto "for life, not school, we learn", these approaches equip your child with lifelong learning skills that extend far beyond their time in school. We are dedicated to ensuring that your child receives the best possible education, one that prepares them to thrive in an ever-changing world.

David Britz-Colwill
Assistant Headteacher

The Three Rs of Revision

www.internetgeography.net/revision



How can you help?



A quiet study space



Desk or table to revise at



Motivational support



Well-being
healthy diet, sleep, exercise and relax

3 steps to revision

Step 1



Refine It

• How?

1. Know what to revise.
2. Prioritise areas to revise.
3. Create a revision plan.

Step 2



Revise It

• How?

1. Dual coding
2. Flashcards
3. Mind maps
4. Revision clock

Step 3



Review It

• How?

1. Self testing
2. Quizzing
3. Past papers

Get involved



Set realistic boundaries



Provide resources such as blank postcards



Plan with them and revisit topics



Learn with them



Quiz them using their flashcards



Praise/reward them

Year 10 Curriculum

Plymouth High School for Girls aims to be an outstanding grammar school for the 21st century remaining true to the philosophy of the school's motto 'for life, not school, we learn'.

Included here is our Year 10 curriculum which:

- Promotes a culture of high aspiration enabling personal and academic success
- Prepares students to think confidently and independently
- Provides an outstanding education for all, the key to this being high quality teaching
- Provides enjoyment, excitement and challenge for all, stimulating an enthusiasm for lifelong learning
- Prepares students to become active citizens, equipped to succeed in a world of rapid change

Subject	Assessment Structures	Course Information
Art and Design (AQA)	Coursework/ Personal Portfolio – 60% Examination Project – 40%	GCSE Fine Art consists of one coursework project 'Human Nature' which make up 60% of the final grade and an Examination Project which makes up the final 40%. The GCSE Art and Design is with AQA examination board (8202). Coursework - 60% Students will gain knowledge in the application of a wide range of techniques and media through a series of mini-projects under the title 'Human: Nature': Graphic Design, Clay Sculpture, Drawing, Lino printing, Acrylic painting, Photoshop, Photomontage, Watercolour and Inks. For each mini-project, students will learn from relevant artists and apply the skills they have learned to their own responses. Students select one of their mini-projects on which they build their own independent project. The Coursework project will develop through Year 10 and is submitted as presentation boards supported by a physical or digital sketchbooks and artworks before the Christmas break in Yr11. Students complete three significant pieces, the first of which must be completed to submit on the first lesson back after the summer, in Yr11. The last of these pieces is the final CW piece, which is completed in the lead-up to and including the 10hr Yr11 Art mock in November. Final Examination Project – 40% The final Examination Project will begin in January in Yr11. Students are given a title from the examination board which they, with support from their teachers, develop a project in response to. Students have 10 weeks lead-up to the examination to prepare a sketchbook of their research and technical investigations, then will produce a final piece in a 10 hour in Art in examination conditions. (2 day) examination. The sketchbook will be left at the end of the examination and will be marked alongside the final piece/s.
Biology (AQA)	Paper 1 (1hr 45min)	There are THREE 'big ideas' in the biological sciences: ORGANISMS, ECOSYSTEMS and GENES which explore the following themes:

and	Topics: 1: Cell biology 2: Organisation 3: Infection and response 4: Bioenergetics Paper 2 (1hr 45min) Topics: 5: Homeostasis and response 6: Inheritance, variation and evolution 7: Ecology	• Life processes depend on molecules whose structure is related to their function • The fundamental units of living organisms are cells, which are organised into tissues and organs • Organisms form populations, communities and ecosystems which interact • Living organisms are interdependent and show adaptations to their environment • Life is dependent on photosynthesis where plants transfer solar energy into chemical energy • Organic compounds are used in cellular respiration to allow the other chemical reactions of life • The chemicals in ecosystems are continually cycling through the natural world • The characteristics of a living organism are influenced by its genome and its environment • Evolution occurs by natural selection and is responsible for all organisms' shared ancestry.
Chemistry (AQA)	Paper 1 (1hr 45min) Topics: 1: Atomic structure and the periodic table 2: Bonding, structure and the properties of matter 3: Quantitative chemistry 4: Chemical changes	There are THREE 'big ideas' in the chemical sciences: MATTER, REACTIONS and EARTH which explore the following themes: • Matter is composed of tiny particles called atoms • There are about 100 different naturally occurring types of atoms called elements • Elements show periodic relationships in their chemical and physical properties • These properties can be explained in terms of the atomic structure of the elements • Atoms bond by either transferring, or by sharing electrons • The shapes of molecules giant structures affect the way they behave

	5: Energy changes Paper 2 (1hr 45min) Topics: 6: The rate and extent of chemical change 7: Organic chemistry 8: Chemical analysis 9: Chemistry of the atmosphere 10: Using resources	• There are barriers to reaction so reactions occur at different rates • Chemical reactions take place in only three different ways: ○ Proton transfer ○ Electron transfer ○ Electron sharing • Energy is conserved in chemical reactions so can be neither created or destroyed. • Materials can be extracted from unrefined sources in the ground and used for industrial and commercial processes
Computer Science (OCR)	Unit 01: Computer systems (01) 80 marks 1 hour and 30 minutes Written paper (no calculators allowed) 50%	This course gives students an in-depth understanding of how computer technology works. It offers an insight into what goes on 'behind the scenes', including computer programming, which many students find absorbing. Students will: • Develop their understanding of current and emerging technologies and how they work • Look at the use of algorithms in computer programs • Become independent and discerning users of IT • Acquire and apply creative and technical skills, knowledge and understanding of IT in a range of contexts • Develop computer programs to solve problems

		• Evaluate the effectiveness of computer programs /solutions and the impact of computer technology in society. Unit 01: Computer systems This component will introduce learners to the Central Processing Unit (CPU), computer memory and storage, wired and wireless networks, network topologies, system security and system software. It is expected that learners will become familiar with the impact of Computer Science in a global context through the study of the ethical, legal, cultural and environmental concerns associated with Computer Science. It is expected that learners will draw on this underpinning content when completing the Programming Project component (03 or 04). Unit 02: Content of Computational thinking, algorithms and programming This component incorporates and builds on the knowledge and understanding gained in Component 01, encouraging learners to apply this knowledge and understanding using computational thinking. Learners will be introduced to algorithms and programming, learning about programming techniques, how to produce robust programs, computational logic, translators and facilities of computing languages and data representation. Learners will become familiar with computing related mathematics. It is expected that learners will draw on this underpinning content when completing the Programming Project component (03 or 04).
	Unit 02: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming (02) 80 marks 1 hour and 30 minutes Written paper (no calculators allowed) 50%	

Design and Technology – Food Preparation and Nutrition (Eduqas)	The two pieces of coursework combined are worth 50% of the final mark	GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition is a new national specification replacing all other ‘food’ GCSE’s. The end examination will be set by the Eduqas Examination Board (formerly WJEC) The two non-examined assessments are taken in year 11 with a final, 105 minute, written examination paper at the end of the two-year course. Non-examined Assessments: - 1) A scientific investigation is completed in Sept of year 11 (15% of final mark) 2) A practical examination consisting of making 3 dishes in 3 hours and accompanying written assessment will be completed in the spring term of year 11 (35% of final mark). The course will equip you with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. They should encourage students to cook and enable them to make informed decisions about a wide range of further learning opportunities and career pathways as well as develop vital life skills that enable them to feed themselves and others affordably and nutritiously, now and later in life. In studying food preparation and nutrition, students must: • Demonstrate effective and safe cooking skills by planning, preparing and cooking using a variety of food commodities, cooking techniques and equipment • Develop knowledge and understanding of the functional properties and chemical processes as well as the nutritional content of food and drinks • Understand the relationship between diet, nutrition and health, including the physiological and psychological effects of poor diet and health • Understand the economic, environmental, ethical, and socio-cultural influences on food availability, production processes, and diet and health choices
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		• Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of functional and nutritional properties, sensory qualities and microbiological food safety considerations when preparing, processing, storing, cooking and serving food • Understand and explore a range of ingredients and processes from different culinary traditions (traditional British and international), to inspire new ideas or modify existing recipes The students must be able to make the connections between theory and practice so that they are able to apply their understanding of food and nutrition to practical cooking.
Design and Technology – Textiles (Edexcel)	Controlled Assessment – 50% Final Examination – 50%	The first two terms of Year 10 consist of a series of research, design and practical tasks set by local Textile and Fashion design companies. These projects provide students with the opportunity to develop a sound foundation to deliver work for their Controlled Assessment and covers a substantial part of the subject content of the specification. The making of the product will further develop technical skill and reinforce the need and understanding of quality assurance and quality control. The GCSE Major Project (Controlled Assessment) is started during the third term of Year 10 and continues throughout Year 11. This makes up 50% of their overall grade at GCSE. It consists of a single design and make activity selected from a range of contexts set by the Edexcel Examination Board where students will need to work at identifying a problem and developing a solution. Deadlines will be set for completion of each aspect of the major project and students will be expected to plan their work to meet these dates. The final deadline for this project is February 2023. The final examination, which also makes up 50% of their overall GCSE grade, consists of both core and specialist theory content. Students will complete the theory content throughout year 10 and certain aspects will be recovered in year 11 in the lead up to the examination (February- May).
Design and Technology – Graphic Products	Coursework – 50% Examination Project – 50%	The first two terms of Year 10 consist of a series of research, design and practical tasks set by local and national product design companies. These projects work to provide students with the opportunity to

and Resistant Materials (Edexcel)		develop a sound foundation to deliver work for their Controlled Assessment and covers a substantial part of the subject content of the specification. The making of the product will further develop technical skill and reinforce the need and understanding of quality assurance and quality control. The GCSE Major Project (Controlled Assessment) is started during the third term of Year 10 and continues throughout Year 11. This makes up 50% of their overall grade at GCSE. It consists of a single design and make activity selected from a range of contexts set by the Edexcel Examination Board where students will need to work at identifying a problem and developing a solution. Deadlines will be set for completion of each aspect of the major project and students will be expected to plan their work to meet these dates. The final deadline for this project is February 2023. The final examination, which also makes up 50% of their overall GCSE grade, consists of both core and specialist theory content. Students will complete the theory content throughout year 10 and certain aspects will be recovered in year 11 in the lead up to the examination (February- May).
Drama (Edexcel/Pearson)	3 components: Component 1: Devising Theatre NEA: internally assessed, externally moderated. 40% of the qualification. Component 2 performing from a text: externally assessed by a visiting examiner. 20% of the qualification. Component 3: Interpreting Theatre	Component 1 This has two parts to the assessment, the first is to create, develop and perform an original piece of theatre devised from a chosen stimulus using the techniques of an influential theatre practitioner. The second is to write a portfolio of supporting evidence which documents their developmental processes, and they must also complete an evaluation of their final piece. This unit will take place before the Easter holidays in year 10. Component 2 This is a performance examination where students will perform two key extracts from a performance text. This will take place in January/February of Year 11. Component 3 This is the written examination. Section A will require students to answer questions on a performance text studied and will look at how the script can be realised in performance. Section B is a live theatre evaluation and students will answer one question on a

		performance that they have seen. They are permitted to bring some theatre evaluation notes (up to a maximum of 500 words) into the examination. May/June Year 11
English Language (AQA)	Exam – 100%, comprising two papers assessing Reading and Writing Each examination carries equal weighting	This content is taught in the second year of the course. Students will read, discuss and write on a range of fiction and non-fiction texts. They will continue to develop their skills as writers of fiction and non-fiction. Spoken English Endorsement Students present information and ideas in spoken presentations and listen and respond to others appropriately. The content of each examination paper is as follows: Paper One Explorations in Creative Reading and Writing Section A: Reading (40 marks) (25%)– one literature fiction text 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks) 2 longer form questions (2 x 8 marks) 1 extended question (1 x 20 marks) Section B: Writing (40 marks) (25%) - one extended descriptive or narrative writing question (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy) Paper Two Writers' Viewpoints and Perspectives Section A: Reading (40 marks) (25%) – one non-fiction text and one literary non-fiction text 1 short form question (1 x 4 marks) 2 longer form questions (1 x 8, 1 x 12 marks) 1 extended question (1 x 16 marks) Section B: Writing (40 marks) (25%) - one extended writing question focused on presenting a point of view (24 marks for content, 16 marks for technical accuracy)
English Literature (AQA)	Examination – 100%, comprising two	

	papers assessing their understanding of a range of fiction texts.	Students will read, discuss and write on a range of literary texts in preparation for the two examination papers detailed below: Paper One Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel One hour 45 minutes - 40% of GCSE Section A Shakespeare: students will answer one question on their play of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the play and then to write about the play as a whole. Section B The 19th-century novel: students will answer one question on their novel of choice. They will be required to write in detail about an extract from the novel and then to write about the novel as a whole. Paper Two Modern texts and poetry Two hours 15 minutes - 60% of GCSE Section A Modern texts: students will answer one essay question from a choice of two on their studied modern prose or drama text. Section B Poetry: students will answer one comparative question on one named poem printed on the paper and one other poem from their chosen anthology cluster. Section C Unseen poetry: Students will answer one question on one unseen poem and one question comparing this poem with a second unseen poem. Copies of the set texts are not permitted in the examinations
French (AQA)	Course Content	Themes The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to listening, speaking, reading and writing. Theme 1: People and Lifestyle Topic 1: Identity and relationships Topic 2: Healthy living Topic 3: Education and work Theme 2: Popular culture Topic 1: Freetime activities Topic 2: Customs and festivals Topic 3: Celebrity culture

	Paper One 25% of GCSE Paper Two 25% of GCSE Paper Three 25% of GCSE Paper Four 25% of GCSE	Theme 3: Communication and the world around us Topic 1: Travel and tourism Topic 2: Media and technology Topic 3: The environment Assessment - GCSE French has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four papers at the same tier. All examinations will take place in Summer 2026 Listening Examination Questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally Questions in French, to be answered in French or non-verbally Speaking Examination Role-play Photo card Reading aloud General conversation Reading Examination Questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally Questions in French, to be answered in French or non-verbally This paper also includes a translation from French into English Writing Examination Writing in French Translation tasks
Geography AQA	Examination 100% 35% 88 marks 1 hour 30 minutes written paper 35 % 88 marks 1 hour 30 minutes written paper	Living with the Physical Environment The Challenge of Natural Hazards The Living World Physical landscapes of the UK Challenges in the Human Environment Urban issues and challenges The changing economic World The challenges of resource Management
Geography AQA	30% 76 marks 1 hour 15 minutes written paper	Geographical application Issue Evaluation Fieldwork

German (AQA)	Course Content	Themes The specification covers three distinct themes. These themes apply to listening, speaking, reading and writing. Theme 1: People and Lifestyle Topic 1: Identity and relationships Topic 2: Healthy living Topic 3: Education and work Theme 2: Popular culture Topic 1: Freetime activities Topic 2: Customs and festivals Topic 3: Celebrity culture Theme 3: Communication and the world around us Topic 1: Travel and tourism Topic 2: Media and technology Topic 3: The environment Assessment - GCSE German has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four papers at the same tier. All examinations will take place in Summer 2026
German (AQA)	Paper One 25% of GCSE Paper Two 25% of GCSE Paper Three 25% of GCSE Paper Four 25% of GCSE	Listening Examination Questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally Questions in French, to be answered in German or non-verbally Speaking Examination Role-play Photo card Reading aloud General conversation Reading Examination Questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally Questions in German, to be answered in German or non-verbally This paper also includes a translation from German into English Writing Examination Writing in French Translation tasks
History (Edexcel)	Examination:	History GCSE consists of three examination papers

		• Focus on Hitler's rise to power and his switch from radical revolutionary to populist leader of the people • How Hitler took control and consolidated power after 1933 including his use of terror and propaganda • How did Nazi policies change life in Nazi Germany for women, children, workers and minorities
Mathematics (Edexcel) <i>Some students will have the opportunity to achieve an additional qualification in level 2 AQA Further Mathematics. (Suitable for students on track to achieve a grade 8/9 in GCSE). Those students will learn the course in Mathematics curriculum time during their year 11 and more information will be shared with those students and families in year 11.</i>	Examination 100% Papers 1 to 3 cover the higher tier content Paper 1: Without a calculator 33.3% Paper 2: With a calculator 33.3% Paper 3: With a calculator 33.3% ALL papers are sat at the end of Year 11	The GCSE Mathematics course is designed so that students may: • Develop a positive attitude to Mathematics. • Be stretched with appropriately challenging work. • Apply mathematical knowledge and understanding to solve problems. • Think and communicate mathematically – precisely, logically and creatively. • Appreciate the place and use of Mathematics in society. • Understand the interdependence of different branches of Mathematics. • Acquire the skills needed to use technology such as calculators and mathematical computer packages effectively. All girls will follow the higher tier (Edexcel) where the new grades 9-4 are available, with the expectation that all students are aiming for one of the top 3 grades available (grade 7+ which roughly sits at around 60% at GCSE standard). The course continues the work started in lower years, using GCSE resources and examination specification materials. The following areas of mathematics are studied and tested with the GCSE: • Mathematical Processes and Applications • Number, Ratio and Proportion • Algebra • Geometry and Measure • Handling Data, Statistics and Probability Students will be internally assessed three times during the school year. Each examination style assessment will feature a high proportion of past GCSE examination questions to ensure students are preparing in the right way for their final examinations. This will be split into sections to test their retained knowledge of FACTS and FORMULAE, as well as their ability to FLUENTLY apply basic methods and finally their FLEXIBILITY around solving unique problems. The end of year examinations reflect real GCSE papers very closely. This will be a comprehensive set of 3

		papers (of 60 minutes), which will cover the all that has been taught of the GCSE content at that time. Students require a calculator (We recommend either the Casio FX-85GTCW or the CG100 for any student aspiring to study A level Mathematics), geometry set, pencil, mini-whiteboard pen and mini whiteboard (given out by the school in previous year) and purple pen for EVERY maths lesson. It is vital that the students familiarise themselves with their calculator prior to the examinations (year 10 examinations and beyond). We encourage parents to look at the references and guidance in the exercise books and half termly learning booklets to find out more about what is being taught when, find out what must be retained from each half termly knowledge bank and to look at the sparx codes to support students with prior and new learning using the sparx website. A weekly compulsory task of sparx maths is set each week in term time. Students are expected to use the time, resources, linked videos and support club to reach 100% correct before the weekly deadline. XP boost (consolidation) and XP target (challenge) are recommended optional extra tasks. In the run up to end of year 10 examinations, students will also be expected to complete mini practice papers (20-30 mins) to support examination technique, timing and revision.
Music (OCR)	Integrated portfolio: 60 marks NEA (30% of total) Practical component: 60 marks NEA (30% of total) Listening and Appraising: written examination (40% of total)	All examination boards introduced new GCSE specifications for first teaching in Sept 2016. Students taking Music will be following the OCR specification. OCR's GCSE (9-1) in Music will provide a contemporary, accessible and creative education in Music with an integrated approach to the main three elements-performing, composing and appraising. Learners are encouraged to be creative and to broaden their musical horizons and understanding through Areas of Study that inspire and challenge. This specification will enable learners to explore performance and composition with a focus on their own instrument or voice. The GCSE consists of one externally examined paper and two non-examined assessments (NEA) Content overview:

		● Performance on chosen instrument or voice (solo AND ensemble) ● Composition to a brief chosen by the student ● Composition to a brief set by OCR ● A written paper, with CD extracts: aural recognition and context – unheard/unfamiliar music from the Areas of Study Area of Study 1: My Music – students will study their own instrument/voice, and develop their understanding of it through performance and composition. Area of Study 2: The Concerto Through Time – a study of the Concerto and its development from 1650 to 1910 Area of Study 3: Rhythms of the World – a study of the traditional rhythmic roots of music from selected areas of the world including Africa, India & Latin America. Area of Study 4: Film Music - a study of music composed for the screen including the Movie and Video Games industry. Area of Study 5: The Conventions of Pop – focussing on Rock ‘n’ Roll of the 1950s and 1960s, Rock Anthems of the 1970s and 1980s, Pop Ballads of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and Solo Artists from 1990 to the present day. Students will also acquire and use musical language relating to the Areas of Study as well as to the musical elements of melody, rhythm, harmony, tonality, structure, texture and sonority. Year 10 (2019-20) Students will spend time practising techniques of composition, and will begin their ‘free’ composition. They will be introduced to the Areas of Study and will acquire specific knowledge and understanding relating to them. They will work on both solo and group performances. Private practice of performance skills will be expected. Year 11 (2020-21) The brief for the second ‘set’ Composition will be released in September 2025. There will be further study of a range of music linked to the Areas of Study. Composition 2 will be started during the Autumn Term of 2021. At this point, decisions will be made about the performance material that is to be submitted, and students will prepare for recordings during the Spring Term 2021. The final date for the submission of NEA marks is May 15 and the written exam will be during the summer examination period (date tbc).

Physical Education (AQA)	60% Theory with 2 written examinations in at the end of Year 11 40% Practical with on-going assessment throughout the course and external moderation towards the end of the second year.	Course Information GCSE PE is split into theory and practical lessons. Practical During the 2 years' students will cover different physical activities that are on the specification, including Climbing, Badminton, Trampolining and Netball. If a student is performing at sufficient level in an activity outside of school, then they can produce evidence on a memory stick. This will then be marked in line with GCSE criteria by the teacher. Individual marks from the top 3 activities will be put forward for assessment for each student. (at least one of these activities must be a team activity and one must be an individual activity- the list of activities under each category can be found on the AQA website) Students will also complete an analysis and evaluation of a practical performance which makes up 10% of the practical grade. Theory Paper 1 The human body and movement in physical activity in sport (1 hour, 15 mins) worth 30% of the overall course. - Applied anatomy and Physiology - Movement analysis - Physical training Paper 2 Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport (1 hour, 15 mins) worth 30% of the overall course. - Sports psychology - Socio-cultural influences - Health, fitness and well-being. Both written examinations include multiple choice questions, short answer questions and extended answer questions as well as being able to interpret and analyse data. The GCSE in Physical Education is ideal preparation for the A Level course. The course also develops key skills that employers look for and can lead to further training in areas such as leisure and recreation, the armed forces, the fitness industry and sports coaching. For further information on the GCSE PE course, please visit www.aqa.org.uk Please do not hesitate to e-mail Miss Jones at lowenna.jones@phsg.tsat.uk if you have any specific enquiries.
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Physics (AQA)	Paper 1 (1hr 45min) Topics: 1: Energy and energy resources 2: Electricity 3: Molecules and matter 4: Radioactivity Paper 2 (1hr 45min) Topics: 5: Forces in balance 6: Forces and motion 7: Forces and pressure 8. Waves 9. Electromagnetism 10. Space	There are FIVE 'big ideas' in the physical sciences: FORCES, ELECTROMAGNETISM, WAVES, ENERGY and EARTH which explore the following themes: • The use of models, as in the particle model of matter or the wave models of light and of sound • The concept of cause and effect, for example, between: ○ Force and acceleration ○ Between changes in atomic nuclei and radioactive emissions • 'Action at a distance' and 'the field' in analysing electrical, magnetic and gravitational effects • That differences between pressures or temperatures or electrical potentials, drive change • That proportionality is an important aspect of many models in Physics • That physical laws and models are expressed in mathematical form.
Religious Studies (AQA)	Terminal Examination June 2022 Component 1: 1 hour 45 Component 2: 1hour 45	We study AQA Syllabus A. There are two components of equal weighting. Component 1: The Study of Religions - Beliefs, teachings and Practices, where we study Buddhism and Judaism. Component two: Thematic Studies – this unit looks at a range of contemporary moral, ethical and philosophical themes. This unit is studied looking at a variety of Christian perspectives. Thinking tools are used to support learning and development of examination technique. Further details can be found on the AQA website http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/religious-studies/gcse/religious-studies-a-8062

The Core Curriculum

Alongside subjects such as English, Mathematics, Science and your child's chosen GCSE options, they will also study PHSE and Religions Education. These two further subjects are part of the statutory content that all schools must cover in order to fulfil the National Curriculum.

Religious Education

Students will follow a unit looking at Philosophy of Religion before moving on to a unit on prejudice and discrimination. Students will be expected to keep abreast of news and other relevant media items and will have to produce a presentation or write a discursive article towards the end topic area.

PSHE & Citizenship

At 14 – 19, the philosophy driving the PSHE programme is to provide our young people with balanced factual information on a range of issues which may now, or in the future, directly affect them. We aim to develop well rounded, thoughtful, responsible young adults who are able to play a full and active role in our modern technological society

Citizenship education is provided through a combination of opportunities in a range of subject areas (in particular RE), whole school and suspended timetable activities and through student's involvement in the life of the school and wider community. It gives pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to become informed, active and responsible members of local, national and global communities. It enables them to address real life issues and shows them how they can make a difference. The strands developed at Key Stage 3 are revisited and extended at Key Stage 4 & Key Stage 5.

What will you study?

The topics are organised under 3 themes as below. There are four topics covered in tutor time with their form tutor as teacher. There are 2 topics covered through stand-alone extended sessions taught by PSHE teachers with additional input from invited guest speakers.

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Topic 1</i>	<i>Topic 2</i>
Living in the wider world	Financial decision making – savings, debt, gambling and advertising	Work experience – preparation for work experience and readiness for work
Relationships	Addressing extremism and radicalisation – community cohesion and equality	Healthy relationships (extended session) – relationship expectations and misconceptions including the influence of the media
Health and Wellbeing	Mental Health – mental health and ill health including throughout periods of transition	Exploring influence (extended session) – drugs, gangs, role models and the media

Work Experience Information

Work Experience: Information for Parents

- Each student in Year 10 is expected to select a work placement and participate in Work Experience during the week 28th – 2nd July 2027 – **this is the week for CEW**. There will be a thorough programme of preparation preceding this and a thorough de-briefing session when returning to school.
- Work Experience is an important practical step towards career action planning and will allow your child to find out more about their own strengths, weaknesses, talents and skills. Work experience gives students the chance to learn about what type of job they might enjoy, and develop their CV. This is a highly valued aspect of your child's education and will assist them in thinking realistically about education and training opportunities. We know it can be one of the most transformational experiences young people have during their education

Students (and their families) should source their own work experience placements. If students are interested in a particular job sector and have limited or no contacts, they should ask in school on where to apply.

We are using Unifrog (www.unifrog.org) to manage the administration of the work experience programme – for example collecting information from the employer about their Risk Assessment and Health & Safety policy, as well as getting agreement from yourselves for the placement to go ahead.

Some important logistics:

- Students need to agree the placement with the employer **first**, and then students will get the ball rolling by adding the placement to their Unifrog account (they'll find the Placements tool on their Unifrog homepage).
- The Unifrog system will then email the employer, the parent / guardian, and the school, to collect the necessary information and permissions. For the process to work, **it's essential that students add the initial information about the placement accurately**.

The lifecycle of a placement on the placements tool

1. A **student** gets the ball rolling by adding a new placement;
2. The **employer** is notified by email, and they confirm that they follow best practices in:
 - a. Safeguarding;
 - b. Health and safety;
 - c. Risk Assessment;
 - d. Insurance;
 - e. GDPR;
3. The **parent/guardian** signs an agreement;
4. The Careers Lead reviews all the information provided by each party and gives their consent.
5. The **Careers Lead** has an overview of the status of all the placements at PHSG. They can filter to see which placements have forms outstanding, and nudge people who need to be chased.
6. The placement takes place; **teachers** can record a check-in if they want;
7. The **student** and **employer** reflect on the placement after it is finished. The employer can choose to add themselves to the school / college's placements database.

Finding out more:

- Unifrog have created a set of guides about placements which you can find [here](#).
- Within this set of guides, [this](#) is the best one to start with (it includes a short animation of how the whole process works).
- Next, we recommend looking at [this one](#), because it includes advice on how to find a placement.

Next steps:

- Please read the placement guides on Unifrog, and then start contacting possible hosts for the placement. There is a sample work experience application letter on School Headed Paper for students to adapt. Students will find this in their Unifrog account in the teacher's locker.
- If you have any questions, please contact the school Careers Lead.

We wish you the best of luck with supporting your child to find a placement. Please do make use of Unifrog's guides help you.

Learner Support Centre (A01)

The AO1 Learner Support team is overseen by Mrs Payne, Assistant Headteacher. Staff working in AO1 include Mrs Simister, Learner Support Lead; Miss Shattock Learner Support, Mrs Hore SEN and medical admin. The centre supports young people with a whole range of issues within the school, including providing social and emotional assistance for individuals, EAL support and advice and guidance for students who are looking to gain top GCSE grades, Training for Peer Mentors is offered at the end of Year 9 for them to start at the beginning of Year 10 to support the New Year 7s in the transition from primary school.

Complementing the centre's work is a Counsellor from Plymouth Partnership for 2 days a week.

What is a Learning Mentor? A Learning Mentor aims to build a one-to-one relationship with a young person and offers, as a professional friend, support, advice and guidance to help overcome barriers to learning and ensure all children achieve their greatest potential.

What is Counselling? A counsellor is specially trained to help young people understand themselves better and find ways to facilitate problem solving. They can help with difficulties in school, at home or with friends.

While many students will find the help and support provided by specialist subject teachers and tutors enough, others may require greater support during periods of time at Plymouth High. The quiet environment provided in the Learner Support Centre, combined with the opportunity for one-to-one assistance helps many students build greater confidence, understanding, and improved organisation, to ensure that each young person fulfils her/his potential.

The centre has an open-door policy; time is available at break and lunchtimes for the students to complete homework, come and eat and socialise with other people from different year groups and tutor groups. Any student experiencing any difficulties may seek advice and guidance from the team at any time in their school career.

10 Tips for Parents

- *Keep on top of work experience organisation*
- *Planning is everything, especially with assessments*
- *Stay calm when they don't!*
- *Try to provide somewhere for them to work*
- *Contact the school if there are any doubts or problems*
- *Make sure they take breaks when working for long hours*
- *Provide rewards as appropriate*
- *Keep smiling!*

