

Ysgol Uwchradd

Cathays

High School

A Guide to Courses in

Key Stage 4

(Year 11)



Contact Details

School Contact Details

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Your Contact Details

To make sure that you are kept up to date with school events through text messages, letters and phone calls and can be contacted swiftly in an emergency, please ensure that the school has the correct contact details for you, including mobile phone numbers. Please contact Mrs S Fergusson on Sfergusson@cardiff.gov.uk to update your contact details.

Important Dates

Date	Examination	Year Group
January 6th	English Literature	Year 11 re-sits
January 7 th	Biology	Year 11 Triple Science Group
January 8 th	English Language	Year 11
January 12 th	Chemistry	Year 11 Triple Science Group
January 14 th	Physics	Year 11 Triple Science Group

January 14th	Year 11 Parents' Evening and Sixth Form Open Evening
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Frequently Asked Questions

What is Key Stage 4 and what do pupils study?

Key Stage 4 comprises of Years 10 and 11, when pupils study mainly GCSE or BTEC courses. Pupils have to study English, Maths, Science, Religious Studies, Welsh, Physical Education and the Welsh Baccalaureate. Pupils do not take examinations in Physical Education (unless they have chosen to study Sports at GCSE or BTEC) or the Welsh Baccalaureate.

What is the Welsh Baccalaureate?

Studying the Welsh Baccalaureate is compulsory for all Key Stage 4 pupils. In Wales, pupils have to study what is known as 'the Learning Core' and at Cathays we do this through taking the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification, which covers all elements of the Learning Core.

Element	How we cover this at Cathays	Work involved for pupils
Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number	Project work in Maths lessons	Completion of Holiday Hunter project
Essential Skills Wales in ICT	Project work in Maths lessons	Completion of Holiday Hunter project
Essential Skills Wales in Communication	Project work in English lessons	Completion of ESW Communication portfolio
Key Skill in Problem Solving	Project work in Science lessons	Completion of Problem Solving booklet
Wales, Europe and the World (WEW)	Welsh Baccalaureate lessons	Completion of diary
Work-related Education	Work experience placement in Year 10	Attendance at placement and completion of diary
Personal and Social Education (PSE)	Welsh Baccalaureate lessons	Completion of diary
Community Participation	Completion of 15 hours of voluntary community work within school or outside of school	Completion of diary and authentication of hours completed
Individual Investigation	Assessed project work in Welsh Baccalaureate lessons	Completion of project in lessons and at home

Pupils gain a certificate for passing the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification and additional certificates for the three Essential Skills Wales and the Key Skill.

What is a GCSE?

A GCSE is a General Certificate of Secondary Education. Pupils are awarded grades ranging from A*-G grades for GCSEs. A U grade means 'unclassified', i.e. no grade. If pupils want to study A Levels, which are the next step up from GCSEs, most Sixth Forms ask for 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C. GCSEs usually involve external examinations (often more than one paper), which can involve a traditional examination in a hall or a practical examination in subjects such as Drama or PE. Many GCSEs also involve Controlled Assessments (CATs).

What are Controlled Assessments?

Controlled Assessments (CATs) are assessments which count towards final GCSE grades. They are similar to what was known as coursework, but the assessments are completed in school under examination conditions. However, pupils must prepare and revise for Controlled Assessments in their own time at home as well as in school. Controlled Assessments are **not** a requirement in all subjects.

Subjects which have Controlled Assessments (CATs)	Subjects which <u>do not</u> have Controlled Assessments (CATs)
Art	Dance
Business Studies	Maths
Child Development	RE
Drama	Sociology
English Language	
English Literature	
Food Technology	
French	
Geography	
History	
IT	
PE	
Photography	
Resistant Materials	
Science	
Statistics	
Textiles	
Welsh	

What are 'Tiers of Entry'?

Many GCSE qualifications have examination papers which are available in two tiers – Foundation Tier and Higher Tier. Generally, Foundation Tier papers allow pupils to gain a maximum of a C grade. Higher Tier papers allow pupils to gain the higher grades of A*, A and B but are more demanding and often cover more content. Therefore, a pupil could take Foundation Tier and gain a C grade but the same pupil could take the Higher Tier and gain a D grade. Departments decide which tier is best suited to each pupil in order for them to gain the best outcome possible.

What is the difference between a Short Course GCSE and a Full Course GCSE?

Pupils can take a Short Course or a Full Course GCSE in some subjects. A Short Course is worth half a Full Course GCSE, i.e. if you wanted to get into a Sixth Form college, two Short Course GCSEs at grades A*-C would count as one GCSE at grades A*-C. Short Courses are often taken in subjects which are compulsory for all pupils in the school, for example in Welsh and Religious Studies. Short Course GCSEs cover less content than Full Course GCSEs and have fewer Controlled Assessments and shorter examinations. In Welsh, pupils take the Short Course GCSE in Year 9 and go on to complete the Full Course GCSE in Year 11. In RE

some students are given the opportunity to study for a Full Course GCSE in Year 11, which is in addition to the Short Course GCSE in Religious Studies.

When do pupils take GCSE examinations?

GCSE examinations are available at three points in the academic year, each period is known as a 'season':

Season	Examinations available
November	Maths and English Language only
January	Unit papers in English Language and English Literature and Science
June (exams actually start in May)	All subjects

Further on in this booklet you will find a calendar of examinations and assessments for each subject.

What is a BTEC?

The BTEC qualification is a coursework based qualification which does not involve an external examination. Pupils can gain a Distinction* (D*), a Distinction (D), a Merit (M) or a Pass (P) or a Fail (F) for a BTEC qualification. A D* equates to an A* at GCSE, a Pass to a C grade at GCSE and so on. BTEC qualifications which take two years (such as those in Music, ICT, Business Studies, PE and the two year Science course) are worth two GCSE qualifications and those which take one year (such as the one year Science course) are worth one GCSE grade. BTEC courses involve completion of assignments by specific deadlines over the course of one or two years. A BTEC course also involves opportunities to re-visit work in order to improve grades. Pupils who do not perform well under examination conditions are more likely to succeed at a higher level in the BTEC qualification because the results are not dependent on the performance of each student on one particular day, which is the case with examinations.

How do I know how my child is doing in Key Stage 4?

There are several ways that we use to keep you informed about your child's progress:

Information giving opportunity	Frequency	When
Family Interviews	Once a year	Autumn Term of Year 11
Parents' Evening	Once a year	Spring Term of Year 11
Full Report to Parents	Once a year	Autumn Term of Year 11
Individual Reports	Several times a year	Each term

Targets

From about November of Year 10 we are given estimates of performance for pupils which give an idea of the grades that they should be achieving. These are not estimates for specific pupils, they are an indication of typical progress. These estimates are calculated using the levels gained at KS2 (primary school), KS3 (end of Year 9) and other factors such as

month of birth and gender. These are sometimes called **FFT Targets** because they are target grades that have been calculated by the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) organisation based on data collected over many years and in hundreds of schools throughout England and Wales. Not all pupils have FFT targets because FFT have been unable to get their KS2 or KS3 data from other schools or other countries.

At Cathays, we use these estimates, along with teachers' professional judgement, to set targets for pupils. These targets indicate what a pupil could achieve should they adopt a positive approach to their learning, revise effectively, attend school, act upon advice and take advantage of all the opportunities available to them.

On the reports given out to parents (both the Full Report and Individual Reports), Working at Grades (WAG) are given. These show the grade that your child is working at at the time of writing the report. Comparing these Working at Grades with the target grades gives a good indication of progress.

The **Working at Grade (WAG)** is awarded for a student's academic performance to date and is related to the:

- GCSE grades: A*-G or U indicating performance below the required and expected standard at this stage
- BTEC grades: D* - Distinction*, D – Distinction, M – Merit, P – Pass, F- Fail (These equate to A*, A, B, C, U at GCSE)
- WBQ grades: P – Pass, T- On track, F - Fail

Reports also give a number for effort. The **effort** grade, ranging from 1-4 is awarded for a student's effort and interest in the subject:

1. Outstanding effort
2. Good effort
3. Satisfactory effort
4. Unacceptable effort

Reports also include information about **Controlled Assessments (CATs)** which are assessments which count towards final GCSE/BTEC grades. They are a type of coursework but the assessments are completed in school under examination conditions. However, pupils must prepare and revise for Controlled Assessments in their own time. Controlled Assessments are **not** a requirement in all subjects.

The following codes are used to show progress in Controlled Assessments:

- **Y** = Yes - all completed
- **T** = On-track – will complete if he/she continues to work in this way
- **S** = Some completed – only some of the required work has been completed, must improve
- **N** = None – no work has been completed, unlikely to pass
- **n/a** = Not applicable – there are no Controlled Assessments in this subject
- **L** = Controlled Assessments will be completed at a later date

Early Entry for Examinations

In order to raise standards and maximise pupils' chances of gaining the best possible GCSE grades and to allow opportunities for More Able and Talented pupils, the school enters pupils early for some examinations – i.e. they may sit some examinations in year 9 or year 10 as well as at the end of year 11 as in the traditional model. This differs according to subject, as detailed below:

Glossary

Modular courses - This means that pupils study a module of work and then sit an examination on that module before moving on to the next module.

AS (Advanced Subsidiary) – The first half of an A Level.

English

Most pupils take two GCSE subjects – English Language and English Literature. The courses are modular and examinations take place in January and June of year 10 and January and June of year 11. There are also Controlled Assessments to complete. Pupils complete English Literature in year 10 and English Language in year 11. Pupils have the opportunity to re-take modular examinations.

Mathematics

Most pupils take one GCSE in Mathematics. Pupils sit their Mathematics exam for the first time in June of year 10. If they gain an A*-B grade, they then go on to study a GCSE in Statistics and/or begin the AS Mathematics course. If they gain a C grade they have the opportunity to re-take the examination to gain a higher grade. If they gained below a C grade they have two further opportunities in November and June of year 11 to re-take their Mathematics GCSE. Classes are rearranged following results from examinations.

Science

Most pupils take two GCSE subjects – Core Science and Additional Science. The courses are modular and examinations take place in June of year 10 for Core Science and January and June of year 11 for Additional Science. The current Year 11 will only take examinations in June. There are also Controlled Assessments to complete. Pupils complete Core Science in year 10 and Additional Science in year 11. Pupils have the opportunity to re-take modular examinations.

Some pupils complete a triple (separate) GCSE Science course. This involves three separate GCSE qualifications in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Students sit examinations in all three at the end of year 10 and in January and June of year 11. There are also Controlled Assessments to complete.

Some pupils complete BTEC qualifications in Science – either a one year course or a two year course, depending on the year group. BTEC courses do not involve examinations or controlled assessments.

Cymraeg – Welsh

Pupils sit the Short Course Welsh Second Language GCSE in June of year 9. The course involves one written examination (50%) and three Controlled Assessment tasks (50%). Pupils gain a Short Course GCSE at grades A*-U at the end of year 9. In year 10, pupils start the Full Course Welsh Second Language GCSE. The course involves an oral examination in April and a written examination in June of year 11. The Short Course marks from Year 9 are added to the marks from the Year 11 exams to make up the Full Course GCSE qualification. If pupils did not gain A*-C grades in their written examination in year 9, they have the opportunity to re-take the examination at the end of year 10.

Other subjects

Pupils take modular unit exams in Geography and History in the summer of Year 10. These can be re-taken in Year 11 if necessary. These contribute towards the final GCSE, which is awarded at the end of Year 11 after other modular unit exams have also been completed.

Pupils who are More Able and Talented in a certain language or subject may be given the opportunity to sit examinations as early as year 7. For example, several pupils in years 7 and 8 sit GCSE examinations in Community Languages and a group of More Able and Talented students sit GCSE History in year 9.

Revision and Student Support Guide

General Revision and Academic Support

Moodle via Cathays High website	Each department has a Moodle page which contains resources and information
https://mahara.cathays.cardiff.sch.uk	E-portfolio site – several departments have a Mahara page with individual access details
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize	Revision website for all subjects
www.khanacademy.org	Khan Academy – educational website with tutorials on many subjects (American site)
www.wjec.co.uk	Examination board websites. Access to free past papers and mark schemes and information about exam times.
www.aqa.org.uk	
www.ocr.org.uk	
www.edexcel.com	
www.careerswales.com	Advice on careers and university choices in Wales
www.russellgroup.ac.uk	Russell Group guide on choosing A Level courses – look for ‘advice for future students’
www.ego4u.com	Good for basic English grammar exercises

Subject Specific Revision Support

In addition to the above:

English	www.universalteacher.co.uk All the newspaper websites www.sparknotes.com – free notes on many English texts
Maths	www.mymaths.co.uk – pupils can get their log-in from their Maths teacher
Science	Revision guides available at £3 each Collinsonlinelearning
Art	Catch up sessions provided at lunch times and after school
Business Studies	Revision guides available at £3 each www.businessstudiesonline.co.uk www.tutor2u.com
French	http://madamethomasfrench.wordpress.com/gcse-french-general-resources-and-information/
Geography	Revision guides provided for all pupils
History	Revision guides provided for all pupils
Religious Studies	Revision guides provided for all pupils
Sociology	Hwb and ATSS websites
Welsh	Collins Revision guides provided for all pupils https://hwb.wales.gov.uk

Revision ideas from pupils:

- Complete past papers and mark your own work using a mark scheme
- Complete past paper questions and compare your answers to model answers given to you
- Mark example answers using mark schemes
- Create flashcards of key information
- Make notes from your textbooks or revision information
- Create mind maps of key information
- Self-test – set yourself mini tests and then mark them
- Get other people to test you
- Create revision crib sheets on key topics
- Read, cover, write and check for key terminology
- Use colours to code information and help you to remember topics
- Using revision guides

Pastoral Student Support

www.meiccymru.org	Free and confidential helpline on a range of issues affecting young people
www.childline.org.uk	Advice and support for young people
www.actionforchildren.org.uk	Confidential counselling service for young people across Cardiff
www.bulliesout.com	Support regarding bullying
www.ceop.police.uk	Advice on internet safety
www.thinkuknow.co.uk	Information about online safety for young people and their parents
www.thecalmzone.net	Support for young men aged 15-35 affected by depression
www.parentlineplus.org.uk	Confidential advice for parents
www.youngminds.org.uk/young people parents@youngminds.org.uk	Support on mental health issues
www.youth2youth.co.uk	Helpline for young people in need of emotional support
www.b-eat.co.uk/YoungPeople	Support and advice regarding eating disorders
www.nshn.co.uk	Self-harming network

GCSE Examinations and Controlled Assessments (CATs) Overview Calendar 2015-16

Month	Year 11	
	Exams	Controlled Assessments
September		Computing CAT (until November) ICT CAT (until November) Resistant Materials CAT (until Feb) Textiles CAT (until Feb)
October		English Language Writing CAT
November	Maths GCSE exam	English Language Reading CAT Science CAT Welsh CATs catch-up Food Technology CAT (until Feb) Child Development CAT (until Jan)
January	English Language Unit 1 exam English Literature re-sit exams Triple Science modular exams	French Writing CAT French Speaking CAT
February		English Language Speaking and Listening CATs
March		French Writing CAT Statistics CAT
April	Welsh Unit 3 oral exam	French Speaking CAT Submission of Art Personal Portfolio
May	Art external exam (day-long exams) Start of external exams for all GCSE subjects	Final submission of all BTEC work (Music, ICT, PE, Business Studies and Science)
June	External exams for all GCSE subjects	
July		

Note – BTEC courses involve assignment deadlines throughout the year. BTEC courses running in Years 11 include Music, Business Studies, PE, ICT and Science.
Pupils re-sit exams if they fail to achieve a C grade when they first take the exam or if they wish to improve their grade.

Key Stage 4 Individual Subject Timelines 2015-16

Note – CAT = Controlled Assessment, exams = official external examinations

Subject	Exam Board	Assessment Details	Autumn Term Year 11 2015	Spring Term Year 11 2016	Summer Term Year 11 2016
English Literature GCSE	WJEC	2 written exams (60%) 1 CAT (40%)	Pupils sit this exam at the end of Year 10. Students are able to re-sit this subject in Year 11 if necessary.		
English Language GCSE	WJEC	2 written exams (60%) 2 written CATs (20%) 2 Speaking and Listening CATs (20%)	Writing CAT (2 hours) Reading CAT (2 hours) Preparation for exam	January Unit 1 exam 2 Speaking and Listening CATs	May/June Unit 2 exam and Unit 1 re-sit for some
Maths GCSE	WJEC	2 exams, 1 calculator, 1 non calculator No CATs	November exams (2) (re-sits)		Exams (2) (re-sits)
Science GCSE Triple Award (three GCSEs - Biology, Chemistry and Physics)	WJEC	3 exams (25% each) and 1 CAT (25%) for each GCSE (9 exams and 3 CATs in all)	1st CAT	January unit exams in Biology, Chemistry and Physics 2 nd and 3 rd CATs	Unit exams in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
Science GCSE Double Award (two GCSE qualifications)	WJEC	3 exams (25% each = 75%) 1 CAT (25%) for each of two GCSEs	Science CAT		3 unit exams
Science Additional GCSE	OCR	2 exams (35% and 40%) 1 CAT (25%)	Science CAT		2 unit exams
Science BTEC	Pearson (EDEXCEL)	100% Coursework	Assignment deadlines throughout the year		Final submission of all BTEC work

Subject	Exam Board	Assessment Details	Autumn Term Year 11 2015	Spring Term Year 11 2016	Summer Term Year 11 2016
Art GCSE	EDEXCEL	Personal Portfolio CAT (60% - 45 hours) External exam (40%)		Personal Portfolio CAT completed and submitted	Examination – May
Art - Photography GCSE	EDEXCEL	Personal Portfolio CAT (60%) Exam (40%)		Personal Portfolio CAT completed and submitted	GCSE exam 40%
Business Studies BTEC	Pearson (EDEXCEL)	100% Coursework	Assignment deadlines throughout the year		Final submission of all BTEC work
Dance GCSE	AQA	Practical exam in 4 parts (80%) Written exam (20%)		Practical exam with external examiner	Written exam
Design and Technology – Child Development GCSE	WJEC	1 written exam (40%) 2 CATs (60%)	Child Focus Task CAT 15 hours		Written Exam
Design and Technology – Food Technology GCSE	WJEC	1 written exam (40%) 2 CATs (60%)	Board Prescribed Task CAT 20 hours		Written exam
Design and Technology – Resistant Materials GCSE	AQA	1 written exam (40%) 1 CAT (60%)	45 hour CAT		Written exam
Design and Technology – Textiles GCSE	AQA	1 written exam (40%) 1 CAT (60%)	45 hour CAT		Written exam

Subject	Exam Board	Assessment Details	Autumn Term Year 11 2015	Spring Term Year 11 2016	Summer Term Year 11 2016
Drama GCSE	WJEC	1 written exam (20%) 1 practical exam in two parts (60%) - 1 devised performance (40%) and 1 1500 written CAT (20%) 1 scripted performance piece (20%)	Practical exam in two parts	Scripted performance	Written exam
French GCSE	WJEC			Writing CAT Speaking CAT	Exam
Geography GCSE	WJEC	2 written exams (75%) 2 CATs (15% and 10%)	Controlled Assessment 1 – fieldwork based (10%)	Controlled Assessment 2 – decision making task (15%)	Options unit exam (35%)
History GCSE	WJEC	3 written exam papers (75%) 2 CATs (25%)	Unit 1 exam preparation (USA 1910-1929)	Unit 2 exam preparation (South Africa 1948-1994)	Unit 1 and 2 revision and exam (2 papers)
ICT BTEC	Pearson (EDEXCEL)	100% Coursework	Assignment deadlines throughout the year		Final submission of all BTEC work
Music BTEC	Pearson (EDEXCEL)	100% Coursework	Assignment deadlines throughout the year		Final submission of all BTEC work
Physical Education BTEC	Pearson (EDEXCEL)	100% Coursework	Assignment deadlines throughout the year		Final submission of all BTEC work

Subject	Exam Board	Assessment Details	Autumn Term Year 11 2015	Spring Term Year 11 2016	Summer Term Year 11 2016
Religious Studies GCSE	AQA	Pupils taking Short Course – 1 exam paper (100%) Pupils taking Full Course – 2 exam papers - Short Course exam (50%) Full Course exam (50%) No CATs			1 exam for Short Course 2 exams for Full Course (the Short Course exam and an additional Full Course exam)
Sociology GCSE	WJEC	2 exam papers (50% each) No CATs			2 written exams
Welsh GCSE	WJEC	Full Course = result from Short Course taken in Year 9 (50%) + 1 oral exam (25%) 1 written exam (25%)		Oral exam	Full Course written exam