

Madeley Academy



“Focused on Success”

**Key Stage 4
2026 - 2028
Year 10**

**Information for Parents, Carers,
Students and Tutors**

March 2026

What is Key Stage 4 about?

Key Stage 4 starts in Year 10. It covers the 14 - 16 age range and is a very important phase of education.

The qualifications students achieve during this time will influence strongly the students course opportunities and career prospects in the 16 – 19 phase. The policy of the Academy is to provide courses that will give students the best opportunities to succeed.

All students will receive a balanced educational provision with the opportunity to study a range of subjects. At Madeley Academy, Key Stage 4 covers 2 years to enable students to gain a depth of knowledge in their courses and to enable staff to enrich these courses with exciting activities.

With the support of parents and carers, we can expect a great deal from each individual student. Outcomes will vary but you can be sure that teachers will be supporting students to achieve the best that they can.

The Senior Leadership Team will keep the predicted grades for students under regular review and work with parents and carers if there is any risk of under-achieving. Students may have slightly different courses to their peers with some students having extra time in some subject areas and English, Mathematics and Science are setted subjects with other subjects operating mixed-ability classes.

During Key Stage 4 more homework can be expected. Students are advised to plan their time carefully so that they can take advantage of extracurricular activities such as Sport and Performing Arts.

There may be the need to put on extra lessons after the Academy day and students would be expected to attend these when they are planned and we would expect the full support of parents and carers.

What qualifications are available to me?

The Academy has worked hard to provide vocational qualifications to complement the traditional GCSE courses, because this provides a broad and balanced education and a thorough preparation for sixth form or employment.

Vocational qualifications and GCSEs provide progression to Higher Education and Training as follows:

Qualifications	AGE
Vocational Qualifications and GCSEs combined	14-16
Level 3/BTEC/AGCEs or a combination	16-18
Degree Programme/Training e.g. Apprenticeship/Employment	18+

Important national changes affecting your child's education

- For all courses, the grades at the end of the course will be expressed as 9 to 1
- 9 (highest) to 1 (lowest) will replace GCSE grades A* to G for all courses
- The top 20% of candidates graded 7 or above to be awarded a 9
- Grade 5 is roughly equivalent to a C+
- Grade 7 and above is roughly equivalent to an A
- All GCSEs have a greater numeracy and literacy content
- There is very little coursework-style assessment in these courses
- Vocational Courses such as Level 2 BTECs now have all externally assessed units including two controlled assessments and one exam – these are not easier courses but are designed differently to traditional GCSEs

What will my subjects be?

Compulsory GCSEs:

English Language

Mathematics

English Literature

Combined Science

Choice 1

GCSE Geography

OR

GCSE History

Choice 2 - 2 subjects from:

Art

Hospitality and Catering

Business Studies

History

Construction and Built Environment

Information Technology

Drama

Music

Design and Technology

Physical Education

French

Religious Studies

Geography

Sport

Hair and Beauty

Health and Social Care

Additional Courses

Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship plus statutory RE are covered in lessons and by the Personal Tutor. Students also receive Careers Guidance, which enables them to build a Personal Careers Plan in preparation for Work Experience, Sixth Form or employment. All students will access Core PE lessons and have a wide range of after-school clubs available for them to attend including The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

What will my compulsory subjects be?

All students will study the following courses:

GCSE English Language and Literature

Students begin their study of English with a foundation knowledge of the set texts and language skills in Year 9. Students develop skills to analyse non-fiction texts, plays (including Shakespeare), poetry and a range of fiction texts. They also learn how to write for different purposes and audiences. These skills are further developed in Year 10 and 11 to prepare for the English examinations, (two Literature examinations and two Language examinations) where students are tested on their ability to analyse unseen and prepared literature and complete writing tasks. All students will study both courses.

Further information is available from Mrs Allen, Head of English

GCSE Mathematics

All students study Mathematics until the end of Year 11, and all will sit a GCSE Mathematics examination. **GCSE Mathematics, does not contain a coursework nor controlled assessment element and is based on 3 externally assessed exams.**

Further information is available from Ms Kelly, Head of Mathematics

GCSE Combined Science

This qualification is worth 2 Science GCSEs and is studied by the majority all of students. Students develop scientific knowledge and understanding through the specific disciplines of Biology, Chemistry and Physics in equal amounts.

Assessment is terminal at the end of Year 11 and is through 100% external examinations

Further information is available from Mr Breen, Head of Science

What choices do I have?

GCSE Geography

Consists of three units of study:

1. Living with the Physical Environment – to include Natural Hazards – earthquakes and volcanoes, tropical storms, climate change; the Living World - tropical rainforest, hot deserts; and Physical Landscapes in the UK – coastal landscapes; river landscapes.
2. Challenges in the Human Environment – to include Urban Environments – urban growth: case study Rio de Janeiro, change in UK cities: case study Birmingham; the Changing Economic World – economic development: case studies Nigeria & UK; and Resource Management – global distribution, UK – food/water/energy, focus – global water supply.
3. Geographical Applications – Issue evaluation & fieldwork.

Fieldwork/Trips

Students will conduct at least two fieldwork visits in contrasting environments and will formulate key questions, gather data, and interpret the data. Fieldwork visits will be within the UK – we currently complete an urban study, either in Shrewsbury and/or Birmingham; coastal fieldwork at Rhyl in Wales; or a river study in Carding Mill Valley in the Shropshire Hills.

Assessment

Exam 1: 1 hour 30 minutes on Unit 1 Living with the Physical Environment

Exam 2: 1 hour 30 minutes on Unit 2 Challenges in the Human Environment

Exam 3: 1 hour 30 minutes on Issue Evaluation and Fieldwork techniques.

Note: Unit 4 Geographical Skills are assessed in all three exams.

Further information is available from Mr Guy, Head of Geography

OCR GCSE History

The students will complete a thematic study on the nature of Crime and Punishment in Britain from 1250 to the present day. This will examine topics including social crimes such as smuggling, the death penalty, and the transporting of criminals to Australia. A British depth study on the Elizabethans 1580 – 1603 will also be studied, where students will examine issues such as the Catholic threat to Elizabeth's reign and evaluate the power and authority of the Queen.

To enable students to investigate local History they will be taken to Ironbridge to explore the changes which happened to the town during the Industrial Revolution and the impact this had on the local area and Britain as a whole. Students will also complete two international History studies on the Making of America 1789 - 1900 which will focus on topics including the expansion of America and the American Civil War alongside a depth study on Living under Nazi rule 1933 – 1945 where students will examine what life was like for different races, age groups and social classes during the dictatorship.

Assessment

Exam 1: 1 hour 45 minutes on Crime and Punishment and the Elizabethans.

Exam 2: 1 hour 45 minutes on the Making of America and Living Under Nazi Rule.

Exam 3: 1 hour on History Around Us (Coalbrookdale)

Further information is available from Mr A Jones, Head of Humanities, Deputy Headteacher

Which subjects do I choose from?

Choice 2 - 2 subjects from:

Art	Hospitality and Catering
Business Studies	History
Construction and Built Environment	Information Technology
Drama	Music
Design and Technology	Religious Studies
French	Sport
Geography	
Hair and Beauty	
Health and Social Care	

GCSE Fine Art

The GCSE Fine Art course encourages learners to use of a wide range of exciting 2D and 3D media including: drawing, painting, printing, mixed media, glass and sculpture. Through a series of challenging projects students will develop an individual coursework portfolio over two years.

All coursework and final pieces of artwork must be supported by sketchbooks which demonstrate the learners understanding of the work, which have been produced through drawings, experimental and development work, 2D and 3D work, continuous research, contextual references and written study. There will be final ten-hour examination, externally set which involves time to prepare a personally chosen theme, based on the extensive preparatory work learners have produced as part of the examination project. This course is internally assessed and externally moderated.

- Component 01: Portfolio 60% of total GCSE
- Component 02: Externally set task 40% of total GCSE

Further information is available from Mrs Llewellyn and Mrs Farthing, Joint Head of Art and Design

BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise

The BTEC course in Enterprise offers a wide and varied introduction to the world of Business whilst gaining a foundation of knowledge of how the four functional areas operate to allow businesses to succeed. The course allows students to enhance their ability to communicate, work as a team and problem solve whilst applying their knowledge to real world organisations.

The course is assessed by a combination of coursework units and a single examination.

The content of the course covers aspects of:

- Start-up business options
- Marketing
- Finance
- Operations
- Human Resources
- External environment

Further information is available from Mr Craig, Head of Business Studies

BTEC Tech Award in Construction and Built Environment

The Pearson BTEC Tech Award in Construction and the Built Environment is for learners who want to acquire sector-specific applied knowledge and skills through vocational contexts by studying practical skills used in construction, the principles of technology in construction used to create a better environment in the world, and interpreting the landscape, briefs and other aspects that impact on design and creation of construction as part of their Key Stage 4 learning.

The qualification enables learners to develop their sector-specific skills, such as using tools and materials safely with vocationally correct techniques, interpreting and understanding the infrastructure for safe and efficient work, and specialist design techniques to enhance communication of design by using realistic vocational contexts.

- Construction Technology
- Construction in Practice
- Construction and Design

Further information is available from Mr Dew, Head of Construction

GCSE Design and Technology

Design and Technology is 50% theory and 50% coursework. Students will need to be prepared to work hard to be successful. Year 10 is an exciting, but demanding blend of theory and practical experiences including CAD CAM. An understanding of the needs and wants of others will be beneficial.

In Year 11, students undertake a rigorous and independent non-exam assessment, submitting an electronic portfolio and a product. There is also an externally assessed examination.

Further information is available from Mr Smith, Head of Design and Technology.

GCSE Drama

GCSE Drama is an exciting, challenging course which requires students to build knowledge and skills in creating and performing drama. The course will therefore engage students who have a real interest in studying, watching, and performing drama. To build their potential as creative and expressive practitioners, students will be expected to participate in theory tasks, practical activities and to perform their drama work to peers / small audiences.

To achieve their GCSE, students must complete three components:

1. **Understanding Drama** is a written exam paper which tests knowledge and understanding of three key topics: *Theatre Roles and Terminology; Study of a Set Text; Live Theatre Review*. 40% of the overall GCSE.
2. **Devising Drama** will assess student's ability to devise performance work which communicates a clear message or intention to an audience. Students will create their ideas as part of a group and perform their devised pieces for assessment. All students will write a performance logbook to analyse and evaluate their work. 40% of the overall GCSE.
3. **Texts in Practice** is a practical component in which students are assessed on their ability to perform extracts from a play to communicate a message or intention to an audience. Assessment will be to a visiting examiner. 20% of the overall GCSE.

Alongside drama skills, the course will build important transferable skills including research and investigation, analysis, positive participation, teamwork, independence, collaboration, creativity, and imagination.

Further information is available from Mrs Eastment, Head of Performing Arts

GCSE French (For Students Currently studying French)

The modern foreign languages course at Madeley aims to provide students with wider cognitive skills and open their minds to the global dimension.

The content of the course has been spread over 5 key themes:

- Identity and culture
- Local area, holidays and travel
- School
- Future aspirations, study and work
- International and global dimension

Students will develop a range of skills through listening, speaking, reading and writing and will be assessed at either foundation or higher tier. Students will develop their understanding of the language progressively through the course. They will develop their ability to communicate and express and develop thoughts and ideas. Later in the course they will focus on accuracy. Language learning is a valuable lifelong skill which enables our students to be adequately prepared for the increasingly global job market.

Further information is available from Miss Michel, Head of Languages.

GCSE Geography

Consists of three units of study:

4. Living with the Physical Environment – to include Natural Hazards – earthquakes and volcanoes, tropical storms, climate change; the Living World - tropical rainforest, hot deserts; and Physical Landscapes in the UK – coastal landscapes; river landscapes.
5. Challenges in the Human Environment – to include Urban Environments – urban growth: case study Rio de Janeiro, change in UK cities: case study Birmingham; the Changing Economic World – economic development: case studies Nigeria & UK; and Resource Management – global distribution, UK – food/water/energy, focus – global water supply.
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Further information is available from Mr Guy, Head of Geography

VTCT Level 2 Certificate in Hair and Beauty Therapy (VRQ)

Hair and Beauty is an excellent choice for students with a keen interest in the world of practical industry. This is a combined course.

The course is based on 3 key areas:

- Anatomy, Physiology and Cosmetic Science
- Business and Entrepreneurship in the Hair and Beauty Sector
- Design in the Hair and Beauty Sector

The course is assessed via both an end of course exam and an assignment.

All theory work is supported by a practical element, giving students a variety of learning opportunities to help them achieve.

Further information is available from Mrs Timmins, Head of Hair and Beauty

BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care

Starting in Year 10 Students will undertake the new BTEC Tech Award in Health and Social Care. The course will include a combination of exam and written set assignments to provide level 2 learners with the knowledge, skills and understanding needed for a career in the sector. The new BTEC course will also involve an externally assessed controlled assessment.

Students cover 3 units:

Component 1. Human Lifespan Development (Assignment)

Component 2. Health and Social Care Services and Values (Assignment)

Component 3. Health and Wellbeing (Exam)

Further information is available from Miss Tonks, Head of Health and Social Care

WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Hospitality and Catering (Technical Award)

This qualification is designed for learners who have an interest in food and the hospitality industry. It will provide learners with experience of using different cooking techniques and methods to enable them to use these within further education or apprenticeships. It will give them a basic understanding of the skills required for a career in food and hospitality. In Year 10 students will develop basic culinary skills. They will learn about food safety, nutrition and menu planning. In year 11 the students will plan and cook two dishes following the exam board brief. They will also take an external exam based on their knowledge of the Hospitality and Catering Industry.

The course has 2 key components:

Unit 1 The Hospitality and Catering Industry (External Examination 40% of final grade)

Unit 2 Hospitality and Catering in Action (Internal assessment 60% of final grade)

Further information is available from Mrs Dimmack, Head of Hospitality and Catering

OCR GCSE History

The students will complete a thematic study on the nature of Crime and Punishment in Britain from 1250 to the present day. This will examine topics including social crimes such as smuggling, the death penalty, and the transporting of criminals to Australia. A British depth study on the Elizabethans 1580 – 1603 will also be studied, where students will examine issues such as the Catholic threat to Elizabeth's reign and evaluate the power and authority of the Queen.

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WJEC Vocational Award in ICT

The Vocational Award in ICT is a qualification that is both skill and theory based and equivalent to a GCSE. Vocation courses like this offer an experience that focuses on applied learning by acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and understanding through purposeful tasks set in sector or subject contexts that have many of the characteristics of real work. The skills learnt when studying ICT at this level will aid progression to further study and prepare learners to enter the workplace.

Students will gain an understanding of how information technology is used in a range of contexts, including business and organisations, education and home use of information technology.

The course is assessed over two units, an Examination (40%) and a Controlled Assessment (60%).

These units cover aspects of:

- Hardware
- Application and Specialist Software
- Databases
- Spreadsheets
- Automated Documents
- Digital Imaging

Further information is available from Mr N Davies, Assistant Headteacher.

GCSE Music

During this course students will develop skills in Performance (30%), Composition (30%) and Listening/Appraising (40%). Due to the practical requirements of the course, it is recommended that students are competent instrumentalists/singers who are currently receiving tuition or who intend to do so. An ability to read music is also desirable, particularly for composition work.

The Appraising component involves listening to and analysing different pieces of music covering a wide variety of styles; from Bach's 'Badinerie for Flute' to Toto's 'Africa'. Students will sit a listening examination at the end of year 11. The Performing and Composing components give students the opportunity to gain self-confidence by performing with others, develop social and team-working skills and exercise their creativity, while engaging in activities which they enjoy.

Assessment:

60% Coursework (Performing and Composing)

40% Examination (Appraising) – externally assessed

Further information is available from Mrs Chambers, Head of Music

Religious Studies

GCSE religious studies is made up of two components. Component one sees students complete a depth study of two religions- Christianity and Islam focusing on beliefs, teachings and practices of each religion. In the second component, students complete a thematic study focusing on the 4 ethical issues-

- The existence of God and revelation.
- Religion, peace and conflict.
- Religion, crime and punishment.
- Religion, human rights and social justice.

This allows students to deepen their understanding of the religions studied in component one and apply them to ethical issues.

Further information is available from Miss Boucher, Head of Religious Studies

BTEC Tech Award in Sport

The BTEC Level 2 Tech Award in Sport gives students the opportunity to explore a range of sport related topics that will enable learners to develop their sector-specific skills, such as sport analysis and sports leadership, and personal skills, such as communication, planning, time management and teamwork through a practical and skills-based approach to learning and assessment.

The course consists of three components, which includes two coursework-based units and one external written exam. The units covered are as follows: Component 1: Preparing Participants to Take Part in Sport and Physical Activity; Component 2: Taking Part and Improving Other Participants Sporting Performance; and Component 3: Developing Fitness to Improve Other Participants Performance in Sport and Physical Activity.

Further information is available from Mrs Adams, Head of Physical Education

The Students' Entitlement

Students will study the compulsory subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, plus a Humanities subject. Students are then entitled to choose two subjects from an extensive range with the addition of additional core teaching. Every effort will be made to provide the subjects chosen but it must be appreciated that this is not always possible. When this occurs, a second choice will be given or alternatives will be negotiated.

Our Guarantee

The Academy guarantees to honour its commitment to provide a broad Curriculum in an effort to provide the very best of opportunities for students. We aim to do our very best in setting developmental targets for students to achieve their target grades.

Partnership

The students' needs are the main focal point in our partnership with parents and carers. It is the Academy's responsibility to ensure that parents, carers and students are properly advised before decisions are reached. In return the Academy expects the support of parents and carers in achieving the best for their children.

The Academy's guarantee and students' entitlements are non negotiable. They are there to protect the interests of the students. Without deviating from this and in the interest of deploying effectively the Academy's resources, the Academy reserves the right to implement amendments to the subjects students might study. Once agreed courses will only be changed in exceptional circumstances

Who can help you? Personal Tutors, subject staff, Careers Advisors and Mr Fraser, Deputy Headteacher

The Next Stages

Keys Stage 4 subject taster day:	Monday 16th March
Year 9 Parent's Evening	Tuesday 17th March
Subject choices form accessible via MCAS	Wednesday 18th March

Students are encouraged to use the time up to this date to seek advice from Subject Teachers, Tutors, Year Managers and Senior Leaders. In addition, a careers and guidance programme called Unifrog www.unifrog.org is available online to assist students in their choices.

Letter and contract confirming proposed subjects and courses issued	Friday 26th June
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