YEAR 9
OPTIONS BOOKLET

COURSES FOR YEAR 10 & 11
2026 – 2028

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COURSES FOR STUDENTS 2026 – 2028

This booklet contains details of the courses which we intend to provide for our students who are moving from Year 9 to Year 10 in September 2026.

- **Students can have some choice in the subjects that they study.**
- **From September, students will be preparing for the New GCSEs and other qualifications which are taken throughout Year 10 and at the end of Year 11.**
- **The school also begins to prepare students in earnest for their move into further education, training or employment in the summer of 2028.**
- Students, Staff and Governors at Argoed take pride in the excellent academic results which have been achieved. We have a policy of entering all students for GCSE.
- **Our aim for all learners is to develop into responsible and knowledgeable young people who are prepared for their future roles in the family, community and workplace.**

Parent/Teacher Discussion

An Information Evening for Year 9 parents will take place on **Thursday 26th February 2026 at 6pm,** where there will be an opportunity to ask questions regarding any issues arising from this booklet. **There will also be a Year 9 Parents' Evening on Tuesday 17th March 2026.** Final option choices are to be chosen through the SIMS options website and guidance on how to do this will be given to pupils, along with log in details. The deadline for final choices is **Thursday 26th March 2026**.

Which courses are compulsory?

The **National Curriculum** requires students in Wales to follow the following subjects**:**

English Language and Literature
Mathematics and Numeracy
Science
Welsh Full course
WBQ – Skills Challenge

Students also must have lessons in the following:

Religious Education
Physical Education

Which courses can I choose?

Depending on the route chosen, a number of subjects can be chosen from the following list:

Art
Drama
Music
Digital Technology (New Course)
Computer Science
Business
Product Design (Design Technology New Course)
Engineering
Food and Nutrition
Health and Social Care & Childcare (New Course)
Spanish
Geography
History (New Course)
Physical Education (New Course)
Religious Studies

Modified Programmes

Some students with particular individual needs may be able to follow a curriculum which is more suited to them. Examples of such courses are:

Level 2 workplace courses
Cope / ASDAN
Group work
College courses
Level 2 in Work Related Education – Agored Cymru

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ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) L1/L2 Skills (vocational)

Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	Level 2 = GCSE Grade B Level 1 = GCSE Grade E
Coursework	100%
Final Examination	None

Content

Communication
Sport and Leisure
The Environment
Health and Fitness
International Links
Expressive Arts
Citizenship and Community
Independent Living
Vocational Preparation
Work Related Learning and Enterprise
Science and Technology
Beliefs and Values

The aims of the course are to help students develop and demonstrate a range of skills, including Wider Key Skills such as Improving Own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem Solving. These are taught alongside the modules above.

These modules are divided into 6 sections or challenges, each taking at least ten hours to complete. These challenges may be completed in a variety of situations: in school, in the wider community or at home.

The course will be taught in one option group.

Further Information From: Mrs. M. Kincaid

Spanish

Hours per fortnight	5 hours
Groups	Mixed ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC)
GCSE Entry Level	One Tier of Entry - Grades A* - G
Unit 1 Oracy	30% of qualification Three tasks: role play, presentation and discussion and conversation
Unit 2 Reading and Writing	15% of qualification – NEA controlled assessment
Unit 3 Listening	20% of qualification Listening comprehension tasks with written responses
Unit 4 Reading and Writing	35% of qualification (EXAM) Including Reading comprehension, Translation (Spanish to English) and writing task in response to familiar stimuli

Content

You will develop your understanding of the language in a variety of contexts and enhance your language learning skills. You will learn to communicate effectively in the language and develop an understanding of the target language countries- through the following contexts:

- Leisure and well-being
- Travel
- Current and future study and employment

You will also learn the grammar necessary to enable communication and understanding of the structure of the language.

Teaching and Learning

You will be expected to build on the skills and knowledge from previous lessons in Spanish. You will be encouraged to enjoy language learning and to relish the linguistic challenge, which will give you skills for future use in this multilingual global society.

You will use interactive textbooks, authentic music, clips and DVDs, digital voice recorders, IT software and studystack.com.

We intend to organise another trip to Spain, hopefully in spring 2027.

Further Information From **Mrs. V. Butler**

History

Hours per fortnight	5 hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC) Grades A*-G
Internal Assessment	40% of the course Two NEA Assignments, one in year 10 and one in year 11
Examinations	60% of the course Two written papers, one in year 10 and one in year 11

Content

Unit 1: Wales and the early Tudors, c. 1485-c.1547
30% external assessment. One hour written examination.
Students will study the accession on Henry VII and the impact of the Tudor regime on life in Wales, including the early Reform and the Acts of Union

Unit 2: The Third Reich c. 1933-c. 1945
20% internal assessment. Non-Examination Assessment.
Students study the rise of the Nazi Party, life in Germany during the 1930s, the impact of World War II, and the fall of the Third Reich.

Unit 3: The Vikings c. 750-c.1066
30% external assessment. One hour written examination.
Students study the expansion of the Vikings and the establishment of Viking rule in the Danelaw and in the British Isles.

Unit 4: Internal Assessment
20% Non-Examination Assessment.
Research tasks of topics given by WJEC.

Teaching and Learning

The course builds on the skills and knowledge that have developed during Key Stage 3. Lessons are teacher-led and pupils are encouraged to take an active role in discussion and group work. Primary and secondary sources are investigated and critically analysed. IT skills will be essential as one NEA assessment is completed online. Classwork and homework assignments are assessed regularly.

Further Information From: Mrs. S. Hanson

Geography

Hours per fortnight	5 Hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC) - Grades A*- G
Internal Assessments	40% of the course Two NEA Assignments
Examinations	60% of the course Two written papers, one in year 10 and one in year 11

Content:

UNIT 1: Our Physical and Human World:
30% external assessment. 1 hour 30 minutes written examination.
Here you will study topics including drainage basin and rivers; changing coastlines; migration; settlement; and change.

UNIT 2: Developing Fieldwork Skills:
25% Non-Examination Assessment.
You will carry out a fieldwork visit based on a topic such as geographical flows, settlement, sustainability, mitigating risk, inequality, place and space, or change over time.

UNIT 3: Our Dynamic and Diverse World:
30% external assessment. 1 hour 30 minutes written examination.
Here you will study topics including the geography of inequality; the highs and lows of our weather; wild weather; continual climate change; and managing global challenges

UNIT 4: Sustainable Solutions:
15% Non-Examination Assessment.
You will write a report based on a real-world issue in a decision-making task based on sustainability, reporting how sustainable the various options are likely to be.

Teaching and Learning

The course builds on the skills and knowledge that have developed during Key Stage 3. Lessons are teacher-led and pupils are encouraged to take an active role in discussion and group work. Fieldwork is a compulsory element of the course, and two sites are visited to gather data to analyse and evaluate. Classwork and homework assignments are assessed regularly.

Further Information From: **Mrs. S. Williams**

Art

Hours per fortnight	5 hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC)
GCSE Level Coursework Final Examination	All learners sit the same exam - Grades A*- G 60% (2-4 Assignments) 40% 10hr practical exam

Content

The WJEC GCSE Art and Design qualification will support you to explore the work of artists and designers to help develop your own creative talent, develop creative skills so that you can plan, devise and design your own work, gain practical skills, becoming increasingly sophisticated and controlled as well as reflect on, evaluate and refine your work, explore diversity, identity and culture.

Teaching and Learning

You will learn to use a broad range of media, techniques, tools, digital technologies and processes depending on which pathway you choose. You will develop the skills to create artefacts – whether that is painting, fashion design, content creation, photography, or architectural models (to name a few possibilities).

You will learn how to develop creative processes and working methods to develop the visual outcomes that you choose. You will also learn and understand about working independently (with teacher support) to develop your own ideas and to meet deadlines set for your work. Through all of this, you will gain an awareness of sustainability in art and design as well as a deeper understanding of culture and identity through engaging with your emerging work.

Further Information From: **Mrs. K. Over**

Drama

Hours per fortnight	5 hours
Groups Qualification GCSE Levels	Mixed Ability GCSE (WJEC) All one tier - Grades A*- G
Unit1: Devising theatre (NEA)	40% Devised performance and written evidence
Unit 2: Performance of a Text Unit 3: On screen Examination	30% Acting out a scene with an audience 30% Written examination based on a set text

Content

The course consists of a range of practical work and written work. Pupils have the option of either acting or focusing on a technical element of theatre. The course is examined in 3 units, two of which are practical units examined in school and one written exam on a set text. You will study and perform famous plays, devise your own plays and study a variety of theatre styles and practitioners. Pupils will build an awareness of the development of theatre in correlation with history. Pupils who choose a technical element will have the choice of lighting design, set design or costume and makeup. Pupils will have many opportunities to visit live theatre productions.

This course fosters pupils' creativity, personal growth, self-confidence, communication and analytical skills through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding and the exercise of the imagination.

You will be required to work in groups and rehearse in your own time as well as in lessons. High attendance is required to allow all pupils to rehearse. Please see the school website for more information including what jobs it develops skills for, what past pupils have said, pictures and more!

Teaching and Learning

Following a course in GCSE Drama will enable students to:

- work imaginatively and creatively in collaborative contexts, generating, developing and communicating ideas;
- reflect on and evaluate their own work and the work of others;
- develop and demonstrate competence in a range of practical, creative and performance skills;
- consider and explore the impact of social, historical and cultural influences on drama texts and activities.

Further Information From: Mrs. S. Pritchard

Music

Hours per fortnight	5 hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC)
GCSE Level	All learners sit the same exam - Grades A*- G
Performance	32.5 % of Qualification
Coursework	65% of Qualification – 2 compositions
Final Examination	1 paper worth 35% of Qualification

Content

You do not have to be able to read Music to start this course, but you will be expected to revise the basics during the first two weeks**. It is essential that you make a commitment to attend instrumental/vocal lessons for the duration of the two-year course.**

The GCSE Music course is very popular and you will be given the opportunity to develop your passion for music through performing, composing and listening. **The focus in lessons is on enjoying music through analysis and creation.**
Performing: You will be assessed on a minimum of two performances 4-6 minutes in length total.

Composing: An exciting opportunity to express your creativity through music in a variety of styles using fantastic notation/sequencing software packages.

Listening: A wide range of music is enjoyed by listening to recordings. Students identify how elements of music have been applied to different styles and genres they also study two set works in greater detail.

Teaching and Learning

Performing: You will be expected to learn an instrument and have lessons from a specialist teacher for the duration of the course. There are opportunities to perform in lessons and also as part of an ensemble.

Composition: Composition is taught in the classroom with the aid of computer notational software. You will be required to download the free notation program so that you can work on your coursework at home.

Listening: A wide variety of music from areas such as film, musicals, modern, classical and jazz is analysed and their main characteristics are discussed.

Further Information From: Mr. C. Millard

Physical Education and Health

Hours per fortnight	5 Hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification GCSE Levels	GCSE (WJEC) One tier of entry - Grades A*- G
Practical	Performance 1 – 20% Performance 2 – 20%
Coursework breakdown	Personal Training Programme (of self) – 20%
Final Examination	Full Course – 1 paper (1.5hrs on screen exam) – 40% • Factors that affect health and wellbeing, sports and physical activity. • Physiological processes for health and sporting performance. • Psychological aspects of sports and physical activity. • Personal Training.

Content

A keen interest in ALL aspects of PE is essential pupils must understand that the theory can be complex and a positive attitude to all aspects of the course are needed to reach full potential. Students will be expected to participate in some very strenuous physical activity.

Year 10: Badminton, Athletics, Tennis, Rounders, Gymnastics, Basketball.
Year 11: Badminton, Gymnastics, Basketball, Fitness Testing.

If a pupil does a sport outside of school that is on the WJEC Activities list then it may be used for their practical. Video evidence must be supplied throughout the course for this to be accepted.
There is also a theory course, studied in the classroom.
This course includes three topics.

Teaching and Learning

Students are taught in a mixed group for most activities. If a large number of students choose this subject, it may be possible to provide two teachers, with a wider range of activities.
You are taught skills, tactics and techniques and will be expected to plan, practice and improve your own performances.
Written and practical work is designed to cater for students of all abilities.
Homework is expected, this includes an expectation to attend extra-curricular clubs.
For your coursework assessment you will be marked at the end of each unit of practical work.

Further Information From: Mr. M. Hanson

Food and Nutrition

Hours per fortnight	5 Hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC)
GCSE Levels	One tiered paper - Grades A*- G
UNIT 1 Principles of Food and Nutrition	On screen Written exam 1.5 hours - 40%
UNIT 2 – Food Investigation	NEA 10 hour task - 20%
UNIT 3 – Food and Nutrition in Action	NEA 15 Hour task – 40%

Content

This course will enable learners to make connections between theory and practice so that they can apply their understanding of food science and nutrition to practical cooking. The content relates to both food and drinks

Teaching and Learning

This course encourages independent learning in preparation for GCSE NEA tasks. It is essential that pupils are capable of organising themselves and be fully committed to the theory side of the course, as well as the practical side. You will work through the design process, and keep a folder with records of all your activities.

A variety of books and other resources are used.

Further Information From: **Mrs. C. Lloyd-Jones**

Product Design

Hours per fortnight	5 Hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification GCSE Level	GCSE (WJEC) One tier of entry - Grades A*- G
Unit 2 - NEA (coursework)	70% of Qualification – Design Project
Unit 1 - Written Examination	30% of Qualification - Design and Technology in the 21st Century

Content

GCSE Product Design is a practical subject area which requires the application of knowledge and understanding when developing ideas, planning, producing products and evaluating them. Students will be expected to use their independent learning skills and be self-motivated. Learning to keep to deadlines is an important skill.

In Year 11 pupils will complete their non-examination assessment of Unit 2. Marks will be awarded for:

- Identify, investigate, analyse and outline design possibilities
- Design and make prototypes and evaluate their fitness for purpose

Teaching and Learning

Preparation for their controlled assessment task is delivered through a variety of design and make problems incorporating both designing and making skills.

The students then choose and develop these skills to produce their controlled assessment task given a choice of possible problems.

A range of ICT skills are fostered through computer-aided design (CAD) and computer-aided manufacture (CAM).

Possible Career Paths

A 'levels and A 'level product design, this may lead to a degree course in the areas of design and engineering, engineering apprenticeships. College courses

Further Information From: **Mrs. H. Craughwell**

Health and Social Care with Childcare

Hours per fortnight Qualification	5 hours GCSE (WJEC)
GCSE Level	Level 1/2 - Grades A*- G
NEA (coursework)	30% of Qualification - Unit 2 – Adult health and socialcare 30% of Qualification – Unit 3 Childcare
Written Examination	40% of Qualification Unit 1 Health & Socialcare and Childcare in Wales in the 21st Century

Content

The full range of grades A* to G can be achieved as a single award.
There is 1 external exam for this qualification.

This course will apply to you if you:

- Have a keen interest in the health and social care services and how they operate.
- Enjoy studying a subject that is relevant to your life and experiences.
- Want to find out more about how individuals at different life stages have different care needs to help them grow, develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- Want to study a course that is active and enjoyable.
- Have an interest in working in Health and Social care/Childcare

UNIT 1 – Health and Socialcare and Childcare in Wales in the 21st Century (Exam) worth 40% of overall grade.

UNIT 2 – Adult Health and Socialcare NEA (12 hours) worth 30% of the total mark.

UNIT 3 – Childcare NEA (12 Hours) worth 30% of total mark

Further Information From: **Mrs. H. Craughwell / Mrs C Lloyd-Jones**

Engineering

Hours per fortnight	5 Hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	Level 1/2 - WJEC
Coursework	NEA (Non-Exam Assessment) - 60%
Final Examination	Written paper - 40%

CONTENT

The Level 1/2 Award in Engineering provides a more vocational alternative to GCSE.

The qualification is based around the world of engineering and aims to introduce students to the various strands available within the field. The qualification offers students the chance to develop knowledge, skills and understanding through tasks set in realistic work-related contexts.

Pupils will be expected to work from engineering drawings to produce accurately measured finished products.

The course consists of three units of work that will make up the final mark and grade awarded.

Unit 1: Internal Assessment
Manufacturing Engineering Products
40% NEA
- Brief set by the exam board every year
- Completed in Year 10

Unit 2: Internal Assessment
Designing Engineering Products
20% NEA
- Brief set by the exam board every year
- Completed in Year 11

Unit 3: External Assessment
1Hour 30 Minutes Exam
40%

Further Information From: Miss. R. Jones

Business

Hours per fortnight	5 Hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC)
NEA (Coursework)	Unit 2 NEA: 15% (Year 10) Unit 4 NEA: 25% (Year 11)
Examinations	Unit 1 Written paper: 30% (Year 10) Unit 3 Written paper: 30% (Year 11)

CONTENT

Unit 1: Introduction to the Business World - 1hour 15minute written exam – 30% of qualification

Unit 2: Key Business Considerations – 5hour NEA – 15% of qualification

Unit 3: Business Strategies for Success - 1hour 15minute written exam – 30% of qualification

Unit 4: Business Creation - 8hour NEA – 25% of qualification

So, why take business? You may see yourself as the future Alan Sugar or Karen Brady? However, this course is suitable for anyone as we will all at some point in our careers either work for a business or own a business. You will develop leadership, team working, oracy and organisational skills.

The aims of the course are to support learners to develop:

- an understanding of the activities that make a business successful
- an appreciation of the complex, pluralistic and diverse nature of society by understanding the role and influence of business and innovation on people, places, and community
- an understanding of business processes, incentives, and outcomes, within their cynefin, and how these can influence opportunities for prosperity
- an understanding of the relationship between business and the environment
- an understanding of technology and its impact on business, the environment, and people
- an understanding of the ethical implications of a business.

We have close links with several local businesses including Spavens, Broughton Park, Cheshire Oaks, Marks and Spencer and Iceland. We often use them in live case-study work along with multi-national businesses such as Jaguar Land Rover and Cadburys.

Further Information From: Mrs. C. Greasley

Computer Science

Hours per fortnight	5 Hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification	GCSE (WJEC)
Examinations	Unit 1 Digital Exam: 50% (Year 10) Unit 2 Practical Exam: 50% (Year 11)

Content

- **Unit 1: Understanding Computer Science –** Digital examination: 1 hour 30 minutes - 50% of the qualification

- **Unit 2: Computer Programming** On-screen examination based on pre released brief: 2 hours - 50% of the qualification

Overview

In this technological age, a study of computer science, and particularly how computers are used in the solution of a variety of problems, is essential to learners. Computer science works well with other subjects across the curriculum e.g. Science and Maths.

This course covers: how a computer works, the basics of network management and data security. Learners will also have some proficiency in at least two programming languages by the end of the two-year course.

The WJEC GCSE in Computer Science supports learners to:

- understand and apply principles and concepts of computer science
- explain the features and functions of systems • develop skills in computational thinking
- model and analyse problems in computational terms in order to develop and implement strategies to solve them
- develop their understanding of, and ability to apply, the systems development life cycle • apply relevant mathematical skills
- explore relevant social, professional, ethical, environmental and legal dimensions of systems.

Further Information From: **Mrs. C. Greasley**

Digital Technology

Hours per fortnight	5 hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualifications	GCSE (WJEC)
Examination	Unit 1 – The Digital World on screen exam worth 40% of final grade.
NEA's	Unit 2 – Digital Practices – worth 40% of final grade. Unit 3 – Digital Practices – worth 20% of final grade.

Content

UNIT 1 – The Digital World
Assessment - On-screen examination: 40% of qualification
In this unit students will learn about: digital technology systems, the value of digital technology and perspectives on digital technology.

UNIT 2 – Digital Practices
Controlled Assessment – 20 hours: 40% of qualification
In this unit students will develop knowledge, skills and understanding in: interrogating spreadsheet data and creating data-informed digital products.

UNIT 3 – Communicating in a Digital World
Controlled Assessment: 10 hours: 20% of qualification
In this unit students will develop knowledge, skills and understanding in:
social media and online marketing communications creating digital assets and planning digital communications.

Why study GCSE Digital Technology?

- It is a broad-based qualification that will allow you to build on digital skills, knowledge and understanding that is used in school and everyday life.
- This GCSE is suitable for students who want a career that utilises digital technologies such as web design or to go onto advanced level study of learning involving digital technologies.
- Students will develop their understanding of a range of digital technology systems that we use every day.
- Students will also explore the ever-evolving nature of digital technology systems and how these systems can be used productively, creatively and safely.

Further Information From: Mrs. C. Greasley

Religious Studies

Hours per fortnight	4 hours
Groups	Mixed Ability
Qualification Internal Assessment	GCSE (WJEC) - Grades A*- G 40% of the course Two NEA Assignments, one in year 10 and one in year 11
Examinations	60% of the course Two written papers, one in year 10 and one in year 11

Content

Unit 1: Religious and non-religious beliefs, teachings and practices
30% external assessment. One hour fifteen-minute written examination.
Students will study the key diverse Christian and Buddhist beliefs surrounding the nature of belief, matters of life and death, and religious beliefs in contemporary society.

Unit 2: Religion and relationships
20% internal assessment. Non-Examination Assessment. 6 Hours
Research tasks of topics given by WJEC

Unit 3: Roles, rights and responsibilities
30% external assessment. One hour fifteen-minute written examination.
Students study the key diverse Christian and Buddhist beliefs surrounding stewardship, the nature of human life, and freedom of religious expression.

Unit 4: Religion and human rights
20% Non-Examination Assessment. 6 Hours
Research tasks of topics given by WJEC.

Teaching and Learning

The course builds on the skills and knowledge that have developed during Key Stage 3. Lessons are teacher-led and pupils are encouraged to take an active role in discussion and group work. Sources of wisdom and authority and religious beliefs are critically analysed. Extended writing skills will be essential the NEA assessments are essay based with research and evidence. Classwork and homework assignments are assessed regularly.

Further Information From: **Mrs. K. Chapman**