



The Blue Coat School

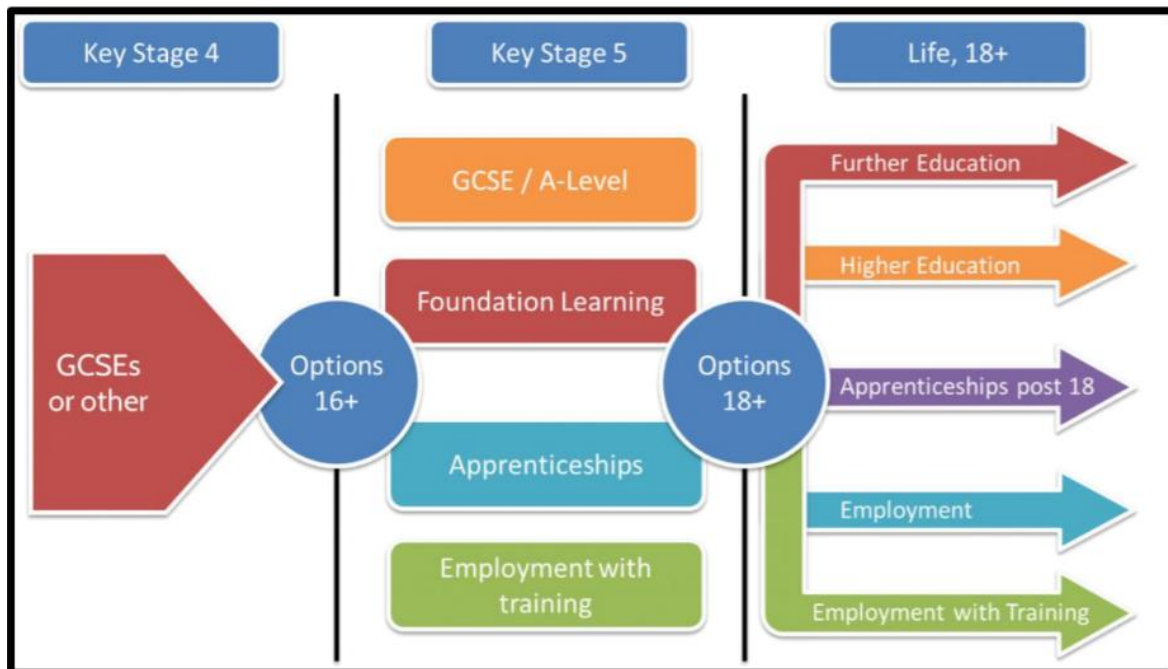
Preparing for post-18 options



- What are my options?
- Timeline
- How do predicted grades work?
- Next steps



What are my options post-18?



There are lots of options available to you, post-18. Whilst the majority of Blue Coat students go on to study at University in the UK, each year we support students to progress on to a range of pathways including degree apprenticeships and international study.

You will discuss the pros and cons of each route in your Personal Development lessons. Unifrog is also a fantastic place to browse your options.



Further Education

Further education encompasses a wide range of programs and courses designed to provide individuals with additional knowledge, skills, and qualifications. It serves as a bridge between compulsory education and higher education or the workforce, helping students pursue their career goals or further academic aspirations.

Further education includes various types of courses, such as:

- **Vocational Training:** Focused on practical skills for specific industries, such as healthcare, construction, and hospitality.
- **Technical Courses:** These may lead to qualifications like diplomas or certificates, often offered at technical colleges or community education centres.
- **Apprenticeships:** Combining work experience with classroom learning, apprenticeships allow individuals to gain hands-on experience while earning qualifications.
- **Adult Education:** Programs designed for adult learners, often flexible in scheduling to accommodate work or family commitments.

Qualifications

Further education can lead to various qualifications, including certificates, diplomas, and vocational awards. These qualifications can be recognized nationally or internationally and are essential for entering specific career paths or advancing in existing jobs.

Flexibility and Accessibility

FE institutions typically offer flexible learning options, including part-time courses, evening classes, and online learning, making it accessible for individuals with different needs and schedules.

Difference from Higher Education

While further education focuses on practical skills and vocational training, higher education (HE) refers to academic study at universities and colleges, leading to degrees such as bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. HE is generally more specialized and research oriented.

In summary, further education plays a crucial role in equipping individuals with the skills and qualifications necessary for their chosen careers or for pursuing higher education opportunities. It offers a diverse range of pathways tailored to meet various personal and professional goals.

Higher education

Higher education refers to the advanced level of education that occurs after secondary school, typically provided by universities, colleges, and other institutions, culminating in degrees, diplomas, or certificates.

Definition and Scope

Higher education encompasses various types of education provided in postsecondary institutions, including universities, colleges, professional schools, and vocational training centres. It is characterized by specialized and advanced learning, allowing individuals to gain expertise in specific fields of study. The primary goal of higher education is to prepare students for professional careers, foster critical thinking, and promote personal growth.

Higher education institutions include:

- **Universities:** Offer undergraduate and graduate degrees across various disciplines.
- **Colleges:** Typically focus on undergraduate education and may offer associate degrees.
- **Community Colleges:** Provide two-year programs that can lead to associate degrees or transfer to four-year institutions.
- **Vocational and Trade Schools:** Focus on specific trades or technical skills, offering certificates and diplomas.

Importance of Higher Education

Higher education plays a crucial role in individual and societal development. It provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary for their chosen careers, enhances employability, and often leads to higher earning potential. Additionally, higher education institutions are centres for research and innovation, contributing to advancements in various fields and fostering a culture of intellectual curiosity.

Types of university

1. Categories relating to the age of universities

Ancient universities

Examples include the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge in England, and the University of St Andrews in Scotland. Many are world-famous, feature highly in global rankings and have high academic entrance criteria.

These universities may have their own traditions, such as how often gowns are worn and a requirement to eat a certain number of meals in formal college settings. This is something to consider when counselling students: some may find that community-

building is an important part of the university experience; others may find it overwhelming.

Redbrick universities

These institutions became universities before the First World War and are named for the architecture commonplace during that period.

Various sources identify six universities of this type: the Universities of Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield. Many are city-based, rather than campus universities, and their industrial origins mean that some were originally known for vocational disciplines such as engineering, although they now offer a vast array of subjects.



Other universities established slightly after this period are sometimes also referred to as redbricks, including the universities of Nottingham and Newcastle, among others.

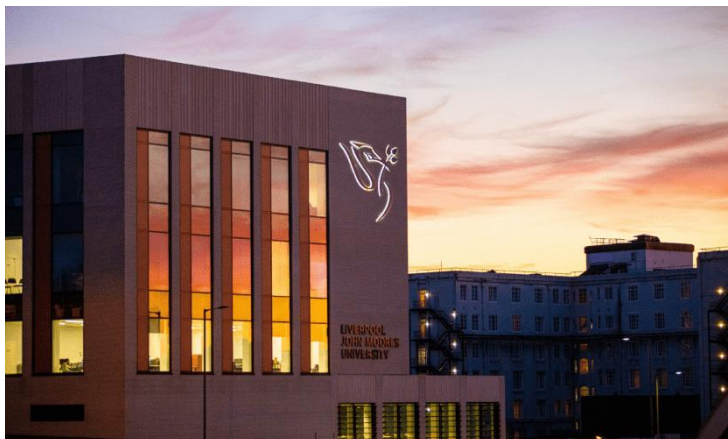
Plate-glass universities

The seven plate-glass universities are the Universities of York, Lancaster, East Anglia (UEA), Sussex, Essex, Kent and Warwick.

These universities originate from the early- to mid-1960s and are named for the architectural style of the time. As with the redbrick universities, the term is now often used more broadly to refer to other universities dating from the same period.

They are often campus-based. Redbrick and plate-glass universities are sometimes collectively referred to as “traditional” universities.

The UK university system saw much expansion following the Robbins Report of 1963, which recommended more university access.



New universities

Post-1992 universities are sometimes referred to as “new” or “metropolitan” universities.

Many of these began as non-university educational institutions, such as polytechnics and colleges of higher education, which became

universities following the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act. Some, however, are newer.

These universities are commonly found in cities and tend to differentiate themselves from the local “traditional” university by adding an additional reference to their name – for example, Nottingham Trent University, Liverpool John Moores University and Manchester Metropolitan University.

Like other university types, new universities offer a wide range of subjects. But they may have historical strengths in vocational specialisms linked to their previous iterations, or in new and emerging disciplines, such as computer games design.

2. Categories related to the type and purpose of university

Most universities in the UK are registered as charities and are not private or for profit. There are a few exceptions.

Private universities

These include Regent’s University and the University of Buckingham, as well as the University of Law, Arden University and BPP University. The last three are for-profit organisations.

Private universities may have more expensive fee structures than other universities, although the difference may be less for international students. Buckingham allows students to take an undergraduate degree in two years rather than three.

Conservatoires

These are specialist institutions for students looking to study the performing arts of music or drama.

Some may require students to apply via the UCAS Conservatoires system or directly to the institution itself; others accept the standard UCAS application. Please be aware that the deadlines are in September of y13 so you must be proactive.

An audition is usually required as part of the application process, and a separate performance reference may be required in addition to the standard academic one.



3. Categories relating to the structure of the university

Collegiate universities

These universities are comprised of a number of colleges, and students belong to the college as well as to the overarching university. They are a minority of institutions: Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Lancaster, York and Kent.

At Oxford and Cambridge, teaching as well as residence is linked to colleges, and the colleges award their own degrees. At the newer institutions of Lancaster and York, the colleges are linked to residential, social and sporting facilities only.

Students who have reacted well to close-knit school communities, such as the house system used by some schools, may find this type of environment reassuring. It shouldn't be confused with the use of "college" to define an academic faculty, or with its use in the American higher-education system.

Campus-based

Campus-based universities have teaching facilities, recreational facilities and residences on one campus, often along with some shops. They may be located outside the nearest city and will work well for students who are happy to be in a self-contained environment. Examples include Nottingham, Warwick and East Anglia.



City-based

These universities have their facilities on different sites across cities. So, for example, the main library, lecture facilities and halls of residence may be a short walk or bus ride from one another.

City-based universities will suit students who like the bustle of city life, who may not wish to travel slightly further for a night out or a shopping trip, or who might react well to everyday reminders of life outside the university bubble. Examples of these include the Universities of Birmingham, Manchester and most universities located in London such as UCL and King's College London.

4. Categorisation according to university groupings

Discussion of UK universities may refer to several groups or affiliations of universities. These groups serve various purposes, and a university may be a member of more than

one. Students may not need to know about these groups, but it can be useful for counsellors to have a sense of what they represent:



Oxbridge

The term Oxbridge is the collective term for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Both institutions have a strong global reputation and are often ranked as two of the best universities in the world.

Many students will be interested in applying to these institutions due to their strong reputations, but they may not be for everyone so thorough research into the student experience at these universities is recommended. Students are only allowed to apply to one of these institutions at a time, not both.

University of London

The University of London is a federation of 17 higher education institutions. Each institution is independent and operates autonomously with its own set of admissions criteria and degree-awarding powers. Students apply directly to the individual university (e.g, UCL), not the University of London, and will graduate with a degree from their individual university. Some of the universities included in the federation are King's College London, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and Birkbeck.

Russell Group

This is a group of 24 universities. They are large, research-focused institutions that are often highly placed in league tables; as such, this is the group students are most likely to have heard of and ask about.

The group includes ancient, redbrick and plate-glass universities, and is often assumed to be the UK's group of elite universities. Care should be taken with using "Russell Group" as shorthand for "elite", however. Although all the universities in the group are academically strong, have competitive entry criteria and good records of graduate employment, there are other elite universities not in the group, either because they are smaller or because they prefer to remain independent.

The Universities of Bath, St Andrews, East Anglia, Lancaster, Leicester and Loughborough are all highly respected institutions not in the Russell Group.

Degree apprenticeships

A degree apprenticeship combines academic study with practical work experience, enabling you to achieve a full undergraduate or master's degree while employed. These programs typically last between three to six years, depending on the level of the degree and the specific course requirements. You will spend about 80% of your time working and 20% studying, often attending university part-time, such as one or two days a week.

Key Features:

- **No Tuition Fees:** Degree apprenticeships are fully funded by your employer, meaning you can avoid the significant student debt often associated with traditional university education.
- **Work Experience:** You gain valuable industry experience while studying, which can enhance your employability upon graduation.

Benefits:

- **Earn While You Learn:** You receive a salary during your apprenticeship, allowing you to support yourself financially while studying.
- **Industry Connections:** Working in a professional environment helps you build a network of contacts that can be beneficial for your future career.
- **Tailored Learning:** Many degree apprenticeships are designed in collaboration with employers and universities, ensuring that the curriculum is relevant to the industry.

Eligibility and Application

Entry requirements can vary by employer and sector, but most programs require a strong academic background. You can find degree apprenticeships across various industries, including engineering, IT, healthcare, and business management.

The best places to look are on Unifrog, UCAS, the Be More apprenticeship hub and on company websites. Applications don't all open/close at a set time, so you need to be on the ball!

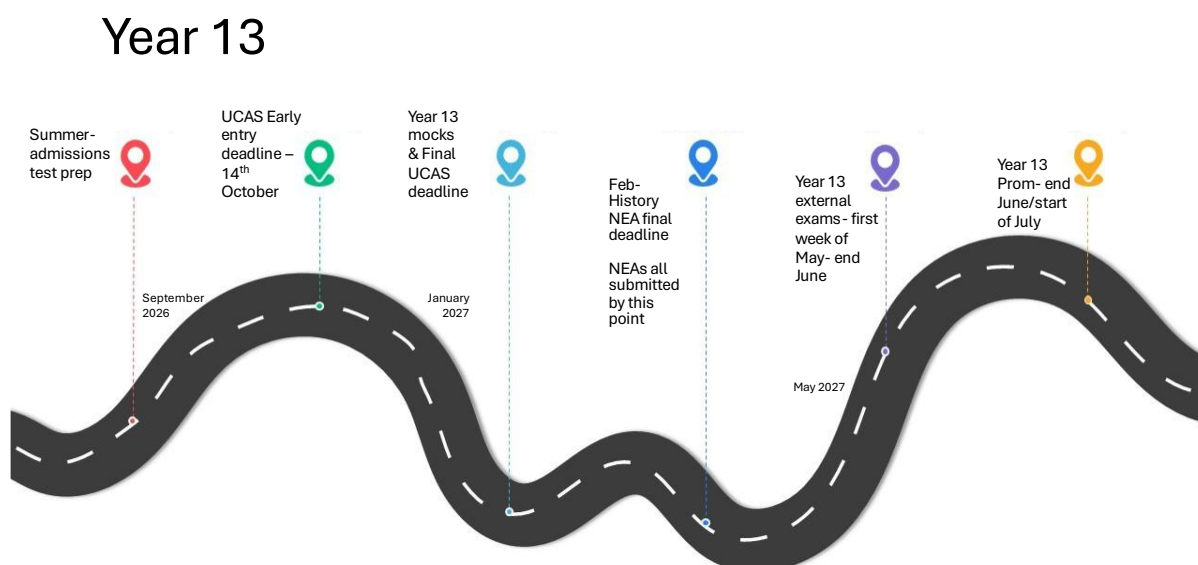
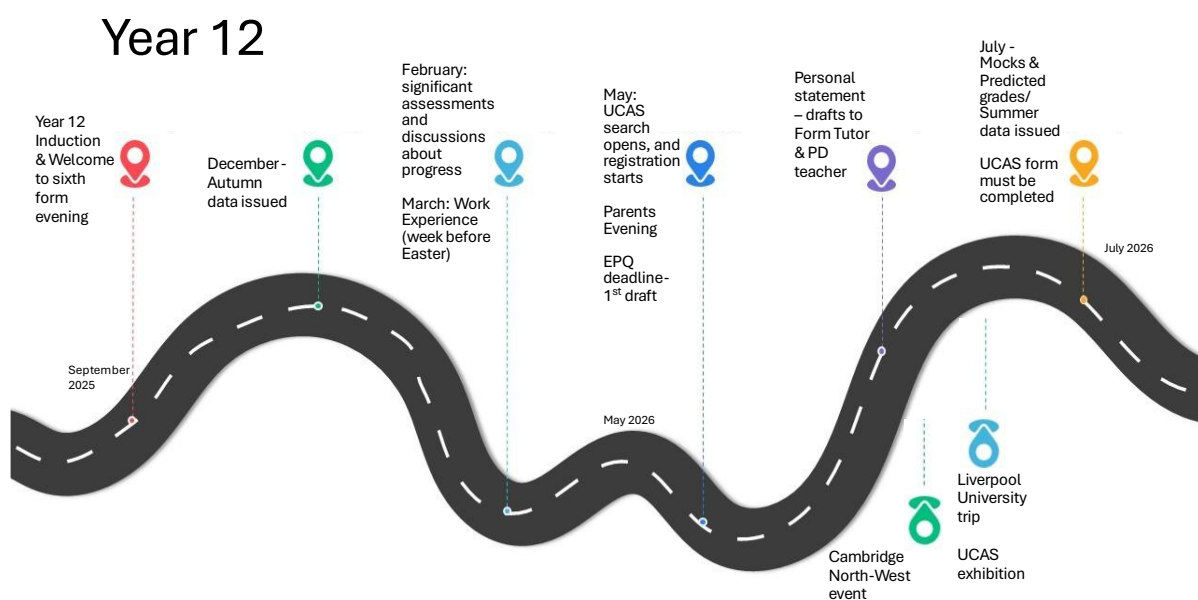


Timeline

Over the course of this academic year all students will receive the following support:

- A one-to-one appointment with an independent career adviser
- A mock interview
- Talks from a range of external speakers during Student Development sessions
- Personal Development lessons focused on next steps
- Access to Unifrog
- Opportunities shared via the Careers Team.

We must stress that every lesson counts in year 12. Students should be attending lunch time sessions, utilising online resources such as UpLearn and contacting their teachers if they require additional support. The expectation is that non-contact hours are used for studying, either in the Sixth Form Study Centre or LRC.



How do predicted grades work?

When you apply for University or a Degree Apprenticeship they will look at your GCSE results and they will also ask for predicted grades.

At the end of this pack, you will find a list of the key assessments that students will sit over the course of year 12. Whilst class and homework are important, it can't always be used as evidence towards a predicted grade as it is not done under exam conditions. Our predictions are evidence-based; the predicted grade policy can be found as part of the assessment policy on the school website.

Any students not on track to achieve the grades required for their chosen career path by February will have a meeting with a member of our sixth form team. Progress and realistic next steps will also be discussed at parents evening in early May. Students will then have the opportunity to make academic progress or amend their future plans before the mock examinations after May half term. **Final predicted grades will be shared before the end of the summer term.**

Next steps and top tips

- Have a think about what you want to do post-18. Use Unifrog to make aspirational and 'safe' plans for your next steps.
- Make a strong start on your EPQ. You will only get busier as time goes on, so the more you can do now, the better! This is an independent project; if you need support from your supervisor, it is your responsibility to ask for it. Lots of students get a reduced university offer based on their EPQ, so it really is important.
- Start contacting companies about work experience. Remember, this is the week beginning 23rd March 2026.
- Work hard in and out of lessons; don't let your study periods go to waste and make the most of clinics and other support systems.
- Reach out if you need help. We are all here to help you.



Evidence for PGs 2027 entry

	Autumn 2025		Spring 2026		Summer 2026		May/June
Subject	Evidence 1	Evidence 2	Evidence 3	Evidence 4	Evidence 5	Evidence 6	Y12 Summer mock exams
Art	Workshop-based. Students receive a grade on their submissions each half term.					Portfolio.	
Biology	October: Biological molecules and cells test.	November: Biological molecules, cells and transport test (incorporating required practicals 1, 3 and 4).	February: Exchange and DNA test.	March: Mid-year assessment (the test will include all work to date).	May: Mass transport and Biodiversity test.		2 papers, all work to date.
Chemistry Tests are 45 minutes long and are taken in class, apart from the summer exams.	September: Group 2, redox, ionization energy & electronic configuration.	November: Groups 2/7, redox, atomic structure, bonding.	February: Alkanes, halogenalkanes, alkenes, bonding, calculations.	March: (just Physical) atomic structure, bonding, calculations, energetics.	April: (just Organic & Inorganic) alkanes, halogenalkanes, alkenes, alcohols, isomers, groups 2&7, redox		All y12 content covered across two papers. One 2-hour paper and one 1-hour paper.
Computing	October: System Architecture and Computational Methods	December: Programming Techniques and Software Development	February: Object-Oriented Programming and Exchanging Data	March: Data Structures and Databases	May: End of year assessment on Year 12 content	July: Data Type and Legal and Ethical	Y12 Summer mock exams
Economics Macro Micro	Indicators of macro-performance objective test. S+D MCQ and 10-mark question.	Aggregate demand/aggregate supply objective test and causes of recession 15-mark question. Elasticity MCQ and 10-mark question.	Economic growth essay. Externalities policy essay.	Unemployment objective test and 15-mark question. For and against government intervention essay	Inflation/deflation essay. MCQ: Government failure.	Fiscal/supply side objective test.	Y12 Summer mock exams: Paper 1 and Paper 2

English Literature	Extract question on 'Othello' (25 marks)	Exam style essay on 'Death of a Salesman' (25 marks)	Essay question on 'Othello' (25 marks)	Exam style question on Keats poetry (25 marks)	Timed extract or essay question on 'Othello' (25 marks) Timed	Keats/Salesman essay (25 marks)	Paper 1: Tragedy (2.5 hrs – 3 essays)
English Language and Literature	Extract Question on Frankenstein (35 marks)	Exam style question comparing texts from the anthology (40 marks)	Extract Question on Frankenstein (35 marks)	Exam question comparing texts from the anthology (40 marks)	Essay question on Browning's poetry (25 Marks)	Timed Exam question comparing texts from the anthology (40 marks)	Paper 1: telling stories (3 hours. 3 essays)
French	Average of final grammar tests SBA - Big little words ALZ - Tenses	End of Unit Test (similar to paper 1)– La famille en voie de changement – JA End of Unit Test (similar to paper 1)- Le septième art - ALZ	End of Unit Test (similar to paper 1)- La musique francophone contemporaine- ALZ End of Unit Test (similar to paper 1)- La cyber-société- JA	Average of 2 La Haine essays One in timed conditions and in the classroom (students can use a plan and resources) and the other one in full exam conditions - SBA	End of Unit Test (similar to paper 1)- Le patrimoine- ALZ	End of Unit Test (similar to paper 1)- Le bénévolat - JA	Paper 1 (50%) – Listening, reading and translations into English Paper 2 (20%)- Essay and translations into French Paper 3 (30%)- Speaking exam
Further Mathematics <i>Some assessments are the same as Mathematics but not all</i>	Pure Maths test sat in Shirley Hall (October) and Pure Maths in-class assessment	Pure Maths test, sat in class (early December)	Pure Maths test sat in class (late January)	Pure Maths test sat in Shirley Hall (late February) Applied Maths test sat in class	Applied Maths test sat in class (mid-April)		2 x Pure Maths mock exams (one of which is the same as the Mathematics cohort). Applied Maths mock exam.
Geography	Knowledge Tests Glaciation and Contemporary Urban Environments.	9- and 20- mark essay questions.	End of unit tests Glaciation 9- and 20- mark essay questions.	End of unit test Contemporary Urban Environments	9- and 20- mark essay questions. Knowledge Test Hazards	9- and 20- mark essay questions.	Y12 Mock Exam

	9- and 20-mark essay questions.			9 and 20 mark essay questions.	Knowledge Test Changing Places		
History	US essay (25 marks)	Tudors essay 2 x NEA check points (November and December)	US Source: 30 marks NEA internal deadline - February	Tudor source: 30 marks	25-mark essay and 30-mark source question		Y12 Summer mock exams
Latin	Unseen translations test 1	Literature exam 1	Unseen translations 2	Literature exam 2	Evidence from approximately 12 pieces of homework and 16 vocabulary tests	Unseen translations test 3	Y12 Summer mock exams (language & literature)
Mathematics	Pure Maths test sat in Shirley Hall (October)	Pure Maths test, sat in class (early December)	Pure Maths test sat in class (late January)	Pure Maths test sat in Shirley Hall (late February)	Applied Maths test sat in class (mid-April)		Y12 Summer mock exams: Assessment pure and applied papers
Music	1 x Autumn Performance 1 x Music Theory Assessment 2 x Appraising Assessments	1 x Music Theory Assessment 2 x Section A Appraising Assessments (Sonata and Early Jazz)	1 x Music Theory Assessment and External Exam 1 X Spring Performance 2 x Section A Appraising (String Quartet and Big Band)	2 X Composition 2 x Section A Listening (Concerto and Bebop) 1 x Section C Listening	2 X Composition 1 x Summer Performance	2 X Section A Listening (Symphony and Free Jazz) 1 x Section B and Section C Listening	1 x Final Performance 2 x Composition 1 x End of Year Appraising Exam (Section A all, Section C Essay)
Physics	October: Fundamental skills, Electricity 1	November: Mechanics 1, Electricity 2, Particle 1.	December: Particle 2	January: Mechanics 2	March: Mechanics 3, Waves 1	April: Mechanics 4, Waves 2	2 papers

Politics	Knowledge test in political ideas and 9-mark questions in UK Politics	Extract US 25-mark question	Political Ideas Extract 25-mark question	UK essay (25 marks)	US/UK essay	9-mark questions: UK/US Political Ideas	Y12 Summer mock exams
Psychology	October: Test	November / December: Social influence test	February: Memory test.	March: Mid-year assessment.	April: Approaches test.	May: Clinical psychology test.	2 papers. The tests will include all work to date and include standard exam style questions.
Spanish	Unit 1.1 – Changes in family – Early October	Unit 1.2 – Attitudes to marriage and divorce – Early November	Unit 4 is normally mid-November – the influence of idols	Unit 2 – Technology – End of January Unit 5 February – Regional Identity in Spain	Unit 6 April – Cultural Heritage	Unit 3 – Equality – May - JA	Y12 Summer mock exams inc. speaking exam