MARSHALLS PARK ACADEMY

YEAR 8 & 9 OPTIONS INFORMATION 2026-27

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Gives a description of a student in that subject

The type of assessment

Why you should choose this subject

This button on each page links to the exam board web page

This button on each page links to the Marshalls Park subject web page

YEAR 8 OPTIONS PROCESS
(for study in 9)

Year 8 compulsory subjects
English
Mathematics
Science
French or Spanish
Computer Science
Geography
History
RE
Core PE
Option Subject
Option Subject
Option Subject

Pupils to choose 3 of
Art
Drama
Dance
Design & Technology
Food & Nutrition
Music
PE GCSE

In year 8, with the guidance of teaching staff, students will choose from a selection of arts/computing/technology and physical education subjects to study in year 9.

Students do not have to continue with these subjects into year 10/11 but **will not** be able to choose to study them in year 10/11 if they don't study them in year 9.

MPA BANDING

In year 9, students will be allocated a band based on their prior attainment, current work ethic and potential. Each band is given appropriate choices matched to the demands of the modern educational and work landscapes, that meet the aspirations of students at each level.

Band	Students
M	Students from sets 1 and 2
P	Students from sets 2 and 3
A	Students from sets 3, 4 and 5

YEAR 9 OPTIONS PROCESS
(for study in years 10/11)

M Band
Examined Compulsory Subjects
English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
Science (triple **or** combined)
Religious Education
History **or** Geography
Foreign Language
Statistics
Option Subject
Non-Examined Compulsory Subjects
Core PE
PSHE, Citizenship and Work-Related Learning

P Band
Examined Compulsory Subjects
English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
Science (combined)
Religious Education
History **or** Geography
Foreign Language
Option Subject
Option Subject
Non-Examined Compulsory Subjects
Core PE
PSHE, Citizenship and Work-Related Learning

A Band
Examined Compulsory Subjects
English Language
English Literature
Mathematics
Science (combined)
Religious Education
History **or** Geography
Option Subject
Option Subject
Option Subject
Non-Examined Compulsory Subjects
Core PE
PSHE, Citizenship and Work-Related Learning

M to choose 1 of, **P** to choose 2 of, **A** to choose 3 of		
Art & Design	**Business Studies**	Computer Science
Construction	Dance	Design & Technology
Drama	Food & Nutrition	**Creative iMedia**
Music	PE GSCE	**Photography**
Statistics	History **or** Geography	Foreign Language (**A** only)

* Listed option subjects will run dependent on viable numbers.
** Construction is strictly limited to two groups of 16 students.

In year 9, with the guidance of teaching staff, students will decide their final GCSE/Vocational subjects.

Pupils can pick from a variety of 'new' subjects (highlighted in bold) that they have not studied in year 7-9 or to continue with subjects chosen in year 9.

Statistics is recommended for those in M Band but is not compulsory.

GCSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-11	X	

You may believe that you only need to study English if you hope to be a writer, a journalist or a teacher. However, the core value of our subject is communication. In every career, there is the need for effective communication. English underpins all other subject areas and helps you to communicate in an appropriate and respectful manner. Most subjects at A-Level and beyond require a pass in English due to the amount of writing and communication involved in all areas of the working world.

100% Written Exam

Mathematics

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-11	X	

GCSE Mathematics students need strong problem-solving skills, logical thinking, and the ability to work with abstract concepts. They should also have good attention to detail, as accuracy is crucial, and the ability to apply mathematical techniques to real-world situations. Persistence and regular practice are essential, as mathematics often requires repeated effort to master challenging topics.

Mathematics is important because it provides a foundation for everyday life, helping individuals manage finances, interpret data, and make informed decisions. It is also essential for further education and careers in fields like science, technology, engineering, and finance, making it a key qualification for future opportunities.

100% Written Exam

Science

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-11	X	

GCSE Science students need curiosity, analytical thinking, and the ability to understand and apply scientific concepts and methods. They should also have strong problem-solving skills, attention to detail, and the ability to conduct experiments and interpret data accurately. Good organisational skills are important for managing coursework and revision effectively.

GCSE Science is important because it builds a foundation of knowledge about the natural world, helping students make informed decisions about health, technology, and the environment. It is also essential for further education and careers in fields like medicine, engineering, environmental science, and research, making it a key qualification for future opportunities.

100% Written Exam

Religious Studies

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-11	X	

Religious Education students want to develop intellectual curiosity, analytical thinking, and ethical awareness. It requires you to construct clear arguments, evaluate evidence, and articulate your views effectively. RE develops cultural awareness, empathy, and the ability to understand different perspectives.

Studying RE equips you with transferable skills that are valued across a wide range of professions including:

Law, Journalism, Media, Politics, Public Service and Human Rights Advocacy.

100% Written Exam

Modern Foreign Language

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-9	X	
10-11	M & P	A

Foreign language students want to improve their communication and problem-solving skills and boost their confidence. This is the correct subject for you if you want to expand your cultural knowledge and stand out from the crowd by being able to look at the world and understand it from different perspectives.

25% Speaking
25% Listening
25% Reading
25% Writing

Choose a foreign language if you want to work as a diplomat, a journalist, a screenwriter, a teacher, a lawyer, a travel blogger, a flight attendant or a translator, amongst many other career paths.

Geography

***Students must choose to study either geography or history or both subjects in year 10-11**

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-9	X	
10-11		X

Geography students have curiosity about the world, strong problem-solving abilities, and an interest in both the physical and human environments. A key attribute is the opportunity to learn outside the classroom, with field trips and practical activities that develop problem-solving, critical thinking, and data analysis skills and bring learning to life.

100% Written Exam
Two fieldwork trips to support exam learning

Geographers are in high demand across various sectors, including urban planning, environmental consultancy, disaster management, and international development. Choosing Geography can lead to a rewarding career in areas like sustainability, travel and tourism, teaching, and research, making it an excellent option for future-focused students.

History

***Students must choose to study either geography or history or both subjects in year 10-11**

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-9	X	
10-11		X

GCSE History students are intrigued by dramatic events, enjoy unravelling the mysteries of the past, and want to master skills like critical thinking, research, and debate. It's a great choice for those who love exploring different perspectives and making sense of how history shapes our world today.

100% Written Exam

If you're aiming to study subjects like Law, Politics, Archaeology, or International Relations at college or university pick GCSE History. It's a solid foundation for developing critical thinking and analytical skills that are valued in many academic fields. It's a subject that prepares you for success in many career paths, including research, teaching, law, journalism, public relations, policy analysis, museum curation and government.

Art

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-8	X	
9-11		X

GCSE Art students need creativity, imagination, and the ability to express ideas visually. They should also have strong observational skills to draw or create from life, as well as the willingness to experiment with different materials, techniques, and styles. Good time management and self-motivation are essential for developing ideas and completing projects.

60% Personal Portfolio
40% Practical Exam Assignment

provides a foundation for further education and careers in fields like fine art, graphic design, fashion, animation, and architecture, making it a valuable qualification for creative industries.

Business Studies

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
10-11		X

GCSE Business Studies students need analytical thinking, problem-solving skills, and an interest in how businesses operate. They should also have good numeracy skills for interpreting financial data, as well as the ability to communicate ideas clearly and evaluate business decisions. Curiosity about real-world business practices and current economic trends is also beneficial.

100% Written Exam

Provides an understanding of key business concepts, such as marketing, finance, and operations. It also lays the groundwork for further education and careers in entrepreneurship, management, finance, or economics.

Computer Science

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-9	X	
10-11		X

GCSE Computer Science students need logical thinking, problem-solving skills, and an interest in understanding how technology works. They should also have attention to detail for writing and debugging code, as well as creativity to design solutions and algorithms. Strong mathematical skills and the ability to work independently or collaboratively on projects are also important.

100% Written Exam

Develops essential digital skills and computational thinking, which are increasingly relevant in a technology-driven world. It provides a foundation for further education and careers in software development, data analysis, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence, making it a valuable qualification for future opportunities in a wide range of industries.

Construction

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
10-11	X	

BTEC Tech Award in Construction and the Built Environment students need practical skills, attention to detail, and an interest in building design, construction processes, and sustainability. They should also have problem-solving abilities to address construction challenges, as well as teamwork and communication skills for collaborating on projects.

33% Written Exam
66% Internal Assessment

provides hands-on experience and knowledge of the construction industry, preparing students for further education or apprenticeships in fields like architecture, engineering, or project management.

Creative iMedia

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
10-11		X

Our Cambridge National in Creative iMedia will inspire and equip you with the confidence to use skills that are relevant to the digital media sector and more widely. You will design, plan, create and review digital media products to meet client and target audience demands.

40% Written Exam
60% Internal Assessment

Choose Creative iMedia if you want to study A Level Media Studies. Or if you want to go into any of the following careers:
Creative director - Web designer - Photo editor - Video & film editor - Graphic designer - Product designer - Multimedia artist - Animation/animator - Art director

Dance

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-8	X	
9-11		X

GCSE Dance students need physical fitness, coordination, and a passion for movement and performance. They should also have creativity to choreograph original pieces, as well as the ability to analyse and interpret dance works critically. Discipline, teamwork, and time management are important for rehearsals and performances.

30% Performance Internal Assessment
30% Choreography Internal Assessment
40% Dance Appreciation

It provides a foundation for further education and careers in dance, theatre, choreography, or teaching, and fosters an appreciation for the arts and cultural diversity.

Drama

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-8	X	
9-11		X

GCSE Drama students love performing, enjoy watching performances and are interested in what goes into creating an effective live production. They want to build their social skills such as confidence or cooperation. Drama will support your English studies and develop effective communication skills, as well as offering opportunities to practise important life skills and professionalism.

70% Written Exam
30% Practical Internal Assessment

Choose GCSE Drama if you want to be a want to go to college/university and study Performing Arts, Teaching or Journalism or you want to work in theatre or in a client facing career where confident speaking is a necessity.

Food & Nutrition

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-8	X	
9-11		X

GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition students need an interest in cooking, nutrition, and food science, as well as practical skills to prepare and cook dishes safely and effectively. They should also have good organisational skills for planning and managing time during practical tasks, and the ability to analyse and evaluate nutritional information and food choices.

15% Food Investigation Internal Assessment
35% Food Preparation Internal Assessment
50% Written Exam

Teaches essential life skills, such as cooking healthy meals and understanding balanced diets, which contribute to long-term health and well-being. It also provides a foundation for further education and careers in food science, nutrition, catering, or hospitality.

Music

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-8	X	
9-11		X

GCSE music requires passion about the subject and willingness to commit your time to improving your instrumental and compositional skills. You should be an avid listener and appreciator of music who has a keen ear for analysis. You should also like learning more about the different elements that make music what it is.

30% Performance Internal Assessment
30% Composition Internal Assessment
40% Appraisal (Listening) Examination

There are many careers in the music industry; it isn't just about playing instruments! You could become a Music Producer, Film/Game Music Composer, Sound Engineer, Live Sound Technician, Session Musician and many more other career paths. The music industry is vast and there is a lot to learn and a lot you can do.

Photography

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
10-11		X

GCSE Photography students need creativity, an eye for detail, and a passion for visual storytelling. They should also have technical skills to use cameras and editing software, as well as the ability to experiment with composition, lighting, and techniques. Good time management and self-motivation are essential for planning shoots and developing ideas.

60% Personal Portfolio
40% Practical Exam Assignment

provides a foundation for further education and careers in fields like photojournalism, fashion, advertising, or fine art, making it a valuable qualification for creative industries.

Physical Education

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
9-11		X

GCSE PE students need physical fitness, coordination, and a passion for sports, physical activity and how the human body works. They should also have good teamwork and communication skills for participating in team sports, as well as the ability to analyse and evaluate performance, both their own and others.

60% Written
30% Practical Performance (3 Sports)
10% Personal Exercise Programme Internal Assessment

provides a foundation for further education and careers in sports science, coaching, physiotherapy, or teaching, making it a valuable qualification for those interested in health, fitness, and sports-related fields.

Design & Technology

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
7-8	X	
9-11		X

GCSE Design and Technology students need creativity, problem-solving skills, and an interest in designing and making products. They should also have practical skills to work with materials, tools, and technologies, as well as the ability to analyse and evaluate designs for functionality and sustainability. Good planning and organizational skills are essential for managing projects from concept to completion.

50% Written Exam
50% Design and Make Task Internal Assessment

Teaches practical and technical skills, encouraging innovation and critical thinking. It provides a foundation for further education and careers in engineering, product design, architecture, or manufacturing

Statistics

Year(s)	Compulsory	Optional
10-11	Recommended M	P & A

Students studying GCSE Statistics need strong analytical skills to interpret data accurately and draw meaningful conclusions. Attention to detail is crucial for ensuring data is collected, organized, and presented correctly, minimising errors. Problem-solving abilities are also important, as students must apply statistical methods to real-world scenarios and make informed decisions

100% Written Exam

Statistics is widely used in various fields, from science to business, and equips students with the ability to make evidence-based decisions in everyday life.

Submission of Option Choices

Please read the information in this booklet and consider carefully before submitting your choices.

You will receive an email link to complete your option choices.