

Key stage 4 curriculum structure and rationale

Ercall Wood Academy has developed its curriculum for 2022 based on the provision seen in outstanding schools nationally. We offer a graduated curriculum offer as detailed below:

- Students not fully secure at the end of year 9 in gaining a grade 4 or above pass in English and Mathematics deserve additional time as this is a key determinant towards future life opportunities. This also supports with catch up due to the impact of COVID-19.
- Placing Triple Science within the core offer enables more students to study this pathway and maintains their “open” options. Studying Combined Science does **NOT** limit the study of Science A-levels.
- Pathway A students study German as part of their core curriculum.
- Pathway B students have an additional period for the Humanities block to support their learning and in addition study OCR PE as part of their core curriculum.
- Students can opt for more than one humanity if they wish to and there are enough student numbers for viability.

Pathway A

(Burway, Wrekin, Adstone)

Subject	Curriculum hours / fortnight
English (Language and Literature)	9
Mathematics	8
Triple Science (3 qualifications)	10
Core PE	3
GCSE German	4
RE (Compulsory)	1
Option 1 - Humanity (History or Geography)	5
Option 2	5
Option 3	5
TOTAL	50 hours
Total qualifications	10

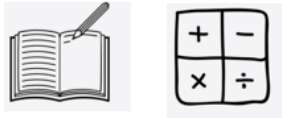
Pathway B

(Ercall, Caradoc, Hope, Ragleth and Stiperstones)

Subject	Curriculum hours / fortnight
English (Language and Literature)	10
Mathematics	9
Combined Science (2 qualifications)	9
OCR Nationals PE	5
RE (Compulsory)	1
Option 1 - Humanity (History or Geography)	6
Option 2	5
Option 3	5
TOTAL	50 hours
Total qualifications	9



Principles of curriculum design



1) Gaining a grade 4 + in English and Maths is crucial

Students not fully secure at grade 4+ have additional curriculum time for English and Maths. The potential cost on future study and employment in not obtaining these gateway qualifications is too great.



2) Maximising curriculum time for qualifications and increasing flexibility of “open” options

Pathway A supports Triple Science and study of a language to enable “open” option choices.

Pathway B supports OCR PE to enable “open” option choices and qualification parity.



3) Values and builds upon key stage 3 learning

Significant time is spent by students learning a Humanity and a Language. Enabling students to build upon that values that learning time and increases the chances of success in qualifications.

Comparing the graduated curriculum offer

As you can see from the table on page 8 Ercall Wood Academy has a graduated curriculum offer. The main adaptations being:

Pathway A

- 3 core PE lessons and do not gain a formal qualification. They can opt for OCR PE within their “open” option blocks.
- Have 4 Modern Languages lessons (German) as part of their core curriculum. This will award a 10th qualification to students without impacting on their open options.

Pathway B

- Have an additional English and Mathematics lesson each fortnight to support in securing these crucial gateway subjects at grade 4 or above.
- Have 5 core PE lessons to study OCR PE as part of their core curriculum offer to gain an additional qualification without impacting on their option choices.
- Study OCR 21st Century Combined Science. This does not impact students’ life choices post 16 for those students that wish to continue their scientific studies
- Do not have German within their core curriculum. However, equity of opportunity is maintained as students can opt for the subject as part of their “open” option subjects.
- Have an additional lesson within the Humanity block

Core Subjects

These are subjects that are compulsory and must be taken by all students. The core subjects are:

Pathway A

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- OCR 21st Century Combined Science (2 qualifications with the mean grade calculated across Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
- GCSE German
- GCSE Geography or GCSE History
- Core PE (non examined)
- Statutory RE (non-examined)

Pathway B

- GCSE English Language
- GCSE English Literature
- GCSE Mathematics
- OCR 21st Century Triple Science (3 separate qualifications for Biology, Chemistry, and Physics)
- GCSE Geography or GCSE History
- OCR Nationals PE
- Statutory RE (non-examined)

The format, type of assessment and qualification to be awarded in each subject will depend on the learning preferences of students. Details can be found within the individual curriculum pages.



The importance of the core subjects

Society and the Government have increasingly put more emphasis on literacy, numeracy and the core subjects of English, Maths and Science. Admissions tutors in Further and Higher Education, as well as Personnel Officers in the world of work, want to know first and foremost how many GCSEs a student achieved including English and Maths. The levels attained in Science quickly follow. We are all aware that not achieving a “pass/grade 4” in the core subjects can lead to a student’s life opportunities being narrowed later on in life.

The English Baccalaureate (EBACC)

The EBACC is a set of subjects at GCSE that keeps young people’s options open for further study and future careers. A study by UCL Institute of Education shows that studying subjects included in the EBACC provides students with greater opportunities in further education and increases the likelihood that a pupil will stay on in full-time education. Sutton Trust research reveals that studying EBACC can help improve a young person’s performance in English and maths.

All students in Pathway A will be studying the English Baccalaureate as part of their core curriculum.

We recommend that students in Pathway B give serious consideration towards enabling the EBACC. This is especially true for those students wishing to gain places within Russell group universities. A number of university courses within these institutions require the study of a language as a pre-requisite. In order to enable this Pathway B students will need to opt for German within their “open” option blocks.

For more information regarding the English Baccalaureate:



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-baccalaureate-ebacc/english-baccalaureate-ebacc>

Option Subjects

There are three option blocks.

Block 1 is a choice of a Humanity from either GCSE History or GCSE Geography.

Block 2 is an “open” option block which will be constructed based on gaining the highest possible student fulfilment.

Block 3 is an “open” option block which will be constructed based on gaining the highest possible student fulfilment.

EWA has already invested time in students expressing initial interests in option choices. This has enabled the creation of an initial block design to meet the needs of those early expressions of interest from our students.

Please understand that it is highly likely that some students will not be able to choose exactly as they would have planned. The nature of options blocking means we cater for the needs of the year 9 learning community as a whole. In doing so, not all individuals have “perfect” option choices.



Subject list

Statutory GCSE subjects

- GCSE English Language & GCSE English Literature (all students)
- GCSE Mathematics (all students)
- GCSE Combined Science (Pathway B: Ercall, Caradoc, Hope, Ragleth, and Stiperstones)
- GCSE Triple Science (Pathway A: Burway, Wrekin, and Adstone)

Statutory non-examined subjects

- Core Physical Education (Pathway A students)
- Statutory Religious Education (all students)

English Baccalaureate subjects / core OCR National PE

- GCSE German (EBACC) – (Core for Pathway A / option for Pathway B)
- GCSE Geography or GCSE History (EBACC) (all students opt for at least one)
- OCR Nationals Sports Studies (PE) (Core for Pathway B / option for Pathway A)

GCSE options subjects

- GCSE Art & Design
- GCSE Computer Science
- GCSE Dance
- GCSE Drama
- GCSE German (pathway B students will need to opt for this if they want the EBACC)
- GCSE RE, Philosophy & Ethics
- GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition
- GCSE Photography
- GCSE Product Design

Vocational options subjects

- OCR Nationals Sports Studies (PE)
- OCR Nationals Enterprise & Marketing (Business)
- OCR Nationals Creative i-Media (IT)
- BTEC Music
- OCR Nationals Health & Social Care

