

Curriculum Overview KS4 (age 14-16)

At Key Stage 4, pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow a similarly academic curriculum, with a small number of valued and appropriate vocational courses on offer. Nearly all pupils will study between eight and ten GCSEs or equivalent. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) excellence is prioritised across our curriculum and an emphasis on foreign languages is maintained, in addition to the important focus on English. In practice, this means that the majority of pupils will take a foreign language at GCSE and complete the EBacc, unless there are valid academic reasons otherwise – these pupils receive additional support with English and Mathematics in place of a foreign language. Just under half of all pupils study separate science subjects, the remainder study a combined double science GCSE. There are alternative pathways identified for some pupils – including entry level qualifications where appropriate. This focus on strategically important and vulnerable subjects (such as foreign languages) and STEM subjects is also informed by the character of Birmingham as a University with strong commitment to these subjects.

Option subjects begin in Year 10 and run for 2 years. Of the 50 periods per fortnight 35 are core - or compulsory – study, and 15 one hour periods per fortnight are option choices. Pupils are offered a choice of 3 subjects as options – these are kept under review annually.

The Learning for Life (L4L) Curriculum, which includes Character Education, Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship, and Economic Education (PSHCE), Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG), Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC), will be delivered through tutor time, in enrichment and via subjects; as such, these are not shown on the core plan below.

For 2021-22 the subject offer is:

		Periods per fortnight	
	Subject	Y10	Y11
Core	English	8	8
	Mathematics	8	8
	Biology	4	4
	Chemistry	4	4
	Physics	4	4
	Physical Education	2	2
	MFL (French) or Extra English and mathematics	5	5

Optional Subjects	Geography	5	5
	History	5	5
	Art	5	5
	Computing	5	5
	Design Technology	5	5
	German	5	5
	Music	5	5
	Photography	5	5
	Physical Education Academic	5	5
	Religious Studies	5	5
	Hospitality and Catering (vocational)	5	5
	Sports Studies (vocational)	5	5