

GCSE options talk

GCSE options: What are GCSEs?

What are GCSE's?

GCSEs are qualifications that school children in the UK study towards when in Year 10. GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education and chosen subjects are studied over two years with final exams taking place in Year 11.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zrjh92p>

Why are GCSE's important?

The choices you make at GCSE are likely to affect what you are able to do in the future, regardless of your career option. No matter what pathway you choose they will be a consideration for most careers.

Why is year 9 important?

Year 9 is the start of your academic career. By the end of this year you will have chosen your GCSE subjects, you will study these subjects for the next two years and may affect what you study after.

GCSE options: What can I take?

How many subjects can I take?

- Most students will take around 9 subjects for GCSE – You can take more and less than 9.
- You have 3 core compulsory subjects that you must take.
- You can then choose from a series of optional subjects.

Compulsory subjects:

- Maths
- English Language
 - English Literature is also compulsory in a majority of schools)
- Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
 - Can be split into three separate sciences or into two combined science GCSE's.

GCSE options: What can I take?

Optional subjects:

- A modern foreign language – Most commonly **French, German or Spanish**. Some schools may offer others.
- A humanities subject such as **History, Geography or Religious studies**.
- An arts subject such as **Music, Drama, Art and Design or Media Studies**.
- A technical subject such as **Design and Technology, Food Technology or Computer Science**.
- All students have to do **PE** in years 10 and 11, but you can also take it as a GCSE option.
- Other subjects, depending on what your school offers, can include:
 - **Journalism**
 - **Sociology**
 - **Home economics**
 - **Business**
 - **ICT**
 - **PSHE & citizenship**
 - **Welsh**

Apprenticeships

Many apprenticeships will require applicants to have certain GCSE's at certain grades.

Here is an example of a apprentice plumber, this position requires maths and English GCSE at grade C/4 or above.

Apprentice Plumber

SPACE HEATING LIMITED

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We are looking for a positive candidate to progress further in their plumbing career by joining an experienced team of plumbers

[Sign in to apply](#)

Closing date: 10 Jan 2020

Requirements and prospects

Desired skills

- Good time keeping
- Willingness to learn

Personal qualities

- Good Attitude
- Polite
- Conscientious

Desired qualifications

- ESSENTIAL to have maths & English GCSE or equivalent at grades A-C or 4 and above

Future prospects

- Our previous apprentice has been rewarded for all their hard work by being put through his full domestic gas course and is now a vital member of the Space Heating team
- They have also become an experienced heating engineer along the way
- In the short term uniform is supplied plus a vehicle once the employee can start to work independently

Things to consider

- Entry Qualifications will be checked
- You MUST have a driving licence as apprentice will be traveling a lot due to the job roll
- Clean driving licence and a can do attitude is essential
- <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

A levels

If you are wanting to go down the A level route many colleges/sixth forms will also require applicants to have certain GCSE's at certain grades.

Here is an example of the entry requirements for York College.

'A minimum of 4 subjects at grade 5 or above at GCSE plus English Language at grade 4 or above. Individual A Level subjects will have specific requirements in addition to these general entry expectations'

Entry Requirement Guidance

The below table gives an overview of typical entry requirements for A Level, Vocational and Apprenticeship Programmes starting in September 2020.

Please note that this is for guidance only. A number of qualifications are being restructured nationally, along with the associated grading approach, so entry requirements may be subject to change for specific programmes of study.

Comprehensive entry requirement advice and guidance is available at our Open Events, Taster Days, and your personal guidance discussion once you have applied.

Course and Level	GCSE Requirement (Number format)
A Levels	A minimum of 4 subjects at grade 5 or above at GCSE plus English Language at grade 4 or above. Individual A Level subjects will have specific requirements in addition to these general entry expectations.

University degree

If you were to progress onto university or higher education, GCSE's would still be considered.

Here is an example of the entry requirements of the primary education course at York St John University. They require 5 GCSE's at grade C/4 or above in English Language, Maths and sciences.

Est. 1841 | YORK
ST JOHN
UNIVERSITY



Entry requirements

Qualifications

The minimum entry requirements for this course are:

120 UCAS Tariff points

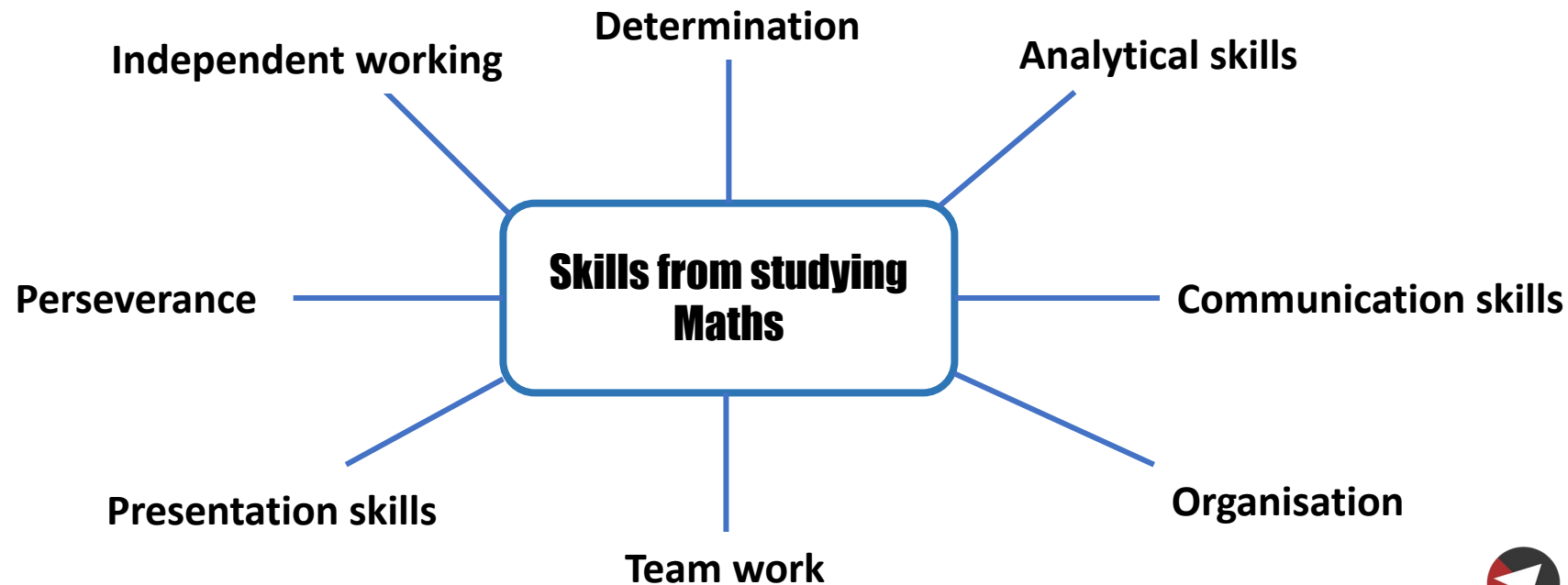
5 GCSEs at grade C/4/Level 4 or above (or equivalent) including:

- English Language
- Maths and Science
- Pass a satisfactory medical report and a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check

GCSE and additional skills.

In the last activity we asked you to start thinking about skills you gained from doing certain GCSE's and how they can be beneficial for some careers.

Here is an example of transferable skills from studying maths at GCSE.



GCSE: What to consider and what not to consider?

DO consider!

- What you are good at?
- What you are currently enjoying?
- Will it help me in the future?
- Do I need a certain GCSE for my chosen career/courses.
- If you are unsure – Keep your options open with a range of subjects.

Do NOT consider!

- Based on what teachers you think you will have
- What your friends are choosing
- You think some subjects are gendered (They are not!)
- You think it will be easy (no subject is 'easy')

Any questions?