



# Design and Technology

A guide to our qualifications



# AQA Design and Technology

**Our comprehensive range of qualifications has been developed in consultation with teachers to ensure that the content and assessment are accessible to students of all abilities.**

**We offer a variety of progression routes and ongoing support to assist you in planning your courses.**

## Entry Level Certificate

A broad course in Design and Technology designed for students who are working at a level below that required for GCSE grade G.

## GCSE Full Course

Our Full Course is available in seven subject areas:

- Electronic Products
- Food Technology
- Graphic Products
- Product Design
- Resistant Materials Technology
- Systems and Control Technology
- Textiles Technology

## A-level

Our A-level is available in four subject areas:

- Food Technology
- Product Design (3-D Design)
- Systems and Control Technology
- Product Design (Textiles)

## GCSE Short Course

Available in Design and Technology

### Electronic Products

Electronic Products encourages students to use a wide range of electronic components with appropriate materials to package an electronic circuit.

### Food Technology

Food Technology allows students to demonstrate their creativity when making food products as well as to gain an understanding of food science and nutrition.

### Graphic Products

Graphic Products enables students to develop products using a range of graphic and modelling materials and new technologies.

### Product Design

Product Design encourages students to design and make products with creativity and originality, using a range of materials such as paper/card, plastics, textiles, ceramics, food, electronics, timber-based materials, and ferrous and non-ferrous metals. Candidates will also develop a variety of techniques for working with these materials.

### Resistant Materials Technology

Resistant Materials Technology is the design and making of products using a range of materials such as wood, metals and plastics and will be encouraged to incorporate new technologies in the production of their products.

### Systems and Control Technology

Systems and Control Technology enables students to design and make systems using a range of electronic, mechanical and pneumatic components.

### Textiles Technology

Textiles Technology enables students to develop a working knowledge of a wide range of textiles materials and components appropriate to modelling, prototyping and manufacturing. Students will learn about design and market influences, processes and manufacture, environmental issues and the use of ICT in relation to the manufacturing of material products.



“It’s great that there is a common approach to all subjects. They use the same assessment criteria, which makes sense for students who are doing more than one subject.’

Roger Smith, Head of Design and Technology, St Peter’s High School

# GCSE Design and Technology

We have developed our new GCSE specifications for each of the different subject areas to enable students to demonstrate their creativity and to develop a wide range of making skills. Our Full Course is a unitised specification consisting of a single un-tiered examination paper (Unit 1) and a controlled assessment activity (Unit 2) allowing more flexibility in how and when students take their examination and submit their controlled assessment tasks.

Our specifications have been designed to include:

- a **linear structure** with a unitised approach, so you can offer the course to suit your students, with the option to re-take units if required
- a **single tiered assessment** covering grades A\* – G to cater for students of all abilities
- a **practical approach** to encourage creativity and originality, using a range of materials and techniques
- a **clear, simple structure** to help your students to revise and relate the work done for coursework.

## Benefits of GCSE Design and Technology to students:

- **creativity:** enables students to be inspired, moved and challenged by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study, which also gives an insight into related sectors, such as manufacturing and engineering
- **preparation:** prepares learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices
- **independent learners:** helps students to develop skills in decision making, creativity, and critical analysis through individual and collaborative working.

## Assessment overview

### Unit 1 – Written paper

40% of total marks

2 hour exam

120 marks

Candidates answer all questions in two sections.  
Pre-release material issued.

### Unit 2 – Design and Making Practice

60% of total marks

Approximately 45 hours

90 marks

Consists of a single design and make activity from a range of broad set tasks.



# A-level Design and Technology

At A-level we offer a suite of specifications including Food Technology, Product Design (3D Design), Systems and Control and Product Design (Textiles). Our specifications build on the knowledge gained at GCSE to enable easy transition through the different levels of study. The specification is unitised, consisting of four units. At AS Level, Unit 1 is an examination paper, Unit 2 is coursework. At A2 Level, Unit 3 is an examination paper and Unit 4 is coursework. Candidates taking the A2 qualification must take all four units.

Our specifications have been designed to include:

- **a flexible approach** to submitting coursework with a choice of different options. At AS Level, students can submit either a single design-and-make project, two smaller projects or a portfolio of work.
- **a clear, simple structure** to help your students revise and relate the work done for Coursework
- **a Coursework Adviser** to give advice and guidance to centres on the Coursework units.

## Benefits of A-level Design and Technology to students:

- **further creativity:** enables students to be inspired, moved and challenged by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study, that also gives an insight into related sectors, such as manufacturing and engineering
- **further preparation:** prepares learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices
- **independent learners:** helps students to develop further skills in decision making, creativity, and critical analysis through individual and collaborative working.

## Assessment overview

### AS Examinations

#### Unit 1 – Materials, Components and Application

50% of total AS marks, 25% of total A-level marks

2 hour written exam

80 marks

#### Unit 2 – Learning through Design and Making

50% of total AS marks, 25% of total A-level marks

Coursework approximately 50 hours

80 marks

Written (or electronic) design portfolio

### A-level Examinations

#### Unit 3 – Design and Manufacture

25% of total A-level marks

2 hour written exam

84 marks

#### Unit 4 – Design and Making Practice

25% of total A-level marks

Coursework approximately 60 hours

85 marks

Written (or electronic) design portfolio.



# Other qualifications

## GCSE Short Course

Our GCSE Short Course is a generic, non-specific Design and Technology qualification. In response to your feedback, we have developed a process-based specification which allows students in the traditional Design and Technology areas to make small, quality products. It has a generic examination paper and addresses the 'across the board' approach of Design and Technology.

Students complete a design and make project which is equivalent to half the amount of work required for the Full Course and can be produced in any material/ingredient area or a combination of materials.

### Assessment overview

#### Unit 1: Written Paper

40% of total marks

1 hour

60 marks

Candidates must answer all questions.

#### Unit 2: Design and Making Practice

60% of total marks

Approximately 20 hours

90 marks

Consists of a single design and make activity from a range of board set tasks.

## Entry Level Certificate (ELC)

This specification has been designed to provide a qualification for students who are unlikely to reach grade G at GCSE level. It also offers students the opportunity to work alongside others following a GCSE course in Design and Technology.

It is a unit-based specification, with students required to complete and submit evidence of **four** units for assessment and moderation. Two units are compulsory, and two units are optional. A list of the optional units are available in the specification. Three levels of award are available: Entry 1, Entry 2 and Entry 3.

There are two alternative pathways through the specification:

1. Students have the opportunity to specialise in a particular Design and Technology subject area and obtain a specific ELC qualification in:
  - Electronics and Systems
  - Food Technology
  - Graphic Products
  - Resistant Materials
  - Textiles Technology
2. Alternatively, they may choose to adopt a mix and match approach across subject areas to obtain a generic ELC in Design and Technology:
  - ELC Design and Technology: Product Design

### Assessment overview

#### Externally-set assessment tasks

50% of total marks

Candidates should submit evidence of the two **compulsory** units.

#### Teacher controlled tasks

50% of total marks

Candidates should submit evidence from two of the **optional** units.

# Resources and support



As an AQA teacher, you will receive ongoing and comprehensive support including:

- **Controlled Assessment Advisers** who are allocated to every centre and are available via telephone or e-mail to answer any subject-specific questions or to offer guidance on the delivery of the Controlled Assessment
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)** courses led by experienced Design and Technology tutors, covering in-depth training on our specifications to support your classroom teaching
- **free Teacher Resource materials** available on the AQA website, including schemes of work, sample questions and resources lists
- **direct access to our subject teams** via phone or e-mail, so you can be sure of getting the right answer straight away
- **free of charge Teacher Standardisation meetings** for Design and Technology. They are held across the UK and provide training on national assessment standards for the Controlled Assessment through reference to sets of exemplar Design and Technology work.
- **Ask AQA online question and answer service**, 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly-asked questions. If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query and you will receive a response from the subject team
- **resources from publishers, Nelson Thornes**, for GCSE and A-level Design and Technology written by our senior examiners to support your students' learning.

## Contact information

**Friendly and helpful staff available from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm to answer queries via telephone and e-mail.**

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