

# GCSE Design & Technology

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What units are studied and how is the course assessed?

The course is made up of two units, one is the theory for the written exam and the other is a substantial piece of work which is a design and make task, the NEA. They have equal weighting. There are no optional units, the students need to study all of the course content. There are two parts to the theory, core knowledge and in-depth knowledge. The core knowledge covers all materials including papers & boards, timber, metal, plastic, fabric, smart materials, electronics and mechanisms. The in-depth knowledge will be chosen from paper & board, timber, plastics or metals.

### Is there a substantial amount of practical within the course?

There is practical work and students will be introduced to a range of materials, tools, equipment and processes. This will include hand tools, machines and computerised equipment such as the laser cutter and 3D printers. The practical skills will be developed through one-off lessons as well as focused mini design projects. They will also need to understand Health & Safety in the workshop.



### Do I need to buy any extra resources or equipment?

No, the only thing we ask all students to have is an A4 ring-binder with a set of subject dividers. The department will provide an A3 folder to use for projects. Good quality drawing pencils, coloured pencils and equipment are beneficial to allow the students to produce good quality drawings and presentations.

### Would work experience within the industry be beneficial?

Absolutely, in fact it is highly recommended that students try to gain some sort of experience within a designing, engineering, architectural, manufacturing or construction-based sectors. We do have some links with local companies, as well as the University of Plymouth. All being well, visiting speakers, visits and training may be set up. The more exposure a student has with any form of construction project, no matter how small, the better their understanding will be.

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### Which course should my son\daughter choose to take from BTEC Construction and GCSE Design & Technology?

This depends on what direction the students want to go in, what career aspirations they have and where their strongest skills lie. Both are very different courses, the main way to decide is to consider career pathway. If a student really wants to pursue a career in the construction industry, no matter the job role, then the BTEC course is most suitable. The BTEC focuses on the designing and construction of low rise buildings such as residential homes, retail parks and leisure facilities. This is the sole focus of the course and will develop an understanding of how buildings are built from the foundations to the roof, carefully considering site and client constraints. The GCSE course has a wide theoretical base and is really aimed at any student wanting to go into a career within design or engineering. It enables a student to hone their skills and develop their individual strengths or interests.

### Can both the BTEC Construction and GCSE Design & Technology be studied together?

The two courses are very different but do complement each other. The GCSE course covers all material areas as well as developing designing and making skills. It focuses on the design and production of everyday products, whereas the BTEC course purely focuses on the materials, design and construction of low rise buildings. The two courses can be studied together but the main thing to consider is the fact that both courses contain a heavy element of assignment based work, some of which may need to be completed outside of lessons.

