



Design and Technology GCSE

Ofsted said: "Pupils study a high-quality and consistently delivered curriculum." May 2026

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY GCSE SPECIFICATION AT A GLANCE

EXAM BOARD: AQA

Students will pursue a course leading to the award of a GCSE 9-1 qualification at the end of Year 11.

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

Written exam (2 hours) 100 marks - 50% of GCSE

What is assessed?

Core technical principles (20 marks)

Specialist technical principles (30 marks)

Designing and making principles (50 marks)

A mixture of short answer and extended response questions.

Assessed Project (30-35 hours) 100 marks - 50% of GCSE

What is assessed?

Practical application: Core technical, specialist technical principles, and designing and making principles

Task(s): Substantial design and make task

Assessment criteria:

Investigating, designing, making, analysing and evaluation.

Students will produce a working prototype and a portfolio of evidence (max 20 pages). Work will be marked by teachers and moderated by AQA.

NB Pupils may be required to make a financial contribution for their material choices for their final NEA product.

SUPPORTING TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES:

Weekly Drop-Ins at school £0

Product Design STEM university visit Estimated cost: £0

External visitors- engineers Cost £0

Colpac Estimated cost: £5

SHOULD MY CHILD STUDY DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY?

A pupil choosing GCSE Design and Technology should be self-motivated, willing to work hard, and able to stay focused on long-term practical projects. They need the confidence to sketch and communicate ideas visually, the resilience to learn from mistakes, and a problem-solving mindset that helps them tackle challenges creatively. Most importantly, they should be ready to reflect on their work and continually look for ways to improve their designs.

What will my child gain from design and technology?

GCSE Design and Technology gives pupils a wide range of valuable skills and experiences. They learn how to think creatively, solve real-world problems, and develop practical solutions through hands-on designing and making. The subject builds resilience, independence, and the ability to iterate and improve work based on feedback. Pupils also gain technical knowledge about materials, manufacturing processes, and emerging technologies, alongside essential skills such as communication, planning, and project management.

Where will design and technology take my child?

It develops practical creativity, problem-solving, and technical skills that lead naturally into fields like engineering, product design, architecture, graphics, and fashion. Students also gain transferable skills—such as resilience, planning, and critical thinking—that are valued in any profession. Overall, D&T opens pathways to both further education and a wide range of modern, innovation-focused careers such as:

- Product Designer
- Engineer
- Graphic Designer
- Architect
- Carpenter
- Interior Manufacturer
- Set/stage designer
- Interior design

Further reading/ suggested revision materials:

AQA GCSE (9-1) Design and Technology: All Material Categories and Systems, Hodder Education

AQA GCSE (9-1) Design and Technology, MJ Ross

Alessi: the Design Factory Alessi

CGP GCSE AQA Design & Technology the revision guide (9-1)

Design modelling: visualising ideas in 2D and 3D
Bairstow, John

For further information, please contact:

Head of Design Technology Faculty:
Mrs E Hulatt, Theatre Design BA (Hons), PGCE
Secondary Design & Technology, NPQML
hulatte@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Goldington Academy
Haylands Way
Bedford
MK41 9BX

Principal: Mr F Galbraith

Tel: (01234) 261516

Email: office@goldington.beds.sch.uk

Website: www.goldington.beds.sch.uk



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