



Chweched
Dosbarth

Ysgol Gyfun
Cwm Rhondda

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda

SIXTH FORM POST-16 LEARNING PATHWAYS AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA



PROSPECTUS 2023/25





POST-16 LEARNING PATHWAYS

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

Choosing the right school is crucial to ensure the best education and you are happy and safe. At Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda, we offer all these aspects through the medium of Welsh and within a Welsh environment. We are the only Welsh-medium secondary school in the Rhondda and we not only celebrate the richness of our Welsh history within the area, but also take pride in our success and our ability to develop citizens who are completely bilingual before they leave school.

As you finish Year 11, it is natural for you to consider your next step and where this will take you in September, and we are confident that Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda will play an important part in your discussions regarding your future. I hope that reading this prospectus will give you a taste of the activities and academic possibilities on offer in the Sixth Form and confirm your intention to join us in Year 12. The range of opportunities is too broad to list in detail, but we hope to give you enough of an idea.

Here, we consider that your success and academic progress go hand in hand with your health and wellbeing. We aim to offer a wide range of courses to enable you to choose a suitable and wise combination when you reach this important milestone in your educational career. We will guide and advise you to ensure the best possible support as you consider your future and career. The teachers know you well and care for you.

Being a member of the Sixth Form is both special and unique. The Sixth Form exists for pupils who are determined to succeed, but it means more than studying for higher qualifications and brings you new privileges and responsibilities. It is a key role of leadership within our school community, and one that will help you to develop into a complete individual, confident, responsible, and fully bilingual, in a Welsh-speaking environment.

The same equal opportunity is offered to develop every learner to the best of their abilities to be Ambitious & Capable, Ethical & Informative, Enterprising & Creative and Healthy & Confident.

Craig Spanswick

Headteacher



A WELSH LANGUAGE ADVANTAGE

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

We are privileged to be Rhondda's only Welsh medium comprehensive school and we shall endeavour to continue producing successful, bilingual students for the communities that we serve.

We provide education through the Welsh language and in a Welsh environment. No other institution in the area is able to offer this.

Sixth Form education at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda will further strengthen our student's linguistic development ensuring they become adaptable and bilingual citizens in our communities. This may be the last contact students will have with a Welsh medium institution. We are reminded that the implementation of two Welsh Language Acts has not only added to the importance of the language in the world of commerce and business, but daily life in the modern Wales. The ability to communicate fluently in the medium of Welsh is highly advantageous within the jobs market in Wales.





SIXTH FORM PROVISION

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda's Sixth Form provision is of the highest standard, and we offer our students a wide and interesting range of courses, together with the care, support and continuity that only comes from continuing to study at our school.

The school offers unique opportunities to our students, including:

- A strong ethos based on respect, understanding and tolerance within the school.
- A wide range of the highest quality academic, personal and social opportunities to ensure the individual's whole development, in a friendly and supportive environment.
- An opportunity is offered to every student across the whole ability range to develop the next step in their education and lay the foundations for life-long learning relevant to the twenty-first century.
- An education through the Welsh language and in a Welsh environment.
- A familiar and welcoming environment. The fact that the students are familiar with the staff and the school will ensure that the students feel at home quickly, allowing them to concentrate on their studies from the outset.
- A caring pastoral system of the highest calibre to guide and support students through their Sixth Form education.
- An opportunity to gain responsibility as Head prefect, Senior Prefects and member of the school Senedd.
- To receive guidance and advice from the Welsh Baccalaureate Personal Mentor.
- Access to the Sixth Form Common Room and Study Centre.

Some of the activities and responsibilities in the Sixth Form:

- Sixth Form Prefects
- Learning Support Prefects
- Reading buddies
- Break time and lunch time duties
- Public Speaking
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
- Model United Nations General Assembly
- University Open Days
- Seren Hub
- School Senedd
- Reading Scheme
- School Choir
- Numerous Sporting Activities
- Subject Prefects
- Eco-schools' Committee
- Music and Drama Productions
- Career Events
- Charity Events
- Educational Visits
- Bus buddies





SIXTH FORM PASTORAL SYSTEM

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

The Sixth Form has a dynamic pastoral system which includes specific lessons with the form tutor in order to mentor students through their Learning Pathways and the Welsh Baccalaureate as well as developing students' revision and work skills, and their ability to work independently. In addition, during tutor sessions the students will receive education dealing with religious education and morality, careers and citizenship.

The form tutor is there to guide and help students and to monitor their progress in the Sixth Form.

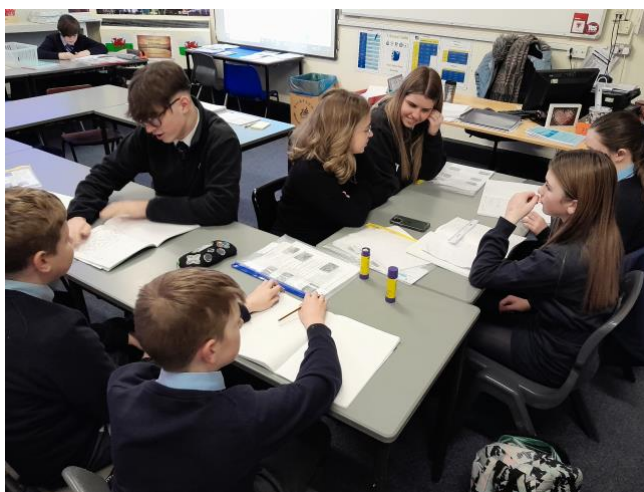
A Tutor will be:

- a source of encouragement
- a listener
- a source of advice and help
- critical but constructive

A Tutor will:

- Monitor student's academic, social and personal development.
- Discuss student's progress at regular intervals in reviews.
- Help to study more effectively and to assess abilities realistically and exploit them fully through a programme of tutorial guidance.
- Discuss career and higher education ambitions and advise.
- Encourage students to take advantage of all the opportunities, both academic and social, which are offered.

Sixth Form assemblies are held every week and whole school and house assemblies are held regularly. More often than not, the Sixth Form assemblies are interactive and require the input of the students. Although we put the emphasis on the Sixth Form pastoral system, the students have the opportunity to be part of the lower school pastoral system by supporting class, school and house assemblies. This aspect encourages independence as well as developing the communication and leadership skills of our students. Assemblies also offer an opportunity for external agencies, such as Network 75, Coleg Cymraeg, to present important information to the pupils





FACILITIES FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

The most striking difference between a Year 12 and a Year 11 timetable, apart from fewer subjects, is the fact that for the first time a Year 12 student will have non-contact time when he/she is not committed to a lesson and is not expected to present him/herself to a teacher. This **time** is an opportunity not to be missed, an advantage not to be squandered.

The ability to **study independently** is a necessity for success on an Advanced Level course and is a vital skill in preparation for work and higher education. Sixth Form lessons are merely starting points. Students are given explanation and direction, and are then expected to work further on their own in order to consolidate what they have already gained or to find new, supplementary information. **Students will fail to fulfil potential if they rely exclusively on work undertaken in lesson time alone.** Therefore, students cannot afford to waste this non-contact time for it is designed as an essential part of the course not as a rest period. Students must quickly adapt, therefore, to their new timetable and exploit every opportunity to improve their learning.

SIXTH FORM STUDY CENTRE

Specific study facilities are available to Sixth Form students, and during your non-contact time you can arrange to see teachers, or use the ICT facilities and the school's other resources and facilities to assist you with your work. A study room is available for the Sixth Form, and is equipped with a computer network, specifically for undertaking research independently, providing access to the whole school network, the school's blended learning environment on Google Classroom, and broadband internet. In addition, Sixth Form students have access to computer facilities around the school during and after the school day. The study room, is available specifically for the Sixth Form to enable them to work independently during their non-contact periods. Study time is noted on each students timetable in order to make full use of the Study Centre.

Sixth form pupils have the luxury of a separate area located in the lower school block. Within this area there is a space for socialising and relaxing as well as a quiet work room.





THE SIXTH FORM COMMON ROOM

The Sixth form Common Room is a centre for relaxation and socializing during specific lessons only. The Sixth form Committee will ensure order, cleanliness and appropriate use of the common room. It is expected that students respect the common room facilities and rules at all times. The sixth form café is open at specific times during the day as well as lunch and break periods to purchase and consume food.



SIXTH FORM CAFÉ





WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY

“I’m so pleased that I continued my studies in the 6th form at YGCR. I had so much support across the board but especially with my university application. I have still been able to access support despite having left! There are so many opportunities available for 6th form students but I especially relished being able to work with younger pupils within the school. The memories I made in the 6th form will stay with me.”

Ellie, Dentistry Student at university

“I decided to carry on my education at college after completing my GCSEs. The college was state of the art and they promised to help me develop my sporting skills. After a year, following some negative experiences, I decided to return to Welsh medium education at YGCR. I find studying through the medium of Welsh so much easier and I am supported to continue with my rugby alongside my academic studies.”

Rachel, Year 12 Student

“We both decided to move to another local school to do our A Levels. It quickly became apparent that the support we received at YGCR was far greater than at our new school and we felt that we were often expected to complete work with very little guidance. Leaving YGCR made us realise how good things actually were there and we both decided to return after Christmas of Year 12. This was difficult but the support and help we received from the teachers we knew was excellent and helped us to settle back in quickly and with little fuss. We are glad that we decided to come back!”

Hannah and Tia, Year 13 Students

“I chose to return to the 6th form at YGCR because they offered a wide range of courses that met my needs for university courses. Another thing that I felt was invaluable was the fact that the teachers knew me and so the learning environment was comfortable for me from the very first day in Year 12. I continue to have numerous opportunities to be part of a variety of extra-curricular activities such as the school Senedd and the yearly production. These, alongside my academic achievements definitely enhanced my UCAS application.”

Reeve, Year 13 Student



BEHAVIOUR & APPEARANCE

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

As a Sixth Form student you are inevitably a role model for the younger pupils in the School. They look up to Sixth Former students and copy your behaviour and appearance. As part of a school based Sixth Form, high standards of behaviour and appearance are expected: **Sixth Form students set the standard for the rest of the school.**

The Sixth Form has always worked through mutual co-operation and consent. Having made the choice to stay at Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda after Year 11 we expect students to work with us to uphold the traditions and ethos of the Sixth Form, which has made it so successful over the years.

We hope that by joining the Sixth Form you will contribute positively to the promotion of a culture of mutual respect and want to be a role model for others within the school community. The Sixth Form dress code aims to promote smartness and confidence and is similar to what would be expected if you were in employment in a business situation. Students must adhere to the school's dress code at all times.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

- White blouse/shirt.
- Official Sixth Form Tie.
- Official Sixth Form V neck school jumper or cardigan with the **badge woven into it.**
- White polo shirt (summer term only), with **badge woven into it.**
- Plain A line or pleated black skirt. No miniskirts.
- Black trousers. No jeans, leggings, or linen trousers.
- Black plain shoes. No trainers, boots or high heels.
- No multi-coloured coats, motifs or logos.
- For Sports' Courses the specialised kit should be worn for practical sessions.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND MOBILE PHONES

Students are permitted to bring electronic devices to school, i.e. lap-top, tablet, iPod and mobile phone under the following conditions:

- Mobile phones that play music or equipment to be used only in the sixth form area/café/refectory.
- The school does not assume responsibility for any theft or damage to these items.



ATTENDANCE & ABSENCE

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

The most significant contribution to your progress on any Sixth Form course will be your attendance. If a student is to achieve to the best of their ability, they must ensure a high level of attendance. A high level of attendance reflects commitment and maximises opportunities for educational achievement. At Advanced Level missing lessons can put students at a serious disadvantage.

Routine medical, dental and optician appointments should be made out of school hours and certainly not when you have timetabled lessons. We are willing to give you leave of absence for your driving test, but driving lessons should NOT be booked during school hours.

If attendance falls below 80% in any subject you should note that you may not be entered for the relevant public examination.

Continued absence will usually result in you being asked to leave the Sixth Form. In case of absence, the following steps should be followed:

- You must contact the school before 10a.m. on the first day of any absence if you cannot attend through illness or for any other reason (either by phone or the Classcharts app). If no contact is made the school will contact your parents / guardians.
- When a student is absent from school, they are expected to bring a note of explanation from the in parents upon their return and give it to their Class Tutor.
- If we become concerned about attendance / punctuality, we shall contact your parents / guardians.

You are not to absent yourself under any circumstances. If you are ill in school, report to the receptionist who will contact the Sixth Form Leadership Team.

LEAVING THE SCHOOL SITE

Although Sixth Form students are allowed to leave the school site, students should aim to stay in school for their working day in order to build up independent study habits. Non-contact time should be spent in private study at school. When leaving the school premises it is of the utmost importance that you sign out using the Sixth Form register in Reception. **These above measures are in place, as the School has a legal responsibility to know where you are during the school day. Any unauthorised absence from lessons without the prior consent of a teacher will be considered "truanting".**

LATENESS

If you are late and registration has closed, you should report to Reception where you will be registered as late in the Sixth Form register. If you persistently fail to arrive on time we will contact your parents. If continued lateness affects your Sixth Form learning experience, you may well be asked to leave the Sixth Form.



HOLIDAYS

Advanced Level study is demanding and it requires a substantial amount of work and effort. It is therefore not appropriate to take holidays during term time. You have volunteered to stay in full-time education and you have 13 weeks' vacation time allocated. If absence is unavoidable then your parents will need to complete the school's official Holiday Absence Form available from the Headteacher's Secretary well in advance to allow consideration of the request.

PAID EMPLOYMENT

Paid employment gives you many opportunities to work with other people and take responsibility as well as affording you the measure of independence an income brings. However, **DO NOT TAKE ON TOO MUCH** and prioritise your academic work. **Please bearing in mind that you are on a FULLTIME course already and that you will need to study in the evenings.** Too much paid part-time employment can affect your studies and is often a reason why students perform poorly in their external examinations.





EMA (EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE) Welsh Government

The EMA is available to students in Years 12 and 13. It is a weekly payment of £30, depending on household income. Applying for EMA is quick and easy. Forms will be available from March 2023.

You can get an application from:

- www.studentfinancewales.co.uk
- your school or college
- your local Jobs and Benefits Office.

Whether you submit a paper application or apply on-line, you must ensure that you apply to **EMA Wales** and not EMA England. You can find a link to EMA Wales at www.studentfinancewales.co.uk.

If you are entitled to an allowance, you will be notified by EMA Wales how much to expect each week. Payments will be made fortnightly directly into the student's personal bank account.

The school is responsible for formulating the specific conditions you must meet in order to be eligible for payments. The conditions include attendance targets as well as specific targets about your responsibilities as a member of the Sixth Form. Further information about the school's specific conditions will be made available in September by the Sixth Form Leadership Team.

The EMA award is regulated by the Welsh Government; the school simply administers the system by monitoring attendance and by passing this information on to the WG. You are welcome to contact the Sixth Form Leadership Team concerning any initial queries regarding the EMA system or process.

Note: This allowance should not be confused with the Local Authority Maintenance Allowance, which is separate and remains available; students can apply for both.



THE UCAS PROCESS

Students hoping to go to university begin the UCAS process in Year 12. Following the AS Level examination period, representatives of the universities visit the school to discuss available options and to assist students with how to complete UCAS forms correctly. University applications are completed online through the UCAS system, and the Sixth Form Leadership Team will assist students with their applications and train them how to use the system during this time. Students should aim to complete their UCAS forms by the first half term in Year 13, to ensure that all forms reach UCAS early. We aim to finish the process by the end of November.

In addition, the school organizes a Higher Education evening during the spring term to explain to parents the process of applying to Higher Education institutions. For those students who are looking at access to employment, the school works closely with Careers' Wales and offers guidance and advice to students every step of the way.

The above information is merely an outline of one possible process. The school is committed to guiding each student in negotiating the different directions that are too numerous to discuss in this prospectus. You will be provided with further information to suit your individual needs during your time in the Sixth Form.

Please visit www.UCAS.com for information regarding UCAS Tariff Points Table. The UCAS Tariff is a means of allocating points to post-16 qualifications used for entry to higher education.

FINANCIAL PROVISION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Student Finance Wales

Student Finance Wales is the body that organises and disseminates all information about funding for Higher Education study. All details can be found at www.studentfinancewales.co.uk.

In addition, the school usually hosts a Higher Education evening during the Spring term of each year to outline the finance available to students wishing to go on to Higher Education. If you have any immediate questions please do not hesitate to contact the Sixth Form Leadership Team.



POST-16 QUALIFICATIONS & COURSES

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

- We offer a very wide range of GCE Advanced (A Level) subjects, 2-year courses, with the option for a single year's study for GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS Level). The AS Level qualification is equivalent to half the A Level course.
- The Level 3 Vocational courses that we offer can be studied as a qualification equivalent to either **2 A Level** (for a BTEC **Diploma**) or **1 A Level** (for a Level 3 BTEC **Subsidiary Diploma**).
- In addition to GCE AS/A Level and Vocational Courses, **every student will work towards the post-16 Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate)**.
- To ensure the best possible option choices, post-16 provision is available to you both here at our school, and also by working in partnerships with outside providers. 'CYFLEOEDD' is the partnership of the four Welsh medium schools in RCT, and 'Cwm Olwg' is a specific partnership between Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda and Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg.

Qualification	Definition
BTEC / IVET	These Vocational Qualifications are delivered with a greater focus on the practical aspects . Courses are continuously assessed over the two years and some do not require students to sit examinations. Universities & Colleges fully accept these qualifications.
A Level (A) or AS Level (AS)	The traditional academic form of study at Sixth Form in which students are assessed via external examinations . Candidates can achieve grades from A*-E. GCE A Levels are designed as 2-year full-time courses of study. They are based on modular units. In Year 12 you will study either AS Level and/or vocational courses. In Year 13 you can continue to study the majority of courses to full A Level standard and/or change and study different AS Level courses*.
Applied AS / A Level	GCE subjects that are based on modular units but with a greater coursework based content
Welsh Baccalaureate	Every student returning to the Sixth form will study towards the Post-16 Welsh Baccalaureate.

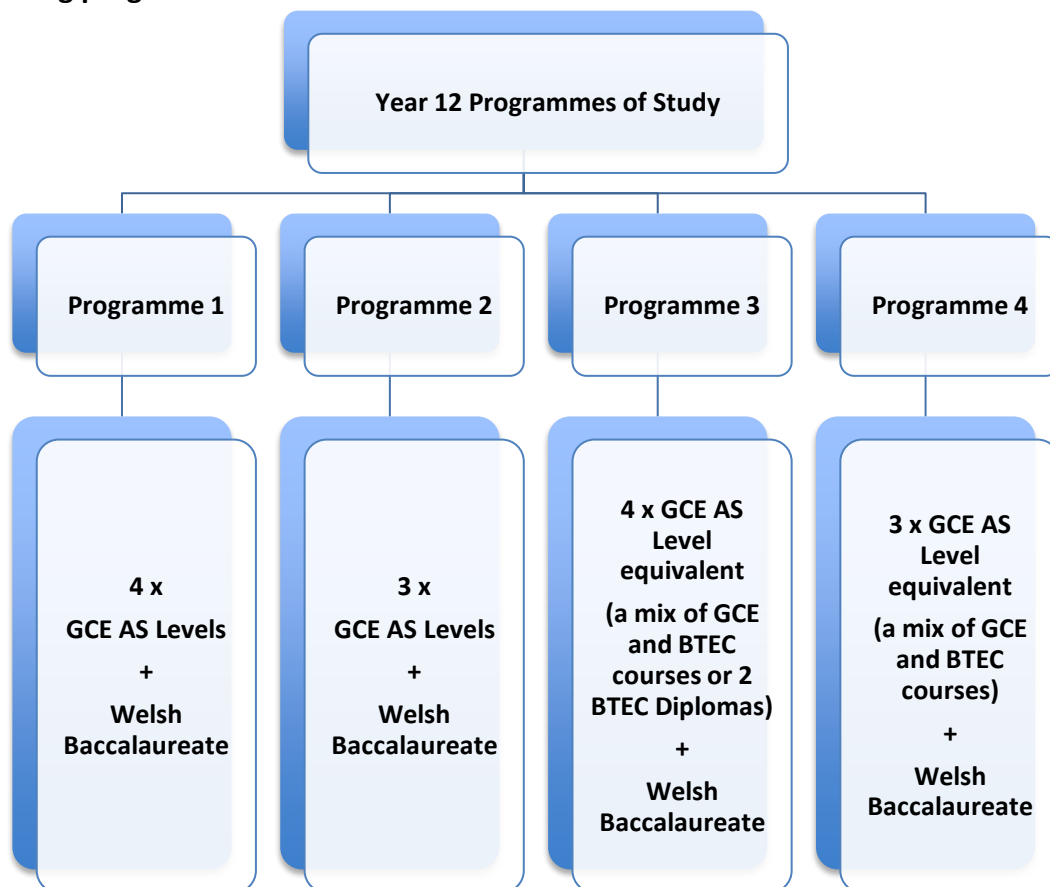
** Even though it is possible for a student to complete an AS Level course without necessarily continuing to study the qualification to A Level, students should consider their options carefully, as the vast majority of Universities ask for at least two full GCE A Level qualifications for admission to university.*



PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

Students must choose a “Programme of Study” for their Sixth Form education, from one of the following programmes:



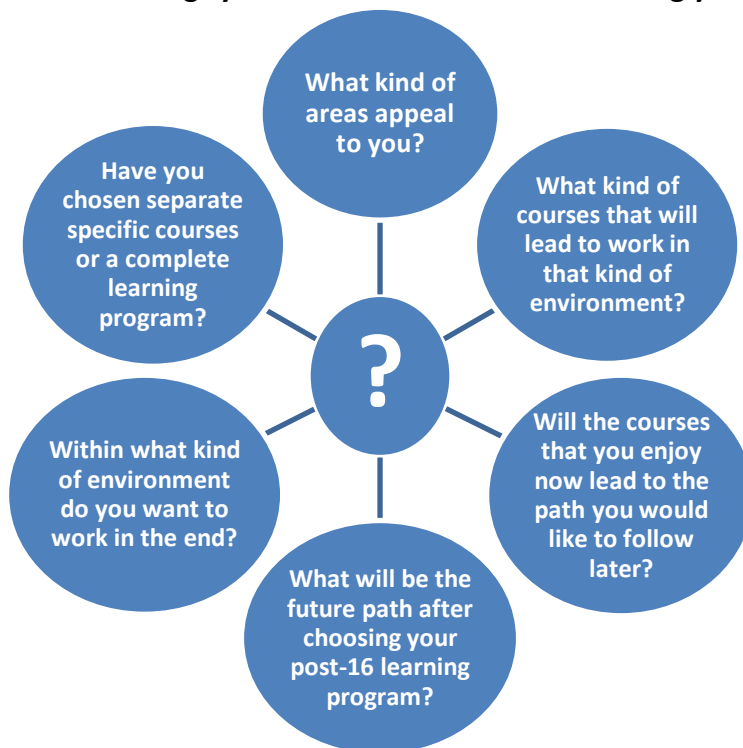
- To create a Programme of Study students choose three or four subjects (or 1 CACHE course) from the Post-16 Curriculum Options list. Students may take a combination of GCE or BTEC/IVET courses.
- Students opting for 4 AS Level qualifications (Programme 1) or 4 AS Level equivalent qualifications (Programme 3) will only be allowed to do so following exceptional GCSE / Level 2 grades, and with the explicit permission of the KS5 Progress Leader
- Students are required to study the Welsh Baccalaureate in the Sixth Form as part of their Programme of Study (with the exception of those opting for 2 BTEC Diplomas in Sports and Uniformed Services).



MAKING MEASURED DECISIONS

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

There are several things you should consider before making your decisions:



Try to be open and honest when thinking about your answers! Remember you may have a group of close and good friends – but you are all different individuals and not all courses will be suitable for everyone. Enjoy choosing what is right for you.

The important thing is to choose wisely. Discuss with your teachers, KS5 Progress Leader as well as your Head of Year and KS4 Progress Leader who can give you honest advice.

The final decisions are made for the combination of courses in discussion with the student, parents and the Senior Leadership Team, in the period following the publication of GCSE results. A thorough Induction programme at the beginning of the academic year will also take place to assist students in choosing a combination of suitable subjects for study. Students will have the option to alter their pathways if deemed appropriate in this initial period.

Various combinations of subjects are possible. The general usefulness of each combination does, however, need to be considered in the light of opportunities beyond the Sixth Form, in employment and higher education. For example, if you wish to study Medicine at University you must study Chemistry at A Level. Use University websites to research courses you are interested in to discover which A Levels are required. If you have any problems, or questions, about the combination of subjects you wish to study, you can discuss the options available to you with the KS5 Leadership Team.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR OPTIONS & JARGON BUSTER

A Level	A two-year full-time course of study assessed by modular units
Applied A Level	AS / A Level subjects with a greater coursework based course content
AS Level	The first year of a two-year full-time A Level course
BTEC / IVET	Courses with a vocational content and less external examinations
Cwm Olwg	The partnership between Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhondda and Ysgol Gyfun Garth Olwg
GCE	General Certificate of Education. AS / A Level courses with course content largely assessed via external examinations
Key Stage 5 (KS5)	Post-16 stage of learning in a secondary school
Learning Pathway	An individual educational pathway chosen by the learner to meet his or her own individual needs
Level 3 Qualification	A completed full A Level (Grade A*-E) or a vocational equivalent
Programme of Study	A selection of subjects chosen by the student to study in order to create an individual post-16 study package
Sixth Form	The KS5 learning community at the school
Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate)	An overarching qualification adding breadth and depth to post-16 education in Wales
Year 12	The first Year of the Sixth Form / KS5
Year 13	The second Year of the Sixth Form / KS5



ADVANCED SKILLS BACCALAUREATE WALES



**Bagloriaeth Sgiliau
Cymru Uwch**
Advanced Skills
Baccalaureate Wales

Course length:
2 years

Course description:

The Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales has changed and will be introduced in its new improved form from September 2023.

The Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales (Level 3) is an innovative qualification that promotes learning inside and outside of the classroom, providing learners with opportunities to select their own areas of study whilst advancing their skills of **Planning and Organisation; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Creativity and Innovation; and Personal Effectiveness (the 'Integral Skills')**.

Building on their achievements at level 2, the qualification helps learners develop complex skills, attributes and behaviours and provides experiences which enable them to be better prepared for their future destination, whether higher education, apprenticeships, training or employment.

The qualification is primarily designed for learners aged 16-19 who are following level 3 programmes of study, such as a combination of A levels and vocational qualifications.

It has a focus on applied learning, i.e., acquiring and applying knowledge, skills and understanding through purposeful tasks set in contexts that are relevant and current and that encourage learners to participate in critical and civil engagement, and to consider their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

Learners will develop and use these skills, and the skills will be assessed, by completing three “projects”:

- Global Community Project
- Future Destinations Project
- Individual Project (topic is selected by each individual student).

How is the qualification graded?

The qualification is graded A*-E.

What could the qualification lead to?

The skills and behaviours developed through completion of the Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales provides a suitable foundation for the study of a range of higher education courses, progression to the next level of vocational qualifications or employment.

For further information please refer to the WJEC website at <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/advanced-skills-baccalaureate-wales/>



POST-16 CURRICULUM OPTIONS

2023 - 25

AT YSGOL GYFUN CWM RHONDDA

Subject		Subject	
Physical Education	GCE	Physics	GCE
L3 Sport, Fitness and Personal Training (x2 A Level equivalent)	BTEC	L3 Uniformed Services (x2 A Level equivalent)	BTEC
Business Studies	GCE	L3 Uniformed Services (x1 A Level equivalent)	BTEC
Biology	GCE		
Art and Design	GCE	L3 Medical Science	IVET
Textiles	GCE	History	GCE
Chemistry	GCE	Health and Social Care	GCE
Music	GCE	Maths	GCE
Computer Science	GCE	Further Maths	GCE
Media Studies	GCE	English(Literature)	GCE
Sociology	GCE	Digital Technology	GCE
Geography	GCE	Welsh	GCE
Drama and Theatr studies	GCE	Photography	GCE
Skills challenge certificate	GCE		

In February 2023, pupils will be invited to make their initial choices as the first part of the options process

Please note: courses will only be available if a sufficient number of students enrol, making courses viable. **The Headteacher's decision in this regard is final.**

