KS5 | Curriculum
Product Design

THE WALDERSLADE & GREENACRE SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

Qualification type / Exam Board

A-level / AQA

What will I learn about?

Do you enjoy being creative, solving problems and turning your ideas into real products?

This creative and thought-provoking qualification gives students the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in a number of careers. Especially those in the creative industries.

They will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design and technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put their learning in to practice by producing prototypes of their choice.

Students will gain a real understanding of what it means to be a designer, alongside the knowledge and skills sought by higher education and employers.

How is my work assessed?

Assessment	Weighting	Details
Paper 1: Technical principles	30%	2-hour 30-minute written exam involving a mixture of short answer and extended response. 120 Marks
Paper 2: Designing and making principles	20%	1-hour 30-minute written exam involving a mixture of short answer and extended response questions. 80 Marks Section A: Product Analysis: 30 marks Up to 6 short answer questions based on visual stimulus of product(s). Section B: Commercial manufacture: 50 marks Mixture of short and extended response questions
Non-exam assessment (NEA)	50%	Substantial design and make project. Written or digital design portfolio and photographic evidence of final prototype. 100 Marks

What should I consider before starting this subject?

- An interest in designing, developing and manufacturing products to solve real-world problems.
- Enjoyment of creative thinking, problem-solving and practical activities.
- A willingness to develop skills in CAD, laser cutting, 3D printing and traditional workshop techniques.
- Confidence in working independently, researching ideas and experimenting with different materials and processes.
- An understanding that the course combines practical work with technical theory, including some mathematical and scientific principles.
- Good organisation and time management skills, as 50% of the qualification involves an independent design-and-make project.

Why is this course useful and what might it lead to?

- Develops valuable transferable skills, including creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking and project management.
- Provides practical experience in designing, developing and manufacturing innovative products.
- Builds knowledge of modern technologies, sustainable design and industrial manufacturing processes.
- Prepares students for university courses and degree apprenticeships in Product Design, Engineering, Architecture and other creative or technical fields.
- Supports careers in Industrial Design, Automotive Design, Interior Design, Furniture Design, CAD and Product Development.
- Encourages independent thinking, innovation and the ability to respond to real-world design challenges.

Entry requirements

- Grade 4 or above in English and Maths.
- GCSE Design & Technology, Engineering or a related subject is desirable but not essential.
- Good mathematical skills and an interest in applying scientific and technical knowledge.
- A strong interest in designing, making and developing creative solutions.

Where can I find more information?

- AQA Course overview
- Course Specification
- Speak to our school's D&T department or sixth-form subject teachers.
- Visit university websites or UCAS to explore related degree courses and career pathways.