



**CREATIVE, DIGITAL & PERFORMING ARTS
ACADEMY**

POST 16 OPTION BOOKLET



The Post-16 Curriculum - 2026 to 2028

An Introduction

Dear students

As a regional academy of excellence for the teaching of creative, digital and performing arts, Birmingham Ormiston Academy (BOA) combines the academic and vocational to provide unrivalled opportunities for its students to work alongside industry professionals.

In applying to BOA to study on one of our specialist pathways, you have already made an important decision about your future.

We aim to develop students academically and vocationally, as well as morally and socially so that they leave the academy as creative, cooperative and responsible young people who will have developed resilience and drive for learning within the arts and related technologies.

We believe that these skills, coupled with relevant academic and vocational qualifications, prepare our students to go onto further and higher education, as well as into the world of work, with the ability to positively contribute to society.

BOA will provide a range of unique learning experiences and opportunities that will prepare its students for both education and employment.

The curriculum is designed to create a learning pathway that meets the aspirations and talents of the individual, and blends the traditional with the professional and work-based vocational.

For some of our Post-16 students, the BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma is their chosen focus for Year 12 and Year 13. Alternatively, a number of Post-16 students choose to blend the BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma with one or more A' Level qualifications. For other students, the BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma sits alongside the development of literacy and numeracy, and the pass rate at BOA for GCSE retake subjects is excellent.

Overall, the choices you make over the coming months as part of this process will shape your experience during the next two years of your time at BOA and will be of vital importance when considering your progression on to further education and the world of work. We are confident that you will leave BOA as a resilient, confident young adult who possesses transferable skills and the personal characteristics required to contribute positively to the wider community.

I hope that this booklet is helpful to you when making the choices about your future.



Mr A Chattaway
Principal

The Post-16 Curriculum at BOA

The Specialisms:

Vocational Qualifications (BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma)

The BTEC is a specialist vocational qualification highly valued by industry and higher education. It encourages and stimulates students' achievement through practical learning and forms of assessment based on applied knowledge and understanding of the relevant subject area. BTEC courses provide considerable opportunities for teamwork and in-depth study based on specialist activities. Since September 2016, some of the BTEC National Level 3 qualifications have included both internally-assessed units and externally-assessed units

Vocational courses that underpin the specialist pathways at BOA provide experiences and education relevant to working life. You will develop your knowledge, understanding and skills across a broad vocational area, and you will also gain experience of work in that area. BTEC courses are assessed mainly through evidence collated in portfolios but externally-marked assessments also contribute significantly.

The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma is equivalent to three A' level qualifications.

Students receive 14 hours of timetabled lessons for the BTEC qualification, in addition to extra-curricular activities, rehearsal time and showcases. Students will also be directed to complete a number of independent learning tasks ahead of their weekly lessons (see below).

Independent Learning

All qualifications at Post-16 require students to complete independent learning tasks in support of the lesson activities and associated assessments. Independent learning tasks should be completed during 'free periods' and also from home. Students will be guided to carry out up to 5 hours of independent learning for their BTEC Level 3 qualification per week, with tasks set in advance of the week's lessons.

The specialist pathways on offer at BOA for September 2025 are as follows:

Creative Arts

- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Art & Design

Digital Arts

- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Games Art & Design
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Social Media Design, Marketing and Radio Podcasting

Performing Arts

- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts Practice: Acting
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts Practice: Dance
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Music
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Music Technology
- BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts Practice: Musical Theatre

Additional subjects:

A' Levels

(General Certificate of Education: Advanced Level)

A' Level courses are offered in addition to the BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma. As a result, students who opt to take an A' Level qualification are – in effect – studying an equivalent of either four or five A' Level subjects.

A' Level subjects are delivered on 5 hours of timetabled lessons per week, as well as up to 5 hours of independent learning activities.

Entry requirements for an A' Level subject:

- BOA expects all students who wish to study an additional A' Level subject to have a strong academic profile, preferably having secured 5 'strong passes' at Key Stage 4.
- Students who wish to study an additional A' Level subject must have achieved a Grade 6 (and ideally above) at Key Stage 4 in the subject they wish to study (or in a similar or related subject), although we require Grade 7s for A' Levels in Environmental Science and mathematics.

NB: Please note that we have set these expectations as a guide but we consider all requests to study additional A' Level subjects on an individual basis.

At BOA, we offer a small range of A' Level subjects that Post-16 students can opt to take in addition to their BTEC qualification. BOA offers the following A' Level subjects:

Qualification and Examination Board:	Entry requirements:
A' Level English Literature (OCR)	Grade 6 in GCSE English Literature
A' Level Environmental Science (AQA)	Grades 7,7 in GCSE Combined Science (or similar)
A' Level Fine Art (AQA)	Grade 6 in GCSE Fine Art (or similar)
A' Level Geography (AQA)	Grade 6 in GCSE Geography
A' Level History (AQA)	Grade 6 in GCSE History
A' Level Maths (Pearson Edexcel)	Grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics
A' Level Media Studies (EDUQAS)	Grade 6 in GCSE Media Studies (or similar)

The Compulsory Subjects:

GCSE retake examinations in GCSE English and GCSE Mathematics (General Certificate of Secondary Education)

The Department for Education expects students to achieve a 'standard pass' or 'good pass' in both GCSE English Language and GCSE Mathematics, and we passionately believe that students should want to pass these subjects. Institutions of Higher Education and employers place great value on these subjects, and it is important for all to be literate and numerate. Students receive 3 hours of timetabled lessons per GCSE retake subject over the course of each academic week, as well as independent learning activities.

GCSE English Language (AQA GCSE English Language: Specification 8700) and GCSE Mathematics (Pearson Edexcel GCSE Mathematics: Specification 1MA1)

Students who do not achieve a *standard* pass (Grade 4) in GCSE English Language and/or GCSE Mathematics are required to re-sit the subject until they gain a Grade 4 or above.

- For students who studied at BOA during Key Stage 4, the first retake opportunity is November each year.
- For students who join BOA as a Year 12 student in September, the first retake opportunity is June each year.

Assessment by Subject

The subject descriptions in the following table indicate the methods of assessment for all subjects on offer at BOA:

BTEC		
Subject	Assessed by external assessors	Internal assessment
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Art & Design	40%	60%
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Games Art Design	-	100%
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Music	-	100%
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Music Technology	40%	60%
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts Practice: Acting	-	100%
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts Practice: Dance	-	100%
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Performing Arts Practice: Musical Theatre	-	100%
BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Social Media Design, Marketing and Radio Podcasting	-	100%

BTEC UCAS Points:

The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma is awarded a maximum of 168 UCAS points, which is equivalent to 3 A* grades at A' Level. 168 UCAS points equates to the top grade of the BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma: Distinction*, Distinction*, Distinction* (or D*D*D*).

A' Level		
Subject	Assessed by external examination	Non-exam assessment
A' Level English Literature	80%	20%
A' Level Environmental Science	100%	-
A' Level Fine Art	40%	60%
A' Level Geography	80%	20%
A' Level History	80%	20%
A' Level Mathematics	100%	-
A' Level Media Studies	70%	30%

A' Level UCAS Points:

Students who take an additional A' Level subject alongside the BTEC qualification can achieve the following UCAS points:

Grade A* = 56 UCAS Points / Grade A = 48 UCAS Points / Grade B = 40 UCAS Points / Grade C = 32 UCAS Points / Grade D = 24 UCAS Points / Grade E = 16 UCAS Points

Higher Education Average UCAS Entry Points:

According to reports from UCAS, the average course entry requirement across higher education courses is 120 UCAS points, which equates to Grades BBB at A' Level. In terms of the BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma, a DDD (Distinction, Distinction, Distinction) grade equates to 144 UCAS points.

NB: It is important to note that the entry requirements for higher education courses vary across institutions. It is important to look at the institutions that interests you to gain an understanding of their entry requirements, which will help you to make your Post-16 choices.

Making your choices

At BOA, we offer a small suite of A' Level qualifications for students to take alongside their BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma.

A' Level qualifications are organised into two timetable blocks, as follows:

Block A	Block B
English Literature Geography History Media Studies GCSE English Language GCSE Mathematics	Fine Art English Literature Environmental Science Mathematics GCSE English Language GCSE Mathematics

Students can choose up to two additional A' Level qualifications – one from Block A and one from Block B – as long as all entry requirements are met.

Please note: Students who take two additional A' Level qualifications must be aware of the demands on their time as the weekly timetable will consist of **24 hours of lessons per week**, as well as up to 1 hour of compulsory Personal Development Time.

Please note: A' Level qualifications at BOA will only run if the class size is deemed viable. In addition, the placing of subjects in specific timetable blocks is subject to change, depending on the availability of staffing.

Final Advice

1. If your child is interested in studying any A' Level subject alongside their BTEC Level 3 National Diploma, A' level choices will be officially requested and confirmed during the enrolment day at the end of August 2026. This year, we have provisionally set the enrolment date as Friday 21st August 2026.

Course details can be found on the academy's website, using the following link, in the Additional Subjects section on the Post 16 webpage:

<https://www.boa-academy.co.uk/post-16/additional-subjects>

If you have any queries regarding the subjects on offer, please email:

options@boa-academy.co.uk

2. Trial periods for all A' Level courses take place in September 2026, especially for students who cannot decide between the subjects on offer and opt to start studying two additional A' Level qualifications alongside the BTEC Level 3 qualification. Trial periods end with a mini-assessment on the content covered and students will be asked to confirm if they wish to continue with their option subject(s) in October 2026.

