

A Student's Guide to the GCSE in Health and Social Care (Double Award)



What is a GCSE in Health & Social Care?

A GCSE in Health & Social Care is a nationally recognised work-related qualification designed to provide you with a choice of routes into further education or employment. It is made up of three units.

What is a Double Award?

A double award is a qualification equal to two GCSEs - it is twice the size of most GCSEs.

What do I need to know or be able to do before taking the GCSE in Health and Social Care?

You do not need to have studied health or social care before starting the GCSE. It is important that you have a lively and enquiring mind, an interest in health and social care, a willingness to explore new ideas and an ability to communicate your ideas effectively.

Why should I choose this course?

You will:

- gain an understanding of health and social care
- learn about the stages of personal development
- have an opportunity to apply learning in a practical and realistic way
- follow a programme of study that enables progression to further courses and employment in the health and care services
- develop Key Skills which are highly valued by employers and further education
- gain confidence by developing independent learning skills.

Who is the GCSE in Health & Social Care for?

This course will appeal to you if you:

- have a keen interest in the health and social care services and how they operate
- enjoy studying a subject that is relevant to your life and experiences
- want to find out more about health and social care through personal investigation
- are interested in finding out about what affects health
- want to study a course that is active and enjoyable
- want to move on to a related career or further education
- wish to build up a qualification by studying individual units

The structure of the GCSE in Health and Social Care

Unit 1: Health, social care and early years provision

The care industry is split into three areas, health care, social care and early years care. You will look at what each of the services does and how they work together to provide care for different people. You will find out about the many different jobs that are on offer within the care industry and how people must behave in these jobs.

Unit 2: Promoting Health and Well-being

This unit will help you to look after your own health and well-being and understand ways of helping others. There are many things that affect people's health and well-being from a balanced diet and exercise to having an interesting job. You will learn how to recognise poor health and well-being and how to put it right.

Unit 3: Understanding Personal Development and Relationships

As people get older they change. They grow in size, they change physically and they change the way they think and act. You will find out about the different stages and the things that affect growth and development. You will look at different relationships that people have, for example family and how people are changed by the birth of a baby.

How is it graded?

A GCSE in Health & Social Care is a double award so is awarded two grades. The grades will be the summary of your results for each of the three units. These will be reported as A*A* through to GG depending on how well you have done in each of your three units.

What assessments will I do?

During the course you will carry out a number of assignments based on Units 1 and 2. In Unit 2, for example, you will be asked to produce a health plan. The health plan could be for an elderly relative, or a friend who is training for a sports event.

After completing your assignment your teacher will mark your work. During your course you will build up a folder (portfolio) containing your work for Units 1 and 2. This portfolio will count towards your final grade.

As part of your course you will take a written exam paper based on Unit 3, set and marked by Edexcel. The mark for your written exam will also count towards your final grade.

Can I develop my full range of skills by doing this course?

As well as covering aspects of health and social care, you will also develop your Key Skills in the areas of:

- Communication
- Application of Number
- Information Technology
- Problem solving
- Working with others
- Improving own learning and performance

If you take part in a discussion or role play or write a report as part of your course, for example, you will develop your **Communication** Key Skill. Collecting and analysing information is part of the **Application of Number** Key Skill, and if you present this using IT, you are starting to develop your **Information Technology** Key Skill.

What courses or employment can I progress to at the end of my course?

Students gaining a GCSE in Health and Social Care will have access to a range of career and further education opportunities. You will use a variety of skills throughout the course, including collecting, interpreting data, communicating your findings in different ways, and identifying and developing the links between different parts of the subject. These skills are in great demand and are recognised and highly valued by employers and colleges.

The GCSE in Health and Social Care is a good starting point for jobs in the care services such as nursing, social worker, care assistant and working with children. The options open to you depend on the results achieved, entry requirements and your own interests, your teacher will be able to help you decide on the next step.

If you wish to continue studying health and social care in a vocational context, you may consider a Vocational A level in Health and Social Care. You may wish instead to study one of the three related BTEC National courses in Caring, Health Studies or Early Years. Otherwise, you may wish to study an Advanced Subsidiary or Advanced GCE in Psychology or Social Policy. You can then continue your studies in Higher Education on either a BTEC Higher National or degree. There are a large variety of higher education courses that are based around health, and social care.

Further details are available from your school or college