

Ysgol Eirias Year 9 Options January 2026





Welcome to the Year 9 Options booklet

In year 10 all learners begin GCSE courses. This means that you begin to specialise in the subjects that you study in order to follow the ones that you are good at, enjoy and want to study further. Making the right choices is vital here, and this booklet is designed to help you make the right decisions over future study. Use this booklet to discover the different options which exist for you, and to discuss the subjects together with your family to help make the right choices.

Learning is divided into 6 Areas of Learning and Experience, and under the Curriculum for Wales all students are expected to do some study in each area. At Ysgol Eirias we aim for you to get the best possible experience from your learning in all 6 areas.

For all pupils in year 9 choosing your options is a very important process, and great care and thought must be put into this process.

In this booklet there is information about each of the subjects you can choose, as well as information about the compulsory subjects which are referred to as the core subjects. This is to help you choose the right subjects for you.

The deadline for the final choices is February the 5^h.

If you have any questions or need further support please contact your head of year Miss Dinsdale.

History Humanities AOLE



This GCSE in History explores events from local, national and worldwide viewpoints. Allowing you to make enquires across three periods of time.

The three main areas covered are:

Unit 1: Wales in the early to mid-twentieth century 1914-1959
Unit 2: The Black Death: A Case Study in medieval society
Unit 3: The Vikings c.750 - c.1066

The fourth unit builds on skills and content covered in the previous units.

Unit 4: A changing society: focusing on British History

There are two examinations and two pieces of Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) across the two years.

Completed in Year 10

Unit 2: 20% NEA (Black Death)
Unit 3: 30% examination (Vikings)

Completed in Year 11

Unit 1: 30% examination (Welsh History)
Unit 4: 20% NEA (Changing society)

Employers and Universities are looking for people who are: independent thinkers; open minded; disciplined; good at problem solving; able to pick out essential information.

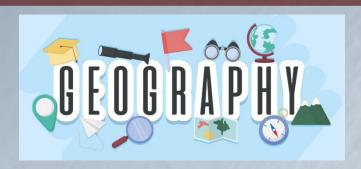
History lends itself to a wide range of careers, here are just some career areas:
Law, Politics and Political research,
Publishing, Journalism, Media, Business,
Public Sector Management & Charity
Work.

For further information please contact Miss S Haslehurst



Geography

Humanities AOLE



GCSE Geography supports learners to become independent, balanced and sympathetic geographers, with an understanding of the changing world. Learners will appreciate the complex and diverse nature of societies and physical landscapes, understanding the interrelationships between people and their environment. Geography will foster a curiosity to explore geographical issues and make sense of the world to work towards a sustainable future.

Unit 1: Our Physical and Human World Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes 30% of qualification

Unit 2: Developing Fieldwork Skills
Non-examination assessment:

fieldwork based 25% of qualification

Unit 3: Our Dynamic and Diverse
World

Written examination: 1 hour 30 minutes

30% of qualification

Unit 4: Sustainable Solutions Non-examination assessment

15% of qualification

Analyst.

For further information please contact Mrs S Marriot



Religious Studies: Religion Philosophy and Ethics

Humanities AOLE



The GCSE in Religious Studies supports learners to develop knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs, values, teachings, practices and philosophical convictions. Learners will explore the big questions of life and existence from a religious and non-religious worldview.

They will study: Key beliefs and teachings, beliefs about life and death and belief in contemporary society from a Christian, Buddhist and non-religious worldview. Students will apply and debate the key beliefs and teachings studied to ethical issues such as humanities relationship to the natural world, human rights, animal rights, medical ethics, freedom of religious expression, use of personal wealth, freedom, justice and crime and punishment.

60% Exam 40% Non exam assessment Many subjects go well with Religious Studies: for example English, History and Geography. Religious Studies can be a useful complement to Science subjects. The skills developed in Religious Studies are particularly useful for careers in Law, Education, Politics, Medicine, Administration or the Media.

For further information please contact Mrs C Davies



Leisure and Tourism

Humanities AOLE



The Tourism industry is one of the world's biggest and fastest growing industries. It provides activities for people to enjoy during their leisure time. You will learn that the industry is made up of many different organisations ranging from Theme Parks and Leisure Centres to National Parks and Cinemas. By studying Tourism you will understand the important part that it plays in today's society. It currently employs over three million people in the UK and is worth £126.9bn to the economy.

Topics covered

The course is made up of three units of study that are completed over the two years of the course. The topics covered include:

- Customer Experience
- The Business of Tourism
- Developing UK Tourist Destinations

The course is assessed through the completion of controlled assessments and an external examination. One of the controlled assessments will require a visit to a tourist attraction such as Alton Towers.

Controlled Assessment - 75% Examination - 25% This course provides a sound understanding of the main areas of Tourism and naturally leads on to the Advanced Travel and Tourism course within the Sixth Form.

Potential career opportunities are varied due to the size and diversity of the industry. These include work within Event Management,

Hospitality, Travel and many more areas.

For further information please contact Mrs K Alexander



Business Studies

Humanities AOLE



The WJEC GCSE Business qualification will develop your understanding of the activities that make a business successful. You will gain an insight into critical issues facing businesses and ways in which these can be solved. You will undertake research to make reasoned judgements and think critically about businesses in your area. You will also reflect on business activity in the context of the environment and sustainability. You will study the impact business has on society. You will explore job market trends and understand different business careers and employment opportunities available to you.

Units 1 and 3 are assessed by written examinations containing both short and extended answers, with some based around business situations. Unit 2 and 4 are non-examined assessments where you will be given an assignment brief to complete. You will undertake research, analyse the data and provide judgements.

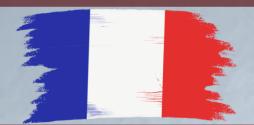
GCSE Business will prepare you for many careers in business and industry. These include in marketing and public relations, law, finance and accounting, human resource management, as well as manufacturing and production. An understanding of the principles of management is applicable to many roles in both the public and private sector and will be valuable for whatever career path you choose.

For further information please contact Mrs T Parkes



French

Languages, Literacy and communication AOLE



The GCSE French Course aims:

To develop the ability to communicate effectively in French
To form a sound base for further study, work and leisure opportunities
To offer insight into French-speaking culture
To encourage positive attitudes towards learning international languages and an appreciation of cultural differences

The GCSE Course further develops the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired in Years 7 - 9

The following themes are covered:

- Language for leisure and wellbeing
 - Language for travel
 - Language for study and work

Oracy (30%) Non Exam
Assessment - conducted by
class teacher and assessed by
WJEC
Reading and Writing (15%) Non
Exam Assessment - conducted
in class and assessed
Listening Exam (20%)
Reading and Writing Exam
(35%)

This is a linear qualification with no tiered entry.

For those interested in using French in the future, opportunities for further study are available through A-Level courses in Years 12/13. The ability to speak an International Language is becoming increasingly valuable in all areas of working life (Banking, Business, Law and Leisure and Tourism, particularly Post-Brexit). A lack of language skills is considered to be one of the main concerns of employers, so if you have a knowledge of French you are in a very strong position within an increasingly competitive global job market - people who can offer French are often in demand, as many organisations are looking for individuals with language skills.

For further information please contact Miss I Williams



German

Languages, Literacy and communication AOLE



The GCSE German Course aims:

To develop the ability to communicate effectively in German
To form a sound base for further study, work and leisure opportunities
To offer insight into German-speaking culture
To encourage positive attitudes towards learning international languages and an appreciation of cultural differences

The GCSE Course further develops the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired in Years 7 - 9

The following themes are covered:

- Language for leisure and wellbeing
 - Language for travel
 - Language for study and work

Oracy (30%) Non Exam
Assessment - conducted by
class teacher and assessed by
WJEC
Reading and Writing (15%) Non
Exam Assessment - conducted
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For further information please contact Mrs B Gordon



Music

Expressive Arts AOLE



Do you play an Instrument or Sing and want to improve your performance skills? Are you already approximately Grade 2-3 standard? Can you read musical notation and enjoy learning about different musical styles and genres?

Then GCSE Music could be the course for you!

All students opting for this subject should be currently learning to play an instrument/sing to a good standard (approximately Grade 2-3) and must be able to read Treble Clef notation.

Taking Music at GCSE level also gives you the opportunity to develop your own creative skills through composition work. In this part of the course, you will compose and notate two pieces; one based on a brief set by the WJEC exam board, the other is a free composition which can be in a style that you choose.

65% of the course is based on practical work and the production of written Reflective Composition Log. Unit 1: Performing will require a minimum of two pieces (approximately Grade 3 standard). Unit 2: Composing, will require 2 compositions including one in response to a brief set by WJEC. The remaining 35% comes from the digital listening exam completed at the end of the course which requires objective responses to a range of questions covering set works and unseen extracts.

A qualification in GCSE
Music gives you the chance
to go on to study Music or
Music Technology at AS/A2
level. This can lead to future
career opportunities in the
field of Performing Arts,
Media Studies, Music
Recording, Event
Management and Teaching.

For further information please contact Miss E Hammerton



Drama

Expressive Arts AOLE



GCSE Drama is a course for students who want to develop their acting and performance skills. It involves both practical and written work and aims to develop your confidence in group work and performance on stage. You must have an interest in both performance and theory of Drama as some of the course requires study of plays and written evaluations. You will be expected to perform in front of an audience regularly.

You will develop in the following areas:

Analysis and study of drama texts, practical skills, responding to stimulus, evaluation of own and others' performance, historical aspects of drama, including the study of theatre practitioners, an enjoyment of live theatre. Topics covered include:
Improvisation and theatrical genres, scripted and devised performance, Theatre
Practitioners, evaluation of own performance, exam on set text.
You may also be involved in Assemblies, Evening Performances and Concerts throughout the course.

Practical element 60% Written element 40%

Unit 1 -Devising Drama- 40% - Creative log, internally assessed practical performance, written evaluation
Unit 2: Performance from a Text- 30%
Practical non-examination assessment
Unit 3: Interpreting Theatre
On-screen examination 30% - Questions requiring objective responses, short and extended
answers, in response to set text and unseen performance

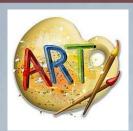
Furthering Drama at A level
Actor
Arts administrator
Community arts worker
Costume designer
Digital marketer
Doctor
Drama therapist
Events manager
Image consultant
Lighting technician
Lawyer
... and many many more

For further information please contact Mrs S Howell



Art - Fine Art

Expressive Arts AOLE



The Fine Art pathway is an exciting aspect of art, craft and design where you explore ideas through personalised projects. This pathway offers a choice of traditional and digital media and processes and involves expressive use of a wide range of materials, techniques and skills, such as drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture and digital work, taught through a range of workshop styled activities.

This qualification will support you to:

- explore the work of artists and designers to help develop your own creative talent
 - develop creative skills so that you can plan, devise and design your own work
 - gain practical skills, becoming increasingly sophisticated and controlled
 - reflect on, evaluate and refine your work
 - explore diversity, identity and culture

Studying Fine Art will extend your creativity and provide a range of transferrable skills which are valuable in all aspects of life and the world of work.

Unit 1: Portfolio Nonexamination assessment 60% of qualification

Unit 2: Externally Set
Assignment 10 hours
sustained focus, plus
preparatory study Nonexamination assessment 40%
of qualification.

This qualification provides a suitable foundation for the study of Art and Design at A-level. It will also provide a satisfying course of study for you if you choose not to progress to study further.

The career possibilities that come through the study of art and design are vast, and include:
Animator, Architect, Cartoonist,
Cinematographer, Digital Artist, Furniture
Designer, Fine Artist, Film researcher, Game
Designer, Interior Designer, Make-up artist,
Product Designer, Photographer, Production
Designer, Sculptor, Special Effects Artist,
Tattoo Artist, Teacher, Theatre Designer, TV

attoo Artist, Teacher, Theatre Designer, T Director, Typographer, Video artist.

For further information please contact Mrs M Millington-Cassidy



Graphic Communication

Expressive Arts AOLE



The Graphic Communication pathway allows you to create visual work to convey information, ideas and emotions using graphic elements to a target audience. It can involve illustration, photography, calligraphy, web design, advertising, packaging, and multimedia and animation design. This offers a choice of using traditional skills alongside digital design. You will have the opportunity to create work in a range of areas from posters to CD covers, T Shirts and even magazines.

This qualification will support you to:

- explore the work of artists and designers to help develop your own creative talent
- develop creative skills so that you can plan, devise and design your own work
 - gain practical skills, becoming increasingly sophisticated and controlled reflect on, evaluate and refine your work
 - explore diversity, identity and culture.

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The career possibilities that come through the study of art and design are vast, and include:Advertising, Animator, Book Designer, Cartoonist, Digital Artist, Exhibition Designer, Graphic Artist, Game Designer, Illustrator and many more.

For further information please contact Mrs H Moore & Mrs M Millington-Cassidy



Textile Design

Expressive Arts AOLE



The Textile Design pathway is a creative course that allows you to make designs and products for woven, knitted, stitched, or printed fabrics and involves an understanding of fibers, yarns, and fabrics. Textile Design encompasses a broad range of materials, techniques and processes, such as surface decoration and embroidery, crochet, knitting, felt making, sewing machine skills, fabric dyes, garment making or interior pieces.

This qualification will support you to:

- explore the work of artists and designers to help develop your own creative talent
- develop creative skills so that you can plan, devise and design your own work
 - gain practical skills, becoming increasingly sophisticated and controlled
 - reflect on, evaluate and refine your work
 - explore diversity, identity and culture

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The career possibilities that come through the study of art and design are vast, and include:-

Costume Designer, Exhibition Designer, Fashion Designer, Interior Designer, Jewellery Designer, Product Designer, Teacher, Theatre Designer, Textile Designer.

For further information please contact Mrs L Kerfoot-Robson & Mrs M Millington Cassidy



Digital Technology

Science and Tech AOLE



Digital technologies are electronic tools, systems, devices and resources that generate, store or process data. It is technology that relies on the use of microprocessors; hence, computers and applications that are dependent on computers such as the Internet, as well as other devices such as video cameras, and mobile devices. Well known applications include social media, email and multimedia. The qualification will allow students to develop their understanding of the range of digital technology systems at use in our society. It will also allow students to explore the ever-evolving nature of digital technology systems and how these systems can be used productively, creatively and safely.

Topics Covered: You will look at a history of digital technology, digital communications and the impact digital technology has had on society as well as more technical aspects of storage and operating systems and data protection. Spreadsheet and desktop publishing software will be used to develop solutions to a range of problems.

Unit 1: The Digital World is a 1 hour 30 minute on-screen examination worth 40% of the qualification.

Unit 2: Digital Practices is a 20 hour NEA worth 40% of the qualification.

Unit 3: Communicating in the Digital World is a 10 hour NEA worth 20% of the qualification.

This course provides a sound understanding of the main areas of information and communication technology and naturally leads on to the Digital Technology course in the Sixth Form. Potential career opportunities are varied due to the fact that almost all organisations require information technology to function efficiently.

For further information please contact Mr A Dawson



Computer Science

Science and Tech AOLE



Computer science integrates well with subjects across the curriculum. It demands both logical discipline and imaginative creativity in the selection and design of algorithms and the writing, testing and debugging of programs; it relies on an understanding of the rules of language at a fundamental level; it encourages an awareness of the management and organisation of computer systems; it extends learners' horizons beyond the school or college environment in the appreciation of the effects of computer science on society and individuals.

What skills will you develop?

- Understand and apply principles and concepts of computer science
 - Develop your practical programming skills
- Develop skills in computational thinking Analyse problems in order to develop and implement strategies to solve them
 - Develop your project management skills
 - Improve your logical and mathematical thinking skills
 - improve your collaboration and team-working skills

Unit 1: Understanding Computer Science (80 marks) is a 1 hour 45 minute on-screen examination worth 50% of the qualification

Unit 2: Computer Programming (80 marks) is a 2 hour on-screen examination based on a pre-released brief worth 50% of the qualification

Computers are everywhere - Whilst there is a huge range of opportunities in the world of computers and programming itself, it is equally true that computers are transforming just about every aspect of life as we know it. Therefore, whether you choose to specialise in computing, or use your computing knowledge to improve your performance in other areas, choosing to improve your computing skills will never be a bad decision.

For further information please contact Mr A Dawson



Product Design

Science and Tech AOLE



Product Design is everywhere. We all use & desire products; they make our lives easier, safer and more fun. On this new course you will:

- * Design products from concept to final production.
- * Consider and investigate the market you are targeting
- * Research, design and make products such as lights, MP3 player docking stations, children's toys & jewellery.
 - * Learn about the materials you can use and how they can be shaped.
- * Analyse a variety of products, looking at how they are designed, trying to guess what the designer was thinking and what innovative features make the product stand out.
 - * Learn valuable project & time management skills.

Unit 2 – Design Project: Contextual Challenge Nonexam assessment 70% of qualification

Unit 1 – Examination 30% of qualification

This course is an excellent foundation for those pupils who wish to pursue either an A Level or an AS Level in 3D Design.

This forms a strong foundation for those who wish to follow a career in either technical or creative professions such as the Building Industry, Engineering, Mechanics, Architecture, Product Design as well as Graphic Design or Stage/Television/Theatre Design.

For further information please contact Mrs B Owen, Mrs H Moore or Mrs M.
Millington-Cassidy



Physical Education (PE)

Health and Wellbeing AOLE



You should only consider GCSE PE if your participation in your PE practical lessons is very good and you have a genuine interest in sport and physical activity. You should also be attending extra-curricular sports clubs, either with school or a local club. Key features include one full course specification with 2 practical activities assessed:-Emphasis is placed on both practical skills and theoretical components. Theoretical focus on:- health, training and exercise; exercise physiology; movement analysis; psychology of sport & physical activity and socio-cultural issues in sport &physical activity. Candidates will also design and undertake an 8-10 week personal fitness programme for their chosen major activity. Candidates will be required to offer 2 activities from a wide range of practical activities included in the course. You can potentially also use activities you do outside school e.g. skiing, kayaking or horse riding.

- The course is assessed through practical and theoretical elements.
- There is a 90-minute digital examination worth 40% of the course.
- 2 externally assessed practical activities worth 20% each.
- An 8-10 week Personal Fitness Programme worth 20%.

Leisure Industry, Sports Science, Teaching, Physiotherapy. BTEC Diploma in Sports Studies GNVQ Leisure OCR Cambridge Technical

For further information please contact Mr N Wilkinson



Health and Social Care

Health and Wellbeing AOLE



The specification is designed to give you an opportunity to extend and apply your understanding and skills related to the development and care of individuals through life from conception and infancy to later adulthood. It is aimed at students who wish to work in the caring profession or care for children and want to take their interest further.

This course promotes an understanding of the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of children linked through the study of the family and community. The course looks at public health and health promotion as well as factors affecting health and well-being across the life cycle. It will offer opportunities for students to develop an understanding of citizenship and understanding of human needs with society.

Unit 1: Exam -Health and Social Care, and Childcare in Wales in the 21st Century Written examination:
40% of qualification

Non-Exam Assessments 60%
There are two NEA's investigating:
Unit 2: Adult Health and Social Care Nonexamination assessment: (30% of
qualification)

Unit 3: Childcare Non-examination assessment: (30% of qualification)

You will develop the following transferable skills: Analysis; Practical skills; Observational skills; Research skills.

These will help you to pursue a career within the Care Industry or the profession of Education. This course is also an excellent foundation if you were to consider Health and Social Care as a 6th form choice at Ysgol Eirias.

For further information please contact Mrs L Kerfoot-Robson



Food and Nutrition

Health and Wellbeing AOLE



This Food and Nutrition course will equip you with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to cook and apply the principles of food science, nutrition and healthy eating. It will encourage you to cook a range of dishes and enable you to make informed decisions about food and nutrition. The topics taught will enable you to make connections between food and nutrition theory and practice and relate to the study of food science.

Unit 1: Principles of Food and Nutrition Digital examination 40% of qualification

Unit 2: Food Investigation Nonexamination assessment: 20% of qualification

Unit 3: Food and Nutrition in Action Non-examination assessment: 40% of qualification.

This qualification builds on previous knowledge and will provide a suitable foundation for the study of Food Science and Nutrition at Level 3.

For further information please contact Miss C Thompson & Mrs M Millington Cassidy



The core subjects

English GCSE

The GCSE English Language and Literature Double Award enables you to appreciate how language connects you to the world around you, to engage with a rich range of texts from different periods and by diverse writers, and to develop and apply your own use of language, through written and verbal communication.

Units 1, 4b and 6 are examined units, together worth 60% of your qualification. Each exam lasts 90 minutes and will consist of low-tariff extract-based questions, an extended essay response and a piece of creative fiction or non-fiction writing. Units 2, 3 and 5 are non-examined assessments, together worth 40% of your qualification. Each unit will consist of two tasks, one that will assess your written response to the relevant text(s) and one that will assess your oracy skills.

Maths GCSE

In GCSE Mathematics and Numeracy, you will build on the knowledge and understanding you have of topics within number, algebra, geometry, and data. You will be taught the key financial aspects of everyday adult life, such as dealing with payslips, bills, and savings. A good understanding of the content of this qualification is the perfect platform to those hoping to follow a STEM career. The course consists of 3 units.

Applications of Num	hematics and Other eracy
Higher tier	Foundation tier
1 hour 45 minutes 80 marks	1 hour 30 minutes 65 marks
Weighting: 30% o	of the qualification
UNIT 2: Non-calculat	or
Higher tier	Foundation tier
1 hour 45 minutes 80 marks	1 hour 30 minutes 65 marks
Weighting: 30% o	of the qualification
JNIT 3: Calculator-al	lowed
Higher tier	Foundation tier
2 hours	1 hour 45 minutes
2 110013	

GCSE Science Double Award

You will study Biology, Chemistry and Physics and apply your knowledge to real world contexts. You will learn to evaluate evidence and use creative thinking to solve problems. Building on your practical skills you will design, conduct and refine investigations using a range of enquiry skills and then analyse and interpret data to draw valid conclusions. You will consider moral, ethical and sustainability issues in science and understand its impact locally and globally.

The course consists of 7 external assessments:

Units 1,2 and 3 examined in June of Year 10 each worth 14% of the overall qualification, Units 4, 5 and 6 examined in May of Year 11 each worth 16% of the overall qualification and Unit 7examined in Jan/ Feb of Year 11 worth 10%.

GCSE Core Cymraeg

You will study three broad themes of 'cynefin', identity and culture. You will learn:
-about the value of the Welsh language socially an in the world of work.
-about its use in Wales and around the world.

-how to understand and use Cymraeg with other in a spontaneous and confident way.
-how to develop skills for life.

-how to respond creatively to literature.

There are two written exams and two speaking assessments, each worth 25% of the overall grade

Jobs advertised in Wales often require the ability to speak Welsh as essential or desirable. If you have a GCSE Core Cymraeg qualification and if the other candidates applying for the post do not have this qualification, you have a head start.



Skills Challenge

The Skill Challenge Certificate (SCC) has 4 elements to this qualification. Each element of the SCC is completed in a variety of subject areas.

The Global Challenge is taught in RS about the raising awareness about extremism (25% coursework). The Community Challenge is completed in PE lessons in response to litter and the environment (25% coursework). The Enterprise Challenge is taught in Y10 skills lessons teach about being aware and ready for the work place (25% coursework) The pupils best 2 challenges are then selected to be contributed to the overall grade. Y11 - Individual Project (IP) is taught in Y11 Skills lessons. (50% coursework)

Agored

This qualification offers students the chance to explore a wide range of beliefs, values, and perspectives that shape how people understand the world. Through engaging discussions and activities, learners will develop critical thinking skills, empathy, and respect for diversity. The course encourages reflection on personal viewpoints while examining global issues, ethical questions, and cultural traditions. This course is 100% coursework.

We hope this booklet has been a useful aid to choosing your options and that you feel well informed about your choices. There will be opportunities to talk to subject teachers at the Moving Forward evening, or you can speak to the named teachers on each page. Alternatively you can also seek help and support from your head of year.

Further support:

Pupils can access the Careers Wales website using their account, which they have set up. They can use the links below for some helpful research into your options choices: Year 8 and 9 subject options | Careers Wales (gov.wales)

There are also the following links to help and support them: Career Matching Quiz - <u>Career Match Quiz (gov.wales)</u> will help them see which careers they could enjoy.

The Buzz Quiz -Buzz Quiz (gov.wales) this is a fun personality test.

A-Z of Careers - <u>Job Information (gov.wales</u>)- general information on jobs, trends & skills etc.



