AQA GCSE
Design & Technology: FAQ

Do I need to be good at drawing?
No, students do not need to be skilled in drawing. We use a range of different communication methods when generating ideas which can include drawing, CAD and physical modelling, we will help students develop these skills during the course so that they are ready for the NEA.

How is the course assessed?
The course is split into two main assessment areas:

NEA - 50% of the final grade

Examination - 50% of the final grade, three areas of study taught through practical work, NEA and theory lessons:

A: Core technical principles
New and emerging technologies
Energy generation and storage
Developments in new materials
Systems approach to designing
Mechanical devices
Materials & their working properties

B: Specialist technical principles
Timbers & Polymers
Selection of materials & components
Forces and stresses
Ecological and social footprint
Sources and origins
Using and working with materials
Stock form, types and sizes
Scales of production
Specialist techniques & processes
Surface treatments and finishes

C: Designing and making
Investigation, primary and secondary
Environmental, social & economic issues
The work of others
Design strategies
Communication of design ideas
Prototype development
Selection of materials and components
Tolerances
Materials management
Specialist tools, equipment, techniques and processes

How is the course delivered?
In Y10 students will undertake a number of small design and make projects that help build skills in preparation for the NEA and certain sections of the examination. A model of 2 lessons in design and make and 1 lesson in theory is followed during Y10. In Y11 students work on their NEA project 2 lessons per week (and also as home study) and 1 lesson in theory. This structure is flexible and will often be modified to suit the demands of the course.

What is the NEA?
This is an independent design project that students carry out themselves. The exam boards issue 3 contextual statements (e.g – Safety in the Home), students pick 1, then begin to investigate, design, make and evaluate. Students will generate approximately 20xA3 sheets of evidence plus 1 physical prototype of their final design idea, manufactured at school in the workshop.

Results?
Historically the department results have always been strong with students out performing their targets year on year.
2017 – 92% A*-B
2018 – 77% A*-B
2019 – 77% 9-6
2020 – 78% 9-6

What progression and career can Design and Technology take me into?
Students can continue their studies in Design and Technology by taking A-Level Product Design, which we offer at Jumeirah College. Students often progress into University courses in Engineering, Product Design, Architecture, Design and the creative fields. The skills developed during studies in Design and Technology, such as project management, critical problem solving, technical inquisition, design and creativity (to name but a few) will accompany a multitude of career paths. Please see the option video for further insight into future career possibilities.