



# Sixth Forms in Partnership Subject Handbook

Subjects available for students  
entering the Colleges' Sixth Form  
in September 2015

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Subjects underlined above will be new specifications leading to a linear A-Level qualification; it will also be possible to take an AS level at the end of Year 12, but this will not count towards the overall A-level result. The remainder are available as one year AS levels, which can then be converted into a full A-Level by a further year of study.

It is *not* possible to convert those subjects indicated as 'AS level only' into A2 levels at the Colleges.

Please note that the inclusion of a subject in this brochure does *NOT* mean that it will appear on the final timetable. Only those subjects with sufficient demand will finally be offered\*. It should also be noted that some combinations of subjects will prove to be impossible to timetable. Subject groupings will be decided on the basis of student interest at this stage. Once the subject groupings have been decided, students will be asked to make their final choice of subjects.

\*Please note that this also applies to A2-Level subjects where insufficient demand is indicated when students are consulted during the course of Year 12.

## INTRODUCTION

You are now at a very important and exciting stage of your education. The choices that you make at this stage will have a substantial influence on the way that your future develops. It is essential that you take time to consider your options and discuss matters fully with your parents and your teachers. This booklet is designed to help you through this process.

Your sixth-form curriculum will be made up by a mixture of subjects, those you have chosen to study and some additional core elements. You should aim for a choice of subjects which will enable you to make the best use of your talents and that will give you a good set of qualifications and provide you with personal satisfaction.

## CHANGES TO A-LEVELS

As a result of changes announced by the UK government, A-Levels are currently being revised in three phases with some subjects changing for first teaching in September 2015, most of the remainder in September 2016, and the rest in September 2017. This is leading to some changes in both content and the way in which they are examined, including the removal of coursework for many subjects. The other major change is that AS examinations taken at the end of the Lower Sixth will no longer count towards the final A-level grade. In some cases specifications have yet to receive approval from the qualifications regulator, and in these cases we are providing generic subject information at this stage. Our advice remains that you should continue to choose four subjects with the expectation that you will take three of these through to full A-levels.

## ARRANGEMENT OF COURSES

You should be aware that whilst the majority of subjects are taught in both schools, there are many that are taught in only one of the Colleges. There are some other points that you should consider before making your choices:

1. Unusual combinations of subjects may prove impossible to timetable. You should therefore be prepared to consider alternative combinations of subjects as a second or third choice.
2. Remember that if only one or two people ask for a certain subject, it may not be economically viable to arrange a class.
3. A-level is far more demanding than GCSE. Remember that it is not starting the course but getting a good grade at the end of it that is important. Be prepared to work hard and listen to the advice from the Staff about your chance of success.

### How do you choose which subjects to study?

- Ask yourself these basic questions:
  1. Which subjects do I most enjoy?
  2. At which subjects am I most successful?
  3. Do I hope to go to university?
  4. What career do I want?
  5. Where do I want to be in ten to fifteen years time?
  6. What other careers might I be interested in? Do take particular note that there are many rewarding careers available to scientists other than being a doctor! University departments often indicate the sorts of careers into which their graduates tend to go; read up about this.
  7. What ambitions have I got?
  8. Do the teachers advise me to take this subject?
- Take time to find out as much as you can about the courses, talk to the staff and talk to students in the present Lower or Upper Sixth.
  1. What sorts of skills do AS level and A2 level require? Are they the same as those required at GCSE level? If not, how do they differ?
  2. How much factual knowledge will be involved and how much analysis and interpretation is required?
  3. Will the subject require good essay-writing technique?

4. What forms of assessment does the course require? Do they match my strengths?
5. How much independent study is required? Is this one of my strengths?
6. Am I prepared to take part in discussions?
7. What form of individual study will be required? Will it be mainly reading or practical assignments?

## **SUMMARY OF ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

All entrants to the Sixth Form must have passed full course GCSEs in at least 5 subjects at Grade C or higher, including Maths and English (not English Literature). It should be noted that these are very much minimum requirements and that they may not sufficiently qualify students to pursue their particular subject choices at AS level. It may, in certain circumstances, be difficult to provide an acceptable course of study at AS level. Any such concerns will be discussed with students and parents during Year 11 and after publication of GCSE results.

It is also normally a requirement in most subjects for a student to have gained a Grade B in that subject, or a similar related subject, in order to study it in the Sixth Form.

# ANCIENT HISTORY

Examination Board: OCR

This subject will **NOT** be changing in September 2015.

## *How is the course structured?*

### **AS**

Candidates study two Ancient History topics on Greek and Roman history. The topics are selected from a range of choices and may vary from year to year.

*Topic 1: Greek History from original sources*

The Delian League to Athenian Empire **Or** Politics and society of Ancient Sparta

*Topic 2: Roman History from original sources*

Cicero and Political Life in Republican Rome **Or** Roman Britain

### **A2**

Candidates study two topics on Greek and Roman history.

*Topic 1 Greek History: Conflict and culture:*

Greece and Persia 499-449BC.

*Topic 2 Roman History: the use and abuse of power:*

The Fall of the Roman Republic 81-31BC.

### **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

Ancient History is suited to all students with an interest in the Ancient World. It also is an excellent complement to History as it involves many of the same skills. You do not need any prior knowledge of Classical Civilisation or Ancient History to start this course, but you may find it particularly interesting if you have some knowledge of History, or the Classical World. Other subjects which would go well with Classics are History, English Literature, Art, Languages, whether Modern or Classical, and Latin.

### **For what kind of student is Ancient History suitable?**

There are no entry requirements, but students should have a genuine interest in the ancient world and an enquiring mind. This subject offers you the opportunity to study the work of historians who shaped the Western tradition of the writing of history. You will have the chance to acquire the skills needed by a historian, through study of a choice of topics in Greek and Roman History from the fifth century B.C. to the second century A.D., looking at significant events, individuals and issues.

### **What skills can I develop during this course?**

The study of Classics will develop your analytical skills, allowing you to examine and evaluate evidence, consider its reliability or bias and compare the relative value of different types of evidence. It will give students an understanding of how societies and civilisations change and have influenced modern society. These skills are easily transferrable to a wide range of other subjects and careers.

### **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

With a qualification in Classics you could go on to Higher Education, or directly into employment. Classics is an excellent preparation for students who wish to progress to further study of the classical world, or to history courses in higher education. Previous students have gone on to study Classical Studies, Archaeology, History (of various periods) as well as many other Humanities subjects. Classics is a subject which is looked on favourably by prospective employers as students of it have a broad knowledge of a different era, and have developed high levels of analytical and evaluation skills.

# ART & DESIGN

Examination Board: WJEC

**This subject WILL be changing in September 2015.**

**How is the course structured?**

**AS**

One unit: Personal Creative Enquiry. This is an extended, exploratory project in response to a set theme and students must integrate critical, practical and theoretical work.

**A2**

Coursework consists of one unit: Personal Investigation, made up of two integrated parts:

- A major in-depth investigative project with outcomes based on themes and subject matter of personal significance to the candidate.
- An extended written element of 1000 words minimum which may include images and texts and must clearly relate to the practical work.

The Externally Set Assignment consists of two parts:

- Supporting and preparatory studies in response to one of the themes set by the exam board. Responses take the form of critical, practical and theoretical preparatory work that will inform the resolution of the ideas.
- A 15 hour period of sustained focus work. The resolution of learners' ideas from the preparatory work must be completed in this period under supervised conditions.

**What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

It is strongly desirable that students taking this course have previously gained a higher grade in GCSE Art & Design. Good skills in research and critical writing are also highly desirable. Skill in drawing is a huge benefit and is a particular area of focus in the new exam board specifications.

**What will I learn on this Advanced level course?**

The main purpose of any course in art, craft and design is to develop your ability to appreciate the visual world, respond in a personal and creative way and to contribute for the benefit of everyone.

**For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

Students studying this course need to be well motivated, organised and able to work independently. It is important that students have genuine interest and enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to engage with new ideas. A determination to develop skills through sustained practise is also required.

**What skills can I develop during this course?**

You will develop: a working knowledge of materials, practices and technology within art; the skills to interpret and convey your ideas and feelings using art, craft and design; your imaginative and creative powers and your experimental, analytical and documenting skills; a specialist vocabulary and the knowledge and understanding of the place of art, craft and design in society.

**What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

The most common path into Higher Education is to undertake a foundation course in Art and Design. This helps students to identify specific areas of interest to prepare for an application to a degree course. Alternatively students may apply to a degree course directly. The range of courses is extremely wide, including: fine art, graphic design and illustration, web design and interactive media, 3D and product design, film and video, theatre design, photography, fashion and many more. Career prospects include architecture, education, fashion, fine art, illustration, interior design, landscape architecture, museum and gallery work, textile design and media communication.

## BIOLOGY

**Examination Board:** No final decision has been made but it is extremely likely that AQA will be selected. If this is **NOT** the case students and parents will be notified early in the Lent term.

**This subject WILL be changing in September 2015.**

### How is the course structured?

Assuming AQA is selected the A-level course will consist of eight modules:

#### AS

The is assessed through two equally weighted examination papers. The modules cover the following concepts:

- Biological molecules
- Cells
- Exchange of substances
- Variation and Genetics

#### A-level

AS content plus:

- Energy transfers (photosynthesis and respiration)
- Responding to changes (nervous and hormonal co-ordination)
- Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- How genes work

A Level will be assessed through three approximately weighted examination papers.

### What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

It is assumed that all candidates will have studied either Core and Additional Science or the three separate sciences at GCSE/IGCSE. However, taking the separate sciences is not a requirement to take AS or A Level Biology.

### For what kind of student is Biology suitable?

As it is a very broad based science, those choosing to study Biology will benefit from possessing: a reasonable level of ability in numeracy and chemistry, the ability to think logically and the ability to assimilate facts and then apply them to unfamiliar situations. Biology is a stand-alone subject but combines well with other Sciences and Mathematics. In the past other popular combinations have included Geography or Physical Education. However Biology's appeal is such that any combination of subjects is acceptable. The key is to be enthusiastic and dedicated; this will be of far more assistance than any particular subject.

### What skills can I develop during this course?

During the course, you will develop the skills previously learnt but also gain practice in thinking logically and systematically. You will continue to develop your practical skills. ***Those who intend to study A Level Biology at Elizabeth College are required to attend a one week residential field course at Slapton, Devon during the last week of the summer term 2016.*** This is an excellent opportunity to expand your knowledge of a wider range of ecosystems and ecological techniques.

### What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Students who have studied A-level Biology have gone on to study for a wide range of degrees including: medicine, dentistry, natural sciences, veterinary science, physiotherapy, sports science, nursing, biochemistry, pharmacology, forestry, agriculture, teaching, psychology, forensic science, and environmental science to name but a few. Many of our former students continue their study beyond A-levels. The skills acquired whilst taking this fascinating subject have helped others to become successful in a huge variety of areas from Law to Accountancy.

# BUSINESS STUDIES

Examination Board: AQA

This subject **WILL** be changing in September 2015.

## How is the course structured?

### AS

Managing the Finance, Marketing, Human Resources and Operations of a Business.

Unit 1: 90 min exam with multiple choice and short answer case study questions. 50% of AS Grade

Unit 2: 90 min exam with extended answer questions based on a Case Study. 50% of AS Grade

### A-level

AS content plus Developing Business Strategies and Managing Change.

Unit1: 2 hr exam with multiple choice and short answer case study questions and two essays. 33.3% of A-level

Unit2: 2 hr exam with extended answer questions based on a Case Study. 33.3 % of A Level

Unit3: 2 hr exam with extended answer questions based on a Case Study. Based on AS content. 33.3 % of A Level

## What will I learn on this course?

AS: This is focused on developing an understanding of the activities a business follows in order to be successful and how these are managed. Activities include: Financial activities: Raising Finance, Cash-flow, Budgeting, Breakeven; HR Activities: Recruitment, Training, Appraisal, Motivation; Marketing Activities: Pricing, Promotion, Distribution and Products; Operational Activities: Efficiency, Quality, Customer Services, Suppliers

A Level: This is focused on developing an understanding of how businesses manage the creation of corporate objectives based on internal and external influences and then implement corporate strategies to achieve these. Strategies include: Financial: Cost minimisation, Investment appraisal, Profit centres; HR: Workforce Planning, Employee relations, Agile structures; Marketing: Market & Product Development, International Marketing; Operations: Scale and resources mix, Innovation, Lean operations; Management: Culture, Change Management and Leadership

## For what kind of student is this course suitable?

The course is designed to develop entrepreneurial decision making. Problem solving and analytical skills will be developed and sound numeracy skills will be needed to carry out key business calculations. Students will need to make justified decisions quickly based on analysis of a wide variety of factors and be able to evaluate the relative influence of these factors on the decisions made.

Information is often in graphical and numerical format so a high degree of numeracy is required.

## What skills can I develop during this course?

Problem solving, Decision making, Information handling, Analysis and Evaluation skills are developed during the course. The course is also highly collaborative therefore team working and leadership skills will also be developed.

## What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Business Studies is a social science and as such can be effectively combined with other social sciences such as Economics, Politics and Geography as well as other more practical careers such as Law, Accountancy and Finance. Many of the skills involved are transferable and the study of one of these subjects will complement and enhance contextual appreciation of the other. Business Studies is widely regarded by universities as being a rigorous subject that develops the application of number, communication, IT skills, independent learning, team working and problem solving skills. It provides, therefore, a sound foundation for the higher study of most academic courses.



# CHEMISTRY

**Examination Board:** To be confirmed once specifications have been accredited by Ofqual.  
**This subject WILL be changing in September 2015.**

## How is the Course Structured?

### AS

The AS syllabus contains similar content to the previous AS specification. The topics studied cover Organic Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry and Physical Chemistry. These topics are examined across two examination papers in the summer of Year 12, each of 90 minutes. The examinations test understanding with a mixture of objective test questions (multiple choice), short answer and extended answer questions.

### A-level

The A-level contains all the content covered above and further topics similar to those studied in the previous specification in Year 13. The topics studied cover Organic Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry and Physical Chemistry. There are three examinations in the summer of Year 13 between 90 and 150 minutes each, totalling 6 hours. Paper 3 is a synoptic paper assessing content over the whole course.

## Practical component

Practical skills are an integral part of studying Chemistry. They are not examined directly but there will be questions about experiments as part of the written papers. Students will be required to undertake practical activities and upon successful completion the student will be awarded a pass. This does not contribute to the overall grade but is quoted separately on a results certificate.

## For what kind of student is Chemistry suitable?

Students of Chemistry should have an interest in, and enjoyment of, this subject; want to find out about how things work in the real world; enjoy applying their minds to solving problems

## What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

You should be familiar with the work that you covered in GCSE/IGCSE Chemistry as this forms the basis for the work at AS level. Your mathematical skills should be of a good standard as 20% of the course is based on these. If you have not studied Chemistry as a separate Science, some extra work may be required over the summer before starting this course.

## What will I learn on this course?

You will build on your GCSE knowledge about atoms and their structures, and develop a wide range of understanding of organic chemistry molecules and their importance in petrochemical and pharmaceutical industries. You will look at the reactions of the elements on the Periodic Table and understand why they happen and the reactions of acids and alkalis. You will understand electrochemistry and batteries/fuel cells and study atmospheric chemistry including the ozone layer, CFCs and which molecules are greenhouse gases.

## What skills will you develop?

You will gain an appreciation of how scientific models are developed and evolved, the applications and implications of Science, the benefits and risks that science brings, and the ways in which society uses science to make decisions. You will also develop practical skills, including making observations, collecting data, analysing experimental results and formulating conclusions.

## What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Chemistry is a rigorous subject that is highly-regarded, opening the doors to many areas of work. You could study Chemistry and build a career in fields as diverse as developing new drugs, or making new materials with interesting properties and uses, or trying to work out how our climate is influenced by man-made pollution. Chemistry is also required for all Medical and Veterinary courses. The skills you will develop in Chemistry are transferable to many other areas and degree courses.

## CLASSICAL GREEK (AS-level only, 2 years)

**NOTE:** *This subject will not be offered during normal timetabled lessons within the blocking scheme, but in extra-curricular time over two years and should not normally be chosen as one of a student's main four subject choices.*

**Examination Board:** OCR

### AS

**Unit 1:** *Unprepared Translation.* This will consist in a passage of Greek prose, a little more difficult than GCSE but not as difficult as A-Level. A defined vocabulary list is issued for this module. There is a heading and the first few lines of the passage are in English.

**Unit 2:** *Verse and Prose Literature.* Candidates will be examined on passages selected from one verse author and one prose author. Approximately 200 lines will be set from each. Questions will examine comprehension, translation, context and literary features. There is also an option of translation of short English sentences into Greek.

### What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

There are no specific requirements for this course although a good linguistic ability is desirable. The first months of the course will be spent gaining a mastery of the language; once this is done, students will embark on studying classical Greek texts.

Ancient Greek is suited to all students with an interest in languages, both ancient and modern. You do not need to have studied Greek or Latin to GCSE. Other subjects which would go well with Greek are Latin, Ancient History, English Literature, Modern Foreign Languages, Mathematics and Classical Civilisation.

### For what kind of student is this course suitable?

Ancient Greek allows students to study the culture of Greece through the original sources in the original language. Ancient Greek is also, like Latin, the root of much of English, and of other European languages, in terms of vocabulary and grammar. It is particularly suited to able linguists who wish to take their study of language to a higher level, and to students who enjoy the process of intellectual challenge.

### What skills can I develop during this course?

The study of Ancient Greek will develop your analytical skills, allowing you to examine and evaluate evidence. It also develops the skills associated with literary appreciation. These are skills which can be transferred into a wide range of other subjects and careers.

# COMPUTER SCIENCE

**Examination Board:** AQA

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## Course Structure

### AS

Paper 1: Problem Solving, Programming and Theory of Computation

50% of AS-Level, on-screen examination

Paper 2: Fundamentals of Data Representation, Computer Systems and Consequences of Computing

50% of AS-Level, written examination

### A2

Paper 1: Problem Solving, Programming and Theory of Computation

40% of A-Level, on-screen examination

Paper 2: Fundamentals of Data Representation, Computer Systems, Databases, Functional Programming and Consequences of Computing

40% of A-Level, on-screen examination

Coursework: 20% of A-Level, internally assessed.

## For what kind of student is this course suitable?

Computing is at the heart of the technological world in which we live. It is not an exaggeration to say that our lives depend upon computer systems and the people who maintain them; without an understanding of computing we are but users, and therefore dependent on others who shape the world technological around us. A fundamental understanding of computing enables students to be not just educated users of technology, but the innovators capable of designing new computers and programs to improve people's quality of life.

## What will I learn on this course?

Computing students learn logical reasoning, algorithmic thinking, design and structured problem solving - all concepts and skills that are valuable well beyond the computing classroom. You will learn to how to break down problems into smaller manageable parts and design algorithms; how to program using procedures, data types, loops and conditional statements; how computers store and process information, including doing sums in binary; different ways of structuring data for use by a computer; how operating systems work; how information is passed around the internet; computer networks; how databases store data and efficient database design.

## What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

This course is very different from ICT and has nothing at all to do with software applications that deal with word processing, spread sheets, graphics packages etc. Because of this, Computing will be taught assuming no previous experience. Success at GCSE in Mathematics and Science will provide a good foundation. Computing goes particularly well alongside subjects like Mathematics, Physics, Design Technology and Business Studies.

## What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

The vast majority of careers in the 21st century will require an understanding of computing. Professionals in every discipline need to understand computing to be globally competitive in their fields. Computational techniques are used in all areas of science and engineering and a foundation in computing will help such subjects at higher education. Studying Computing will prepare a student to study Computer Science at university, to become a professional software developer or to pursue a career in one of many related fields, including Mathematics, Science and Engineering.

## **DANCE (AS Level only)**

Exam Board: **AQA**

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

### **How is the course structured?**

#### **AS**

Unit 1: Understanding Dance: This unit has three aspects which consider the dancer as a performer, the craft of choreography and the significance of dance.

Much of this unit is delivered through practical dance sessions backed up with independent research topics.

Unit 1 is externally assessed through a written paper (1hour 30mins) consisting of short answer and essay questions. It is worth 40% of your AS qualification

Unit 2: Choreography and Performance: This unit also has three aspects, the process of solo choreography, the development of physical and interpretive skills, and the development of performance skills in a duo/trio.

Unit 2 is assessed in a practical examination where you are required to choreograph and perform a solo dance, and perform in a group dance for a visiting moderator. It is worth 60% of your AS qualification.

### **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking the course?**

AS Dance runs as a twilight course, with one long session after school per week. Since the contact time allocated would be less than normal for an AS course, students would be expected to carry out regular research and written assignments as homework.

### **What will I learn on this course?**

You will consider the dancer as performer by studying the demands made in practice and performance on a dancer – both physically and mentally. Through choreography you will gain knowledge and understanding of the constituent features of the dance and their possible relationships. Throughout the course you will study professional repertoire in a variety of dance styles and learn how to make analytical comments in terms of character, qualities, subject matter, interpretation and choreographic intention

By investigation and research you will learn how to use the theoretical aspects of Unit 1 in your own solo choreography as well as by performing as a soloist and in a group.

### **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

It is best suited to students who have a good dance background (in any style), or those who might be attending dance lessons already, outside of school. However, any students who have a keen interest in dance and are willing to work hard may take up this option. It may compliment other artistic 'A' Levels such as Drama, Music, Art and Photography, or add an extra dimension to other less practical courses being studied.

### **What skills can I develop during the course?**

Dance promotes a healthy lifestyle through an awareness of the importance of exercise and training. It develops creativity through individual challenges and collaboration. Analytical awareness and the ability to enjoy dance and other art forms are also nurtured.

### **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

The content allows students to study a subject which can be extended through higher education – such as performing arts, teaching or pure dance training. It also acts as an 'extra' AS level which reflects a creative side to any student applying for higher education or employment.

## **DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY**

### **GRAPHICS & RESISTANT MATERIALS**

Examination Board: AQA

The subject specification will **NOT** be changing in 2015.

#### **How is this course structured?**

##### **AS**

##### **Graphics**

Students will undertake two mini-projects. One will involve blue-sky design and concept models and renderings (previous projects have included an electronic cox for rowing boats and mounted GPS for bikes). The second project will be an architectural study and model for a proposed new build. Each project will have a 20 page electronic portfolio and a finished practical model. The client and user groups for the two AS projects will be provided by the DT department.

##### **Resistant Materials:**

Students will work on two mini-projects. One will involve working with a set user group and enable pupils to produce a chair specifically designed for young children. The second project will involve working with a more commercial client and pupils will design advertising and racking systems for wine display in a commercial environment. Each project will require a 20 page electronic portfolio and a practical outcome.

##### **A2**

Students will select their own area for research and produce a 40 page electronic portfolio and an outcome that encompasses both 2D and 3D designs. It can be a working prototype or a concept model. Areas for study can be very broad and we can usually accommodate any particular student interest. Whilst students in the L6th opt for either a Graphic or Resistant Materials route, both groups will undertake the same theory exam and can choose the type of project and materials that they wish to work in at A2. At both AS and A2 regular deadlines will be set and pupils are expected to spend considerable extra time in the department outside lessons to ensure that they meet these.

Of the six periods per week; four are spent on portfolio and practical work and two periods are given to theory. Pupils will be given regular weekly tests on aspects of theory and a longer test at the end of each half term, in preparation for the exams at the end of the year.

#### **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking the course?**

It is expected and extremely advantageous for pupils to have studied a technology subject at GCSE and to have gained a minimum of a B grade. In exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the Head of Department it may be possible to take this subject without (I)GCSE DT but we would then expect a student to show a high level of aptitude in subjects with a similar skills base such as Art or be able to show a good portfolio of design work. It should be stressed that a student who wishes to do this will be at a disadvantage in terms of theory knowledge and would be advised to read the GCSE texts before undertaking the course. Good drawing skills, experience with design software and excellent time management are all crucial skills.

#### **What will I learn on this course?**

Pupils will have the opportunity to work with a range of graphic materials and complex manufacturing techniques (including 3D printing and laser cutting). The range of software available for students to use is similar to that found in professional Graphic Design studios and we make extensive use of Adobe CS6. Pupils will learn to meet others design needs in terms of: form, function, sustainability and economics. A professional/studio approach is used throughout and pupils will work in a manner similar to design graduates.

The practical and design elements of the course are underpinned with rigorous theory knowledge and pupils should be aware that 50% of the marks at AS are gained in an end of year exam on materials theory and 50% of marks at A2 are based on longer essay based questions.

#### **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

This course is suitable for students who are willing to spend time meeting high design standards and who are likely to want to pursue further studies in: Architecture, Product Design, Industrial Design, Graphic Design and Engineering (although Maths and Physics would be more advantageous for Engineering). It suits people who like spending time; drawing, sketching and problem solving. It is an excellent third/fourth subject when studying Maths/Sciences and often suits those with an interest in engineering. It can also be usefully combined with Art if a student is looking to pursue Arts, Design or Architecture after A levels.

**What skills can I develop during this course?**

Pupils who are successful on this course invariably end up with good time management skills. Use of commercially used software is encouraged and pupils have extended access to the department where they can use the two suites of Macs and Adobe CS6.

**What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

Students can go on to degree courses in Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Product Design, Architecture, and Engineering.

# DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

**Examination Board:** WJEC

**This subject WILL be changing in September 2015.**

## **How is the course structured?**

### **AS**

This consists of one unit: Personal Creative Enquiry. This is an extended, exploratory project in response to a set theme and students must integrate critical, practical and theoretical work.

### **A2**

The coursework unit is made up of two integrated constituent parts:

- A major in-depth investigative project with outcomes based on themes and subject matter of personal significance to the candidate.
- An extended written element of 1000 words minimum, which may include images and texts and must clearly relate to the practical work.

The externally set assignment consists of two parts:

- **Supporting and preparatory studies** in response to one of the themes set by the exam board. Responses take the form of critical, practical and theoretical preparatory work that will inform the resolution of the ideas.
- **A 15 hour period of sustained focus work.** The resolution of learners' ideas from the preparatory work must be completed in this period under supervised conditions.

## **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

It is desirable that students taking this course have previously studied GCSE Art & Design, but consideration will also be given to a student with a portfolio of work that shows a reasonable level of interest in Photography. Good skills in research and critical thinking are also highly desirable.

## **What will I learn on this course?**

The main purpose of any course in art, craft and design is to develop your ability to appreciate the visual world, respond in a personal and creative way and perhaps even contribute for the benefit of everyone. The skills you will develop will be varied. Among them, you will develop a working knowledge of cameras and photographic techniques and lighting. You will develop the skills to interpret and convey your ideas and feelings using photographic imagery. You will develop your imaginative and creative powers and your experimental, analytical and documenting skills. You will also develop a specialist vocabulary and the knowledge and understanding of the place of photography in history and in contemporary society.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

Students studying this course need to be well motivated, organised and able to work independently. It is important that students have genuine interest and enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to engage with new ideas. A determination to develop skills through sustained practice is also required.

## **What skills can I develop during this course?**

Skills developed include: visual communication, creativity, critical and contextual awareness, problem solving and a thorough knowledge of photographic editing and manipulation.

## **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

With a degree, your photography career options increase exponentially since visual artists are needed across many different industries, including advertising, film, television, fashion, geological surveillance, and architecture, but Photography is useful in practically all fields of work and leisure.

# DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

**Examination Board:** Edexcel

**This subject is NOT changing in September 2015.**

## AS

**Unit 1:** This unit introduces students to the content of plays written for the theatre. You will learn how to analyse plays in a variety of ways so that you become familiar with the way written plays can be interpreted for realisation in performance. This internally assessed unit requires students to explore two contrasting play texts, chosen by the centre, in a practical and active way. At least one of the plays must be explored in the light of a recognised theatre practitioner. A video/DVD of one session of the practical work must be made available for use in moderation. A set of Exploration Notes must be submitted.

**Unit 2:** This unit offers students the chance to demonstrate skills in a performance environment. The knowledge and understanding gained during the study of the two plays in Unit 1 can be applied with a view to delivering a performance to an audience.

Students offer either a monologue or a duologue and are also required to contribute to a performance of a professionally published play by a known writer. Students may offer either acting or a design form and must also provide a concept of the interpretation of their chosen roles or designs.

There is no written examination at the end of the AS year.

## A2

**Unit 3:** This unit requires the creation of a unique and original piece of theatre. The knowledge and understanding gained in the AS units can now be applied to a created production. Students will be assessed on both the process of creation and the finished product in the form of a performance to an invited audience.

Students are assessed on the research and development of their work as well as the final performance in front of an identified audience. They are also required to complete an evaluation on both the process and performance of their work.

**Unit 4:** This externally examined written unit requires the detailed study of one set play text and one prescribed historical period of theatrical development. This is usually a Shakespearean production students have seen live during a UK theatre trip. The unit takes the form of a two and a half hour written paper in three sections.

Sections A and B require students to explore one play, from a choice of three set play texts, from the point of view of a director in both an academic and practical way. In Section C a selection must be made of one from a choice of three historic periods of theatre history. A live performance of a play from the chosen period must be experienced and evaluated and a comparison made with the original staging conditions of the play.

## Why study Drama and Theatre Studies?

Drama and Theatre Studies has become a highly respectable A level over the last decade and is valued by universities as a subject connected to both the Arts and the Humanities; courses in Law, History, Social Sciences, Languages and Medicine favour this subject. The balance of practical skills and academic knowledge develops cross-curricular skills that include writing, speaking and the ability to analyse and organise information. It is also a subject that builds confidence and empathy, plus an understanding of ethics and philosophical thought.

## What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

You do not need to have taken GCSE Drama to gain entry to the AS Drama and Theatre Studies course. Students need to be willing to work hard, keen to learn about performing and good at working as part of a creative team.



# ECONOMICS

Examination Board: EDEXCEL

This subject **WILL** be changing in September 2015.

## AS

Students study two themes. In both cases they will be assessed upon a combination of the following.

- Multiple choice questions, which require short supportive answers
- Data response questions broken down into a number of parts
- An extended open response question.

Each theme will be examined for 1½ hours and has an equal weighting towards the AS qualification. .

- **Introduction to Markets and Market Failure.** This looks at how markets work and why they fail. This unit provides students with an introduction to the nature of economics and examines the operation of markets for goods and services. Students also examine the nature of market failure, its causes and possible remedies.
- **The UK Economy – Performance and Policies.** This provides students with an introduction to the key measures of economic performance and the main objectives and instruments of government policy.

## A2

Students may decide to undertake the linear 2 year course and study four themes which are amalgamated within three exams. The exams follow the same format as the AS qualification; however the style of questions will require a higher level of analytical evaluation.

- **Introduction to Markets and Market Failure.** This looks at how markets work and why they fail. This unit provides students with an introduction to the nature of economics and examines the operation of markets for goods and services. Students also examine the nature of market failure, its causes and possible remedies.
- **The UK Economy – Performance and Policies.** This provides students with an introduction to the key measures of economic performance and the main objectives and instruments of government policy.
- **Business Behaviour and the Labour Market.** Here students examine the nature of competition between firms, different market structures (i.e. how competition is affected by the number and size of market participants) and government intervention to promote competition in markets. Students will also be expected to look at the rational that firms are profit maximisers and then challenge this by looking at alternative business objectives
- **A Global Perspective.** This involves the application, analysis and evaluation of economic models in a global context; students are expected to be able to assess policies which might be used to deal with economic problems.

### For what kind of student is this course suitable?

Economics is a social science and as such can be effectively combined with other social sciences such as Business Studies, Politics, Geography and History. Students who may wish to undertake an Economics degree would be advised to consider A-level Maths as one of their choices. Many of the skills involved are transferable and the study of one of these subjects will complement and enhance contextual appreciation of the other.

### What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Economics is widely regarded by university Admission Tutors as being a rigorous subject that develops the application of number, communication, IT skills, independent learning, team working and problem solving skills. It provides, therefore, a sound foundation for the higher study of most academic courses.

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

**Examination Board:** Edexcel. To be confirmed once specifications have been accredited by Ofqual.  
**This subject WILL be changing in September 2015.**

## **How is the course structured?**

### **AS**

Component 1: Unseen Poetry and Drama, two hour examination (60%)

Component 2: Prose, one hour examination (40%)

### **A-level:**

Component 1: Drama, two hour examination (30%)

Component 2: Prose, one hour examination (20%)

Component 3: Poetry, two hours (30%)

Component 4: Coursework (20%)

## **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

Students should demonstrate high levels of competence and commitment to their IGCSE English Literature studies. All the texts are taught in class time, enabling the development of interpersonal skills of discussion, debate and presentation. Students are encouraged to read widely and with discrimination, learning also to consider when texts were written and how they may be read now in comparison to the past.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

Students need a love of literature and a curiosity about language. They need to want to reason, discuss and argue their ideas with other students and be prepared to listen to their ideas sympathetically. Students should enjoy the sharing of responses and value those contributed by others, students and critics alike.

## **What skills can I develop during this course?**

Students will learn sophisticated skills of critical analysis and commentary along with the ability to synthesise their ideas into well-structured and well-considered essays. Exploring responses through discussion and debate are important skills alongside tolerance and appreciation of the multiplicity of meanings generated by texts through time. Students will learn a thorough knowledge of the chosen texts through the many opportunities afforded for personal expression, discussion and opinion.

## **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

This highly regarded subject provides an excellent springboard into courses which value the skills of analysis and synthesis that will be learnt. Apart from the study of English Literature and related courses at university, there are valuable skills acquired at AS and A-Level. Many scientists choose English Literature for the same reasons as lawyers, as a complement to their other studies; they recognise the skills learnt are valuable in developing the abilities to reason and analyse ideas.

# FILM STUDIES

**Examination Board:** WJEC

**This subject will NOT be changing for September 2015.**

## **How is the course structured?**

### **AS**

There are two units, one of which is coursework offering you the chance to look at your own choice of film in detail and to storyboard or produce your own film. For the examination you will study British and American film.

### **A2**

The coursework and examination have the same value. Coursework enables you to pursue film research and to develop a creative project. The examination covers a variety of issues in world cinema.

## **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

There are no particular requirements but a good level of literacy is necessary for you to express your ideas. You need to be enthusiastic about film and prepared to analyse your responses to visual media.

## **What will I learn on this course?**

This course will enable you to:

- Develop your interest and enjoyment in a wide variety of films
- Gain an understanding of the development of the film industry in Britain and America and how it functions today
- Gain an understanding of the specialist language of film criticism
- Learn about the way films work to create meaning and how to articulate your responses to the messages and values represented across a wide variety of films through the study of genre
- Make informed and reasoned analyses of your responses to film
- Develop practical abilities in storyboarding, screenwriting and film-making

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

This course will appeal to you if you:

- Enjoy films across a wide spectrum of tastes and times
- Enjoy expressing your opinions and reasoning your responses to film
- Are prepared to research your ideas through a variety of media
- Have a particular interest in film, media or communication studies

## **What skills can I develop during this course?**

You will:

- Take part in group discussion and make presentations exploring aspects of films studied
- Write analyses of film production, distribution and exhibition and their allied parts
- Research from a variety of sources details about film and the film industry
- Present ideas using DTP or WP facility
- Plan coursework and written assignments along with background reading and film viewing

## **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

Film Studies teaches elements of History, Business Studies and analysis whilst encouraging you to develop your own ideas and the confidence to express them in speech and writing. You may want to specialise at university or link into subjects such as History, Media Studies, or Journalism.

# FRENCH

Examination Board : AQA

This subject will **NOT** be changing in September 2015.

## How is the course structured?

### AS

Unit 1: Listening, Reading and Writing

Candidates study media, popular culture, healthy living, family and relationships.

Unit 2: Speaking (15 minutes)

Stimulus card and conversation on topics.

### A2

Unit 3: Listening, Reading and Writing

Candidates will study 3 topic areas – environment, the multicultural society, contemporary social issues, the work of a film director and a literary author.

Unit 4: Speaking Test (20 minutes)

Stimulus card and conversation on cultural topics.

## What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

You should be attracted by France and interested in acquiring a foreign language. You need to enjoy manipulating French to express yourself and to be curious about how language works. Grade B or above in GCSE French is necessary.

## For what kind of student is this course suitable?

By studying French at A-level, the language starts to come as second nature, you make it part of you and your skill for a lifetime – a lifetime guarantee of stimulating, colourful knowledge which you develop as opportunities come your way! You will discuss and write about current topics in French as well as gaining an insight into your own culture and that of a major European country. Popular sociological themes are covered at AS and Literature at A2. There is a skills unit (reading, writing, listening) as well as a fifteen minute oral. We are planning to do a week of lectures and language immersion at Caen University: you will get all the support you need to fulfil your potential.

Language is for communication in all its forms and you should be, or want to be, able to communicate effectively in speaking and writing. You spend time learning how to do this and you are well supported. It is good to become a person with views and opinions as well as developing an interest in current affairs. You will also be given an understanding of the French speaking world and learn how to translate from one language to the other as well as writing a literary essay.

## What skills will I acquire and develop?

Knowledge of French is the most obvious acquisition, as well as an ability to debate and discuss current issues in a confident manner in a foreign language. You will also develop your analytical skills and be able to research and evaluate information. A greater understanding of your own language as well as other European languages will follow, should you wish to pursue a linguistic career.

## What could I go to do at the end of my course?

With an AS or A2 qualification in French you could on to Higher Education or directly into employment. Businesses today value a language student very highly, particularly in England where language skills are becoming a rarity! There are the obvious professions such as teaching, translating and interpreting but there are many others in industry, law, medicine, marketing or politics. Moreover many of our past linguists have gone on to study other languages at university, such as Arabic, Bulgarian, Russian and Japanese. You will never regret learning a language!

# GEOGRAPHY

**Examination Board:** AQA

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## AS

**Unit 1:** Physical and Human Geography: 'Rivers, floods and management' is the compulsory physical geography section and this is concerned with the role of water in landscape development and its management for human welfare purposes. The optional topic is either 'cold environments' or 'coastal environments'.

'Population change' is the compulsory human geography section and this is concerned with population change and migration in countries at different stages of development as well as in rural and urban areas. The optional topic is 'health issues' or 'energy issues'.

**Unit 2:** Geographical skills based on the fieldwork studied in Unit 1. A variety of skills will be taught in relation to the physical and human core topics, such as the analysis of graphs, maps and photographs. Our residential field course in the autumn term will be in the Lake District in preparation for the fieldwork questions.

## A2

**Unit 3:** Contemporary Geographical Issues: Three topics are studied; Contemporary Conflicts, Weather and Climate and Plate Tectonics. The A2 course will involve more essay writing and extended answers than at AS.

**Unit 4:** Geographical Issue Evaluation exercise: Students will be expected to interpret and analyse data from a range of resources released prior to the examination. They will be expected to write a report which makes recommendations about resolving an issue or making a decision.

### **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

The course builds on themes taught at GCSE but also includes some new topics which are chosen for their relevance to current world issues. There is a compulsory field course, in October in the Lake District, lasting 4 days.

It would be highly desirable for all students taking AS Geography to have studied GCSE Geography, but students without this background of knowledge may be accepted on the course if they are willing to undertake extra reading to supplement the work studied in lessons. Students who do not have GCSE Geography usually under-perform at AS level.

### **For what kind of student is Geography suitable?**

Ideally, students will have well developed literacy and numeracy skills and be interested in local, national and world issues. They will be prepared to research topics from textbooks, magazine publications and websites and must be prepared to present their findings to the group.

### **What skills can I develop during this course?**

The course will provide useful transferable skills such as data collection, analysis of information, ICT, problem solving, written and oral communication and teamwork.

### **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

Geography is considered to be a Science or an Arts subject so it can be linked with History, Religious Studies and English or it can provide a link to the sciences, particularly Biology, Psychology and Physics. Past geographers have also studied Mathematics and Economics with Geography. Employers recognize the valuable skills held by geographers. There are many careers suited to students of geography, such as: politics, international relations, teaching, architecture, civil engineering, environmental management, town and country planning, resource management, travel, business management and finance.

# GERMAN

**Examination Board :** AQA

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## AS

Unit 1: Listening, Reading and Writing: Candidates will study 4 topic areas – media, popular culture, healthy living, family and relationships.

Unit 2: Speaking Test: Stimulus card and conversation on topics.

## A2

Unit 3: Listening, Reading and Writing: Candidates will study 3 topic areas – environment, the multicultural society, contemporary social issues and 2 cultural topics.

Unit 4: Speaking Test: Stimulus card and conversation on cultural topics.

### **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

German is suited to all students with an interest in language and in a major European country. A GCSE in German is necessary to begin this course, ideally at Grade B or above. It is quite beneficial to study other languages at AS such as French, as the languages do complement each other by covering the same topic areas. English A-level is also very useful, as studying German literature can be part of the A2 course. However German can link equally well with Mathematics, Music, Economics or the Sciences as it is an extremely logical language or with the Humanities such as History or Geography. The study of German allows students to discuss and write about current topics in a foreign language as well as gaining an insight into a major European country. At both AS and A2 popular themes are covered as well as studying an individual cultural topic at A2. There is a written and listening paper as well as a fifteen minute oral examination. There is the possibility of attending a week's German course in the town of Biberach, in the summer term or the beginning of the summer holidays.

### **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

As this is a language the emphasis is on communication. It is therefore easier if you are a reasonably outgoing and conscientious person with views and opinions as well as an interest in current affairs. You will also be taught how to explore and develop an understanding of the German speaking world and learn how to transfer meaning from one language to the other as well as writing essays.

### **What skills will I acquire and develop?**

Knowledge of German is the most obvious acquisition, as well as an ability to debate and discuss current issues in a confident manner in a foreign language. You will also develop your analytical skills and be able to research and evaluate information. A greater understanding of your own language as well as other European languages will follow, should you wish to pursue a linguistic career.

### **What could I go to do at the end of my course?**

With an AS or A2 qualification in German you could on to Higher Education or directly into employment. Businesses today value a language student very highly, particularly in England where language skills are becoming a rarity! There are the obvious professions such as teaching, translating and interpreting but there are many others in industry, law or politics. Moreover many of our past linguists have gone on to study other languages at university, such as Arabic, Bulgarian, Russian and Japanese. You will never regret learning a language!

# HISTORY

**Examination Board:** OCR

**This course WILL be changing for September 2015.**

## **Course structure**

Over the two years of the course you will study a British History unit, worth 25% of your total mark, a non-British unit, worth 15%, a thematic study of a period of around 100 years, worth 40%, and complete an independent coursework essay of 3000-4000 words, worth 20%. The exact topics will depend on which combination of teachers you have and at which College you study. However, it is likely that you will encounter some terrible Tudors, some revolting French peasants and troubles in Ireland. You will be able to pursue your own interests, within some parameters, in your coursework. All examinations for the full A-level qualification are at the end of Year 13, but students will also take AS examinations at the end of Year 12.

## **What do I need or be able to do before taking the course?**

Enjoy the subject, in lessons, books, documentaries, museums and when travelling. Although GCSE History is not a requirement it is definitely an advantage when taking the A-level, particularly with the technical skills of source analysis. You must be comfortable with extensive reading and expressing yourself with extended writing.

## **What will I learn on this course?**

The course covers a broad range of different periods and topics to maintain interest and stimulate an understanding of skills as much as knowledge.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

There is an extensive amount of independent learning in this subject as it simply not possible to be taught the whole subject in adequate depth for a top grade. This means that reading around the subject is a given. The course combines very well with other Humanities, particularly Economics and RS and languages, ancient and modern. It also overlaps neatly in terms of the skills needed for Geography and English. It can provide important balance for a combination of subjects centred on Maths and Sciences. Past students have also combined History with Music, Drama and Art and have found that the understanding of human society that History gives adds context to these subjects. Universities often appreciate this academic breadth.

## **What skills can I develop during the course?**

Students benefit from developing excellent written skills and communicating complex ideas clearly and fluently, including being able to construct a reasoned argument. Research skills are an integral part of the course particularly in the coursework module.

## **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

History is recognised as providing good preparation for a wide range of courses at university beyond those obviously associated with the subject. It is a very good grounding for careers that focus on the articulation of ideas, logical thinking and argument, such as law, journalism and government and politics. It is also viewed positively by employers who demand proof of a good brain, in fields such as Accountancy, Medicine and Architecture.

# LATIN

**Examination Board:** OCR

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## **How is this course structured?**

At both AS and A2 students study the Latin language as well as a selection of Latin verse and prose texts.

### **AS**

**Unit 1** Latin Language: An unseen translation from Latin into English. There is a defined vocabulary list; any words not on the list which occur in the examination will be translated.

**Unit 2** Latin Verse and Prose: Questions on a selection of Latin authors, one prose and one verse. Candidates have to prepare approximately 225 lines of each.

### **A2**

**Units 3 and 4:** Latin Verse and Unprepared Translation & Latin Prose and Comprehension / Composition

These involve the study of approximately 300 lines of Latin verse and 400 lines of Latin prose. There are two set authors for each paper, from which candidates choose one. Candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate the same skills and responses as for Unit 2. Unit 3 also involves a passage of Latin verse from a named author and Unit 4 an unseen comprehension or a passage for prose composition.

## **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

Latin is suited to all students with an interest in languages, both ancient and modern. You do need to have studied Latin to GCSE and to have passed at a reasonable level to start this course. Other subjects which would go well with Latin are Ancient History, English Literature, Languages, Mathematics and Classical Civilisation.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

Latin allows students to study the culture of Rome through the original sources in the original language. Latin is also the root of much of English, and of other European languages, in terms of vocabulary and grammar. It is particularly suited to able linguists who wish to take their study of language to a higher level.

## **What skills can I develop during this course?**

The study of Latin will develop your analytical skills, allowing you to examine and evaluate evidence. It also develops the skills associated with literary appreciation. These are skills which can be transferred into a wide range of other subjects and careers.

## **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

With a qualification in Latin you could go on to Higher Education, or directly into employment. Latin is an excellent preparation for students who wish to progress to further study of the classical world, or often for those pursuing law. Previous students have gone on to study Classical Studies, Archaeology, Foreign Languages, Law as well as many other Humanities subjects. Latin is looked on favourably by prospective employers as students of it have developed high levels of linguistic, analytical and evaluation skills.



# MATHEMATICS & FURTHER MATHEMATICS

**Examination Board:** EDEXCEL

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## **How is this course structured?**

The modular structure of Mathematics allows the two Colleges' departments to offer a wide variety of courses for both specialists and those who view mathematics as a tool to be used by other subjects. There are eighteen units split into four subject areas:

Core Mathematics (7 units) which must form the backbone of any mathematics course – the most similar to IGCSE Mathematics.

Mechanics (5 units) which is an area of particular interest to physics students

Statistics (4 units) which is particularly relevant to biology, business studies, economics and geography students.

Decision Mathematics (2 units) which deals with approaches to practical problems and is particularly relevant to business studies and economics students.

## **The courses offered are:**

### **AS Mathematics**

Three units are taken in the Lower 6, comprising of two compulsory Core maths units (C1 and C2) and one choice of Applied unit (M1, S1 or D1)

### **A2 Mathematics**

An additional three units are required, comprising of two compulsory Core maths units (C3 and C4) and one choice of Applied unit (M1, M2, S1, S2 or D1)

### **A-level Further Mathematics.**

Twelve units are required in total, the first six or seven of which are taken as A-level Mathematics during the course of Year 12. The final five or six units taken during the Year 13 to give the A-level Further Mathematics qualification. Students contemplating studying up to seven units per year should realise that this involves roughly twice the amount of tuition and work as the more conventional three units per year. Mathematics and Further Mathematics does, however, count as two full A-levels.

## **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

Although there is no direct link between IGCSE results and A-level results, it must be said that the best preparation for A-level mathematics is a good performance at IGCSE. Experience has shown that students who have not performed well at IGCSE rarely succeed, even at AS.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

The complexity caused by the large number of units and the different outcomes that are possible over one and two years for students of different abilities and interests means that all potential students are strongly advised to discuss the avenues that are, in practice, open to them with their mathematics' teacher. Be warned, some applied mathematics modules may not be available to all students – the choice available will depend to a large extent on the other subjects chosen by the student.

# MUSIC

**Examination Board:** EDEXCEL

**This subject will undergo some changes in September 2015.**

## **How is this course structured?**

Proposed changes to A-level Music from 2015 include four Areas of Study (performing/realising, composing/arranging, analysing and demonstrating knowledge). Early proposals suggest that 60% of the assessment will be through coursework, and 40% of assessment through examinations.

## **AS**

**Paper 1:** Performing (30%). This unit gives students the opportunities to select and prepare repertoire to perform as soloists and/or as part of an ensemble. Any instrument(s) and/or voice(s) are acceptable as part of a five-six minute assessed performance.

**Paper 2:** Developing musical ideas (30%). This unit requires students to develop their composition skills leading to the creation of a three-minute piece in response to a chosen brief. Students also write a CD sleeve note to describe aspects of their final composition and explain how other pieces of music have influenced it.

**Paper 3:** Listening and understanding (40%). This unit focuses on listening to set works from the Board's anthology. Students will be required to thoroughly study these works through listening, score analysis and understanding the historical and cultural contexts surrounding them. In addition, students will be required to identify harmonic and tonal features of scores and works, and then apply this knowledge in the completion of a short passage for SATB.

## **A2**

The current A2 course is designed to extend the skills which have already been introduced during Year 12.

Unit 4 (extended performance) is based recital of music chosen by the candidate.

Unit 5 extends compositional skills, currently through prescribed Compositional Techniques topics and further composing. Unit 6 (Further Musical Understanding) consists of a listening paper in which candidates' aural skills are tested. They are required to demonstrate a broad understanding of musical contexts, styles and genres. A written paper tests candidates on their knowledge of a selection of works studied during the course.

## **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

It is a distinct advantage to have taken GCSE Music before beginning the AS Music course, but it is not compulsory. You should be able to perform to at least Grade 5 standard on your main instrument before starting the course and have taken your Grade 5 theory examination.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

Anyone who has a keen interest in performing, creating and listening to different styles of music and who wishes to broaden their experience and deepen their understanding of both live and recorded music. During the course you will be given the opportunity to study musical works chosen by Edexcel which represent a wide range of musical styles from Early Music through to Modern and Popular Music.

## **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

Students who have taken Music at A-level have gone on to pursue a wide variety of courses at university. The discipline and academic rigour required for the study of music in the Sixth-Form are transferable to any university course that demands a high level of self-motivation and independent study. In addition to careers in music and the wider performing arts, our music students have also pursued careers in medicine, law, science and journalism. Many will continue their musical interests through musical clubs and societies alongside their studies and former A-level Music pupils can be found participating in a wide variety of community ensembles that include church choirs and local orchestras.

# PHYSICS

Examination Board: AQA

This subject **WILL** be changing in September 2015.

## What is studied in this course?

- Measurements and errors – Year 12
- Particles and radiation – Year 12
- Waves – Year 12
- Mechanics and materials – Year 12
- Electricity – Year 12
- Further Mechanics (Periodic motion)
- Thermal physics
- Fields and their consequences
- Nuclear physics
- Practical skills
- Data analysis
- One optional topic from : Astrophysics, Medical Physics, Engineering physics, Turning points in physics, Electronics

## For what kind of student is this course suitable?

Anyone who wants to know how the world around them works ought to study physics. The ultimate goal of physics is to find a “Theory of Everything” which will explain all the details of the Universe down to the smallest subatomic particle. That goal has yet to be achieved – perhaps some of those starting their A level courses next year will be the ones to do so.

## What basic qualifications do you need before taking this course?

It is expected that students will have a good grade at GCSE or IGCSE Physics or Science and Additional Science. Students must also have a good GCSE or IGCSE maths grade. However, each student’s qualifications will be considered on an individual basis.

It is not compulsory to study A-level Mathematics in order to succeed at A-level Physics, provided you have a sound grasp of GCSE or IGCSE Mathematics. Those who do choose to study Mathematics to at least AS level will, however, find the Physics course easier, and A-level Mathematics is an essential prerequisite for studying Physics or a Physics-related subject at university.

## What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Apart from the obvious career of research physicist, Physics is essential for Engineering and also for many medical-related careers such as Hospital Physicist and Radiographer. Those wishing to become a pilot must also choose Physics. If you are choosing to study Mathematics you will find Physics quite straightforward and these subjects make a good combination. Physics also blends well with Biology (Biophysics), Chemistry and Geography (Geophysics). Other popular subject mixes are Physics and Music (especially Music Technology) and Physics with Design and Technology (for the engineering approach). Many physics graduates choose careers in the finance industry, where there is a demand for their mathematical-modelling skills.

# PSYCHOLOGY

Examination Board: AQA

This subject WILL be changing in September 2015.

	Topics	Nature of Assessment	Total A-level (%)
Paper 1	Including topics such as Social influence, Memory, Attachment and Psychopathology	Written examination	33.3
Paper 2	Including topics such as Biopsychology and Research methods		33.3
Paper 3	Including topics such as Relationships, Addiction, Schizophrenia, Eating behaviour, Stress and Forensic Psychology	Choice of 3 topics: Written examination	33.3

## What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

Psychology will allow you to have a better understanding of the human mind and how everyday behaviour is influenced by the world around us. It will enable you to develop your critical thinking and evaluative skills and have a better understanding of many social, scientific and contemporary issues involved in our daily life. Throughout the course candidates will also be expected to apply their knowledge and understanding of research methods, different approaches, issues and debates in psychology as well as develop an appreciation of the relationship between research, policy and practices in applying psychology in everyday life.

## For what kind of student is this course suitable?

You do not need any previous knowledge of Psychology in order to study this subject at A-level. As Psychology is regarded as a scientific discipline it complements other scientific subjects (especially Biology). The A2 part of the course will require essay style answers therefore a good ability to write would be advantageous. A GCSE Maths, English and Science grade A\*-C are also considered necessary. However, the main criteria for success in Psychology are dedication, hard work and enthusiasm.

## What skills can I develop during this course?

Psychology lends itself to a variety of different teaching methods including teacher led sessions, individual research, class presentations and discussion. Students will develop the ability to work independently, with peers and build on their examination technique. In addition to this, Psychology will give you an excellent grounding into reading and interpreting scientific research, data analysis and evaluative skills, all of which are essential for Higher Education.

## What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

Psychology is such a broad subject that you can go on to do most things. Many students have gone on to read Psychology at University; many of whom are now training to become Psychologists themselves! Other students have used the A-Level as grounding for other degree courses including Business, Biology, Nursing and English to name but a few others have gone straight into work (including Finance, and PR.)

# RELIGIOUS STUDIES

**Examination Board:** OCR

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## **Course structure**

Within this course we do the 'Religious Philosophy' and 'Religious Ethics' modules.

### **AS**

Each module counts for 50% of the marks (25% of A2). Each module will be examined in Year 12 by written examination in the summer.

Religious Philosophy: Ancient Greek influences on the Philosophy of Religion; Judaeo-Christian influences on Philosophy of Religion; Traditional arguments for the existence of God; Challenges to religious belief.

Religious Ethics: Ethical theories; Applied ethics topics.

### **A2**

The A2 course makes up 50% of the total A-level. It continues with the Philosophy and Ethics modules studied at AS and is examined by two written papers at the end of the final year of study.

Religious Philosophy: Religious language; Experience and religion; Nature of God; Life and death; Miracles.

Religious Ethics: Meta-ethics; Free-will and determinism; Conscience; Virtue ethics; Applied ethics topics.

## **What do I need to know or be able to do before taking Religious Studies?**

It is NOT necessary to have a GCSE in Religious Studies, or a religious faith. It is necessary to have an open and enquiring mind. The syllabus contains the opportunity to look at many existential and classical philosophical and ethical issues. It would help to have an interest in this type of topic! A good qualification in a literate subject would show the ability to cope with an essay based course.

## **For what kind of student is Religious Studies suitable?**

The course would suit anyone who wants answers to life's big philosophical, religious and ethical questions. This can appeal to students from a range of other subject areas that are willing to apply themselves.

## **What skills can I develop during this course?**

Skills include analysis of argument, the ability to understand and manipulate abstract concept, to assess in a fair and reasoned manner a wide range of subject matter. The ability to think critically and rationally in an empathic and understanding manner is also developed.

## **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

Religious Studies is a well-respected and recognised qualification in the work place and university. It is recognised as being a topic which teaches students to think and analyse to a high degree. Students have gone on to University with Religious Studies to study the whole range of Humanities, but also to study Science, Law and Medicine.

# SPANISH

**Examination Board:** AQA

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## **How is the course structured?**

In Year 12 you will study four topics which build on what you have learned at GCSE and cover a wide range of interesting issues. These are:

- Media: TV, advertising and communication technology
- Popular culture: cinema, music and fashion/ trends
- Healthy living/lifestyle: /exercise, health and well-being and holidays
- Family/relationships: relationships within the family, friendships and marriage/partnerships.

## **What skills can I develop during this course?**

Among the many benefits, this new specification is designed to encourage candidates to:

- Develop the knowledge and skills acquired at GCSE level and therefore use Spanish in a wide range of contexts
- Gain a useful insight into another culture and reflect on various aspects of contemporary society
- Enhance their employment prospects, facilitate foreign travel and experience the enjoyment and motivation of improving their linguistic level. The AS Spanish course will give you a profound understanding of the language. Not only will you know more about the mechanics of the language but also about how people live and use Spanish on a day to day basis. Among the many benefits, this new specification is designed to encourage you to:
- Develop the knowledge and skills acquired at GCSE level and therefore use Spanish in a wide range of contexts
- Gain a useful insight into the Spanish culture and reflect on various aspects of contemporary society
- Enhance your employment prospects, facilitate foreign travel and experience the enjoyment and motivation of improving your linguistic level.

## **What do I need to know before taking this course?**

You need a good grade at GCSE and an enjoyment of your chosen language. You will also need to have a curiosity and desire to learn more about the target language and culture.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

Someone who:

- Has enjoyed their chosen language at GCSE and who has a natural curiosity and desire to learn more about the target language and culture.
- Enjoys communicating, exchanging ideas and giving and justifying opinions.

# SPORT & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Examination Board:** AQA

**This subject will NOT be changing in September 2015.**

## AS

**Unit 1:** Opportunities for and the effects of leading a healthy and active lifestyle

84 marks, worth 60% of the AS-level and 30% of the A-level

Written Paper, 2 hours

### **Two sections:**

**Section A** – six structured questions

**Section B** – application of theoretical knowledge to a practical situation

**Unit 2:** Analysis and evaluation of physical activity as a performer and/or in an adopted role

100 marks, worth 40% of AS and 20% of the A-level

Internal assessment with external moderation

Candidates perform, analyse and evaluate the execution of core skills/techniques in isolation and in structured practice as either a player/performer and in an adopted role or two adopted roles.

## A2

**Unit 3:** Optimising performance and evaluating contemporary issues within sport.

84 marks, 30% of the A-level

2 hour written examination

### **Three sections:**

**Section A** – how exercise physiology can optimise performance

**Section B** – how application of psychological knowledge can optimise performance

**Section C** – contemporary influences in sport and their impact on the performer

**Unit 4:** Optimising practical performance in a competitive situation

120 marks, worth 20% of the A-level

Internal assessment with external moderation

Students perform, analyse and evaluate their own performance, identify areas of performance they could improve, and suggest causes and appropriate corrective measures.

## **What do you need to know or be able to do before taking this course?**

Several topics covered in the course are developments of work covered at GCSE but this is not a prerequisite. What is more important is that you should have a lively and enquiring mind, an interest in physical education, a willingness to explore new ideas and an ability to communicate your ideas effectively. In essence, the course will let students who enjoy sport and sporting activities develop their all-round knowledge of the subject whilst pursuing an academic course they enjoy.

## **What will you learn on this course?**

You will:

- Explore the contemporary sociological issues in modern sport
- Examine the effects of exercise and the relationships between training and performance
- Analyse the way we learn to be skilful
- Enhance your understanding of the role of technology or psychology in sporting performance
- Find ways to improve your own performance through your greater understanding.

## **For what kind of student is this course suitable?**

The course will appeal to those students who:

- have a keen interest in sport and recreation
- want to follow a course that develops the theoretical aspects through practical involvement
- want to know more about how the body functions and the effects of exercise
- want to evaluate and improve their own sporting performance
- may want to move on to a related career or higher education course.





