

Sixth Forms in Partnership

Subject Handbook

Subjects available for students entering the
Colleges' Sixth Form in September 2020

TIME-LINE

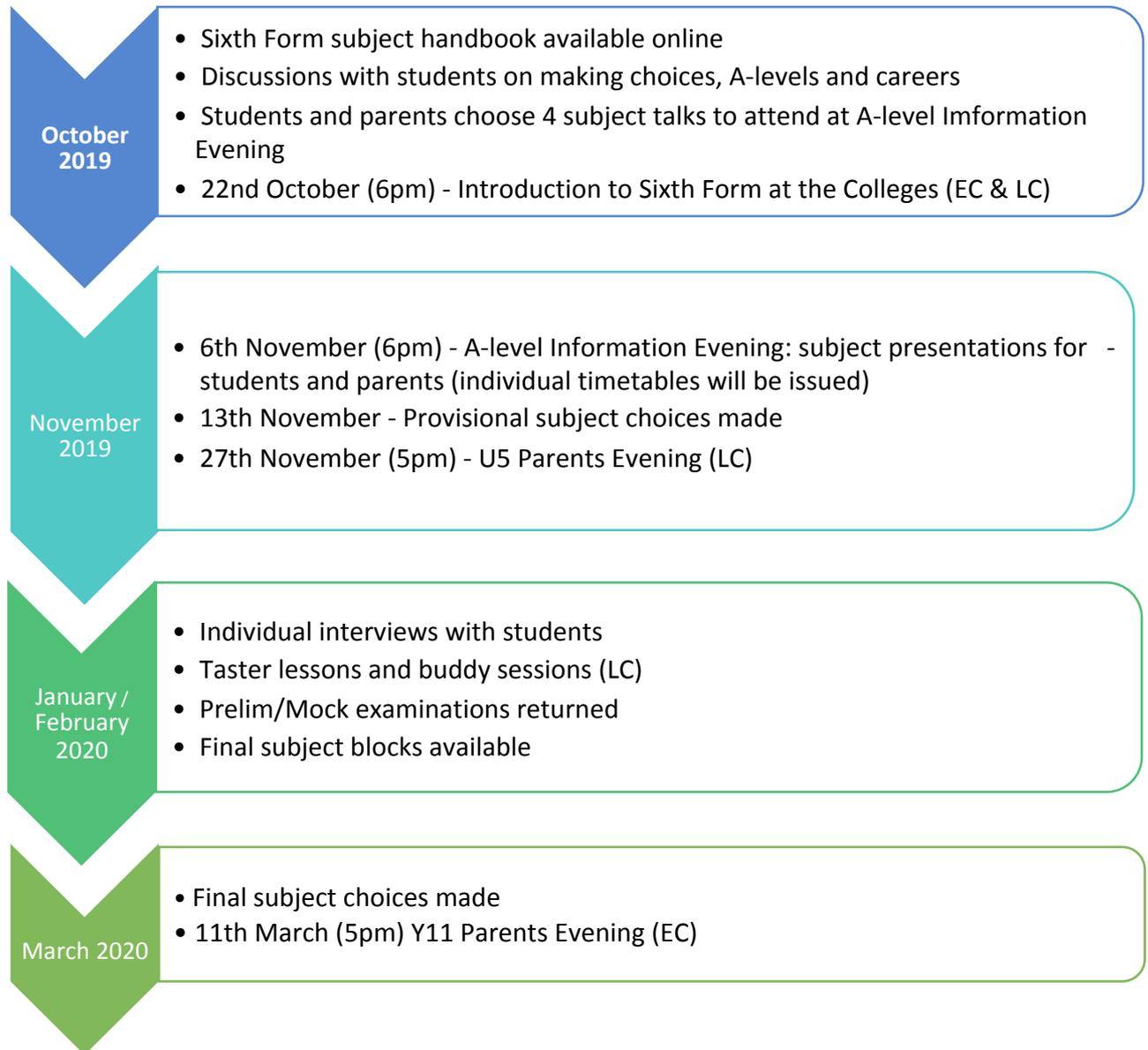


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INTRODUCTION

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.

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 A-level subjects 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 Grade 4 or higher in the new tariff, 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 in the Sixth Form. It may, in certain circumstances, be difficult to provide an acceptable course of study. 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 at least a Grade 6 in the new tariff at GCSE in order to study it in the Sixth Form.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME: THE COLLEGES' DIPLOMA

As well as their three A-level courses, all students are also expected to follow a course of enrichment which contributes to the Colleges' Sixth Form Diploma. This is a programme which has been put together in consultation with universities and employers, and is designed to develop and credit the various skill areas which they say are frequently lacking, even in the most able students with the highest A-level grades. The Diploma has the endorsement of the Guernsey Training Agency University Centre. These skills include:

- The ability to read more widely around a topic and respond to what they have read
- Presentation skills
- Independent study skills
- Super-Curricular activities

These skills are delivered in a number of ways:

- A core content of required reading and attendance at lectures, with extra credit for further talks, dramatic productions, concerts etc.
- A taught element of study skills
- A requirement to have written and delivered a presentation
- Critical Thinking through independent study of a MOOC (Massive Open On-line Course) run by the University of Auckland
- A piece of extended writing, which may be the full EPQ (see below)
- The opportunity and encouragement to take further MOOCs in whatever area(s) interest the students, or a qualification in Mandarin or TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language)

The Diploma also has a requirement for some form of service to others, and gives credit for all the wide range of extra-curricular activities in which our students are involved.

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)

There is the opportunity at both Colleges for students to research and carry out an extended project on any subject of interest to them. This is externally assessed and counts towards UCAS points. In addition to providing preparation for university interviews and applications, it also includes the independent research component that universities and employers see as one of the strengths of the International Baccalaureate; however, by taking an EPQ alongside A-levels, students have the flexibility to choose the subjects which are most beneficial and suitable to them. Many universities now make differentiated offers to students with an EPQ (in other words the grade offer may be reduced).

ANCIENT HISTORY

Examination Board: OCR

The A-level specification contains four elements combining two period studies and two depth studies. The course gives the opportunity to study topics from both Greek and Roman history.

Greek topics include:

- Relations between Greek and non-Greek states 492-404BC
- The Society and Politics of Sparta

Roman topics include:

- The Julio-Claudian Emperors, 31BC-AD68
- The Flavians

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 BC to the second century AD, looking at significant events, individuals and issues.

What skills can I develop during this course?

The study of Ancient History 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 Ancient History you could go on to Higher Education, or directly into employment. All classical subjects give 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. Classical subjects are 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 (Art)

Examination Board: WJEC (EDUQAS)

How is the course structured?

First Year

Unit 1: Personal Creative Enquiry. This is an extended, exploratory project in response to a set theme and students must integrate critical, practical and theoretical work.

Second Year

Unit 2: 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.

Unit 3: 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. You are free to make work in a wide range of areas that include painting, printmaking, sculpture, graphic design, 3D design, film and photography. This course allows students to explore their own ideas and develop a personal approach to making art.

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.

Art and Design (Graphic Communication) – Previously Product Design

Examination Board: WJEC (EDUQAS)

How is the course structured?

First Year

Unit 1: Personal Creative Enquiry. This is an extended project in response to a chosen theme and students must integrate critical, practical and theoretical work. Students will have a chance to explore a variety of materials and processes of their choice. They will then be expected to design, develop, model and manufacture a finished product in either 2D/3D but with an emphasis on Graphic outcomes.

Second Year

Unit 2: Personal Investigation, made up of two integrated parts:

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

Unit 3: The Externally Set Assignment consists of two parts:

- Design work and studies in response to one of the themes set by the exam board. Portfolio work will include; critical, practical and theoretical aspects. There is a high emphasis on design drawings and exploratory modelling work, before reaching a final solution/outcome.
- A 15-hour period of sustained focus work. This must see the conclusion or finish of the final idea.

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 DT/Art related subjects. 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?

Students will be able to focus on areas of Graphic Communication that are of particular interest to them (potentially related to courses they may wish to pursue post College). Students are able to work in, both digital, and traditional methods or a combination of both. There is more chance to specialise in chosen materials or processes. Students will also be expected to manage project timelines over a sustained period of time and plan how to manage this.

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 Graphic Design; the skills to interpret and convey your ideas and thoughts using a variety of media and techniques; your imaginative and creative powers and your experimental, analytical and documenting skills; a specialist vocabulary and the knowledge and understanding of the place of design in society today.

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

Students may use this course to apply directly to University for a wide range of courses such as Graphic design, Product Design, Industrial Design, Architecture, Digital Design, Illustration, Web Design, Fashion, Fine Art, Film, Video or Theatre Design. There is also the option of taking a foundation course first, to further widen the designing and creating skills before University. Students may also be suited to starting work directly in fields that interest them.

Art and Design (3D Studies) – Previously DT Product Design

Examination Board: WJEC (EDUQAS)

How is the course structured?

First Year

Unit 1: Personal Creative Enquiry. This is an extended project in response to a chosen theme and students must integrate critical, practical and theoretical work. Students will have a chance to explore a variety of materials and processes of their choice. They will then be expected to design, develop, model and manufacture a finished product in 3D.

Second Year

Unit 2: Personal Investigation, made up of two integrated parts:

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

Unit 3: The Externally Set Assignment consists of two parts:

- Design work and studies in response to one of the themes set by the exam board. Portfolio work will include; critical, practical and theoretical aspects. There is a high emphasis on design drawings and exploratory modelling work, before reaching a final solution/outcome.
- A 15-hour period of sustained focus work. This must see the conclusion or finish of the final idea.

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 DT/Art related subjects. 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?

Students will be able to focus on areas of 3D design that are of particular interest to them (potentially related to courses they may wish to pursue post College). There is more chance to specialise in chosen materials or processes. Students will also be expected to manage project timelines over a sustained period of time and plan how to manage this.

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 3D design; the skills to interpret and convey your ideas and thoughts using a variety of media and techniques; your imaginative and creative powers and your experimental, analytical and documenting skills; a specialist vocabulary and the knowledge and understanding of the place of design in society today.

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

Students may use this course to apply directly to University for a wide range of courses such as Product Design, Industrial Design, Architecture, Digital Design, Illustration, Web Design, Fashion, Fine Art, Film, Video or Theatre Design. There is also the option of taking a foundation course first, to further widen the designing and creating skills before University. Students may also be suited to starting work directly in fields that interest them such as carpentry or architectural courses on island.

ART & DESIGN (DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY) – PREVIOUSLY DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Examination Board: WJEC (EDUQAS)

How is the course structured?

Year 1

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.

Year 2

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.

BIOLOGY

Examination Board: AQA

How is the course structured?

The A-level course will consist of eight modules:

- Biological molecules
- Cells
- Exchange of substances
- Variation and Genetics
- Energy transfers (photosynthesis and respiration)
- Responding to changes (nervous and hormonal co-ordination)
- Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- How genes work

This A-level will be assessed through three approximately equally weighted examination papers based on the entire two-year course.

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 Combined Science or the three separate sciences at GCSE/IGCSE. However, taking the separate sciences is not a requirement for taking 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 good level of confidence and competence in numeracy and GCSE 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; analysing and evaluating data. You will continue to develop your practical skills as this forms a key part of the A-level course. Students studying Biology will be required to complete field work beyond normal lesson time during the course – in recent years this has taken place after the Year 12 summer internal exams. This is an excellent opportunity to expand your knowledge of a wider range of ecosystems and ecological techniques. Further details will be published nearer the time.

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

Students study ten elements. In all cases they will be assessed upon a combination of the following.

- Multiple choice questions and short answer questions
- Data response questions broken down into a number of parts
- A compulsory case study.

The elements will be examined across three two hour papers at the end of year 2.

- Paper 1 will be assessed on multiple choice questions, short answers and two data response questions drawn from all elements of the course. This paper is worth 33.3% of the total qualification.
- Paper 2 will be assessed on three compulsory data response questions and be drawn from all elements of the course. This paper is worth 33.3% of the total qualification.
- Paper 3 will be assessed one compulsory case study and be drawn from all elements of the course. This paper is worth 33.3% of the total qualification.

Year 1

- What is business?
- Managers, leadership and decision making
- Decision making to improve marketing performance
- Decision making to improve operational performance
- Decision making to improve financial performance
- Decision making to improve human resource performance

Year 2

- Analysing the strategic position of a business
- Choosing strategic direction
- Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
- Managing strategic change

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 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: AQA

How is the Course Structured?

First Year

The Lower Sixth topics studied cover Organic Chemistry, Inorganic Chemistry and Physical Chemistry. Six of the core practicals will also be covered in this year.

Second Year

The A-level contains all the content covered above and further topics in each area of Chemistry. There are six more core practicals throughout the year and then three examinations in the summer of Year 13 of two hours each. Paper 3 is a synoptic paper assessing content over the whole course with a focus on experiments and practical work. The three A-level papers cover work from both years of the course.

Practical component

Practical skills are an integral part of studying Chemistry. Knowledge of twelve core practicals forms part of the syllabus for full A-level qualification and understanding of the methods, and reactions involved will be examined in the examination papers. The physical practical skills are also assessed throughout the course and students who demonstrate appropriate competency over the two years will be awarded a pass in the Practical Component. 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 in the first year. You should have at least a grade 6 in Mathematics as 20% of the examination marks are based on mathematical skills. 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. Amongst other topics, you will look at the reactions of the elements on the Periodic Table, 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.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

Year 1

01 COMPUTING PRINCIPLES

This unit will cover the characteristics of contemporary systems architecture and other areas including the following: the characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices; software and software development; exchanging data; data types, data structures and algorithms; legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues.

02 ALGORITHMS AND PROBLEM SOLVING

This component will incorporate and build on the knowledge and understanding gained in the Computing principles component (01). In addition, learners should: understand what is meant by computational thinking; understand the benefits of applying computational thinking to solving problems; be able to use algorithms to describe problems.

Year 2

01 COMPUTER SYSTEMS

This component will develop learner's knowledge to the internal workings of the Central Processing Unit (CPU), the exchange of data and will also look at software development, data types and legal and ethical issues. It is expected that learners will draw on this underpinning content when studying computational thinking, developing programming techniques and devising their own programming approach in component 03 or 04

02 ALGORITHMS AND PROGRAMMING

This component incorporates and builds on knowledge and understanding gained in component 01. In addition, learners: understand what is meant by computational thinking; understand the benefits of applying computational thinking to solving a wide variety of problems; understand the principles of solving problems by computational methods; be able to use algorithms to describe problems; be able to analyse a problem by identifying its component parts.

03/04 PROGRAMMING PROJECT - External postal moderation or repository

Students select their own problem of an appropriate size and complexity to solve. This enables them to demonstrate the skills and knowledge in the Assessment Objectives. Students need to analyse the problem, design a solution, implement the solution and give a thorough evaluation.

What will I learn on this course?

Computer Science is a practical subject where students apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems. It is an intensely creative subject that combines invention and excitement, and can look at the natural world through a digital prism. The aims of the qualification are to enable learners to develop:

- An understanding and ability to apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including: abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms and data representation
- The ability to analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving problems, including writing programs to do so.
- The capacity to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.
- The capacity to see relationships between different aspects of computer science
- Mathematical skills.

Assessment

Computer Systems Exam	– 2 hours 30 min - 40% of A-level.
Algorithms and Programming Exam	– 2 hours 30 min - 40% of A-level
Programming Project	– Non-exam Assessment – 20% of A-level

DRAMA and Theatre studies

Examination Board: WJEC (EDUQAS)

Component 1

Theatre Workshop Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated, 20% of qualification. Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of a piece of theatre based on a reinterpretation of an extract from a text chosen from a list supplied by WJEC. The piece must be developed using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company. Learners must produce:

- a realisation of the performance or design
- a creative log.

Component 2

Text in Action Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner 40% of qualification. Learners will be assessed on either acting or design. Learners participate in the creation, development and performance of two pieces of theatre based on a stimulus supplied by WJEC:

- a devised piece using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company (a different practitioner or company to that chosen for Component 1)
- an extract from a text in a different style chosen by the learner. Learners must realise their performance live for the visiting examiner. Learners choosing design must also give a 5-10 minute presentation of their design to the examiner. Learners produce a process and evaluation report within one week of completion of the practical work.

Component 3

Text in Performance Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes, 40% of qualification. Sections A and B Open book: clean copies (no annotation) of the two complete texts chosen must be taken into the examination. Two questions, based on two different texts, one written pre- 1956 and one written post-1956. Section C is closed book: the extract of text required for answering the questions will be printed on the examination paper. A question based on a specified extract from 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time'.

Why study Drama?

Drama is a highly respectable A-level 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, communication skills, public 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 Sixth Form Drama 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

Year 1

Students study two themes:

- **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.

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 end of year grade and UCAS predicted grade.

Year 2

The two themes of the first year are extended in the second, studying:

- **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.

In the second year students will prepare for their final examinations: three papers, each of 2 hours, that assess the entire course through multiple choice, short-answer, diagram and long-essay formats.

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

How is the course structured?

2-Year A-level

Component 1: Drama; two hours and 15 min examination (30%)

Component 2: Prose; one-hour and 15 min examination (20%)

Component 3: Poetry; two hours and 15 min examination (30%)

Component 4: Coursework; one extended comparative essay (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 the 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.

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

Students need a love for literature and a curiosity about language as well as the cultural forces which shape both. They need to want to reason, discuss and argue their ideas with other students; they must also be prepared to listen to others' ideas sympathetically. A wider exploration of history and philosophy is also often required; English Literature teaches not just the facts but captures the spirit of the age.

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 stylish, well-structured essays. Exploring responses through discussion and debate are important skills alongside tolerance and appreciation for the multiplicity of meanings generated by texts through time. Students will gain 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 qualification provides an excellent springboard into courses which value the skills of analysis and synthesis that you will learn. Apart from the study of English Literature and related courses at university, there are valuable skills acquired at 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 invaluable in sharpening their abilities to reason and analyse ideas.

FILM STUDIES

Examination Board: WJEC (EDUQAS)

How is the course structured?

All the written exams will be taken at the end of Year 13. The coursework element will be completed throughout the course, with the marks submitted to the board in Spring, 2021. There are three Components:

Component 1: American and British Film 35% (Written exam): You will study 6 feature films made in Britain and America from 1930 to the present day.

Component 2: Varieties of Film 35% (Written exam): You will study 5 feature length films and a range of short films, including silent and foreign language films.

In both exams you will be asked to comment on how the films were constructed (considering features such as the acting, direction, setting, lighting, sound and special effects) as well as how they are received by audiences. Knowledge of the historical contexts of the films is also important.

Component 3: Production 30% (Coursework): You will produce a short film (4-5 minutes) or a screenplay (including photographed storyboard) of your own choice. Based on a set of briefs set by the board and inspired by your viewing of a wide range of short films. You will also write an evaluative analysis of your production.

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

You will need a very good level of literacy to do well in this exam. In particular, you need strong essay skills and the ability to write very concisely, as you will only have 30 minutes to write about each film in the exams. Most importantly, you need to really love film and to be prepared to re-watch the set films many times so as to fully grasp how they were constructed and what the director intended. Some experience making short films is also desirable.

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;
- gain an understanding of the history of film across the world, and the various movements and schools of film;
- 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 and enjoy expressing your opinions and reasoning your responses to film. You need to be prepared to research your ideas through a variety of media and to have a particular interest in film, media or communication studies

What skills can I develop during this course?

Even if your essay writing skills are already good, this course will help you hone them further still. You will also learn new ways of viewing films, taking into account the directors' aims and the production contexts. You will develop your independent working skills, but you will also engage in lots of group discussion. When creating your coursework, you will learn about writing, casting, filming and editing a short film.

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

Film Studies teaches elements of History, Business Studies and analysis. You may want to specialise at university or link into subjects such as History, Media Studies, or Journalism.

FRENCH

Examination Board: EDEXCEL

How is the course structured?

Paper 1 Listening, reading and translation: In the listening section of this paper you will answer multiple-choice and comprehension questions in French from a range of passages spoken by native speakers. In the reading section you will also answer multiple-choice and comprehension questions in French, based on a variety of authentic written passages. You will also translate a passage from French into English.

Paper 2 Written response to works, grammar and translation: In this paper you will write about two books, or one book and one film which you have studied throughout the course. There will also be a translation of a passage from English into French.

Paper 3 Speaking: Before this exam you will have 5 minutes to prepare a discussion based on a choice of 2 stimulus cards. You will then discuss the topic on the card with your examiner, usually your teacher. You will also give a presentation on an independent research project, which you prepare on a topic chosen by you relating to French culture and/or France itself.

Is this the right subject for me?

If you enjoy meeting and talking to people from other countries, finding out about their cultures and developing your knowledge of how language works, studying A-level French is an excellent choice.

What will I learn?

A-level French helps you explore a wide range of topics, which will improve your understanding of French, France and its culture. The topics covered are: evolving society in France; political and artistic culture in French-speaking countries; immigration and multiculturalism in France; the occupation of France and the resistance movement. The book and film (or 2 books/plays) which you study, may link to the above topics, giving you further insight into French culture. You will also learn new grammar and vocabulary and you will be able to translate into and out of French. By the end of the course you will be able to present viewpoints, develop arguments, persuade and analyse and evaluate. You will also develop skills to facilitate the learning of other languages.

How will I be assessed?

You will take three exams. Paper 1 is 40% of the total marks, Paper 2 is 30% and Paper 3 is 30%.

Why should I study a language?

Learning languages encourages you to meet people from different countries and find out more about them. You will learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of careers: the ability to communicate clearly, be confident speaking in public, use problem-solving strategies and write coherently. Languages also develop critical thinking, creativity and independence and add an international dimension to your A-level subjects.

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

If you already have knowledge of a variety of topics, and can express your opinions, and have at least a Grade 6 in GCSE, you are ready to build on this at A-level.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

People with language skills and knowledge usually have an advantage over people without them. They stand out as talented and successful people, with broad and exciting horizons. A-level French adds an extra international dimension to your personal skills profile making it easier to get a job in companies with international links. You will also be able to work or study in a French-speaking country in later life and be able to progress to study a degree in French, or French with another subject.

GEOGRAPHY

Examination Board: AQA

A-level

At least 50% of the topics at A-level will be covered in the first year of the course.

Component 1: Physical Geography: Written examination; 40% of total A-level (150 minutes)

Section A: Core: Water and Carbon Cycles
Section B: Option: Coastal systems
Section C: Option: Hazards

Component 2: Human Geography: Written examination; 40% of total A-level (150 minutes)

Section A: Core: Global Systems & Governance
Section B: Core: Changing Places
Section C: Option: Urban Issues

Component 3: Geographical Investigation: 3000-4000 words. 20% of the total A-level

Teacher marked and moderated by AQA.
Each student will select a title based on any part of the syllabus.

There will be three fieldwork days in June for all Year 12 students. This will be to develop fieldwork skills and to collect data for the Geographical Investigation or coursework. It is also a requirement of the A-level Geography course that four days of fieldwork are completed over the duration of the two year course.

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. It is expected that all students taking Geography will have studied GCSE Geography and ideally should have achieved Level 6 or above.

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 interested in researching 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 a Science or an Arts subject, so it can be linked with Languages, Classics, 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: EDEXCEL

What will I learn?

A-level German helps you explore a wide range of topics, which will improve your understanding of German, Germany and its culture. The topics covered are: evolving society in Germany; political and artistic culture in German-speaking countries; immigration and multiculturalism in Germany; the reunification of Germany. The book and film (or 2 books/plays) which you study, may link to the above topics, giving you further insight into German culture. You will also learn new grammar and vocabulary and you will be able to translate into and out of German.

How will I be assessed?

You will take three exams. Paper 1 is worth 40% of the total, Paper 2 is 30% and Paper 3 is 30%.

Paper 1 Listening, reading and translation: In the listening section of this paper, you will answer multiple-choice and comprehension questions in German from a range of passages spoken by native speakers. In the reading section, you will also answer multiple-choice and comprehension questions in German, based on a variety of authentic written passages. You will also translate a passage from German into English.

Paper 2 Written response to works, grammar and translation: In this paper you will write about two books, or one book and one film which you have studied throughout the course. There will also be a translation of a passage from English into German.

Paper 3 Speaking: Before this exam you will have 5 minutes to prepare a discussion based on a choice of 2 stimulus card, which you are given. You will then discuss the topic on the card with your examiner, who is usually your teacher. You will also give a presentation on an independent research project, which you will have prepared, on a topic chosen by you, relating to German culture and/or Germany itself.

Is this the right subject for me?

If you enjoy meeting and talking to people from other countries, finding out about their cultures and developing your knowledge of how language works, then studying German is an excellent choice for you!

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

If you already have knowledge of a variety of topics, and can express your opinions, and have at least a Grade 6 in GCSE, you are ready to build on this at A-level.

Why should I study a language?

Learning languages encourages you to learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, be confident about speaking in public, use problem-solving strategies and write coherently. You will also develop critical thinking, creativity and independence. You will also be able to discuss interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak the language and learn more about countries where the language is spoken, and the people who speak it.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

People with language skills and knowledge usually have an advantage over people without them. They stand out as talented and successful people, with broad and exciting horizons. Success at A-level German means you will add an extra international dimension to your personal skills profile and so be in a stronger position to get work in companies with international links. You will be able to work or study in a German-speaking country in later life and progress to study a degree in German, or German and another subject. Languages support careers in a range of areas including management, business, science and tourism.

HISTORY

Examination Board: OCR

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 scintillating Stuarts, delve into Vietnam's role in the Cold War and try to understand the role of opium in the rise of a new communist superpower in China. Alternatively, you may get the chance to meet some marauding Normans, a few cowboys and investigate the rise of Irish Nationalism and eventual home rule. 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.

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

Enjoy the subject, both in lessons and through reading books, watching documentaries and visiting museums and places of historical interest. Although GCSE History is not a requirement it is definitely an advantage, particularly with the technical skills of source analysis. However, you can catch up and all the skills needed will all be taught during the A-level course. 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 giving you a wide range of content to stimulate your interest. Of equal importance, though, are the subject specific and more general skills that you will develop.

For what kind of student is this course suitable?

There is an extensive amount of independent learning in this subject as it is simply not possible to be taught the whole subject in adequate depth in class for a top grade. This means that reading around the subject is essential. The course combines very well with other Humanities, particularly Ancient History, Economics, RS and languages, ancient and modern. It also overlaps in terms of skills with Geography and English. 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 learning to communicate complex ideas clearly and fluently (orally and in their writing), including being able to construct a reasoned argument. Research skills are an integral part of the course particularly in the coursework. Critical thinking and analytical skills will also be a focus when using sources.

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

History is highly regarded by universities and employers. It is recognised as providing excellent preparation for a wide range of courses at university. 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

How is this course structured?

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 Set Texts*: Questions on a selection of Latin authors, one prose (Cicero or Tacitus) and one verse (Virgil or Ovid). Candidates have to prepare approximately 225 lines of each.

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

How is this course structured?

Mathematics A-level is taught over two years and assessed by written examinations in the summer of Upper Sixth. There is no controlled assessment. There are three 2 hour written examination papers, in which calculators are permitted. Two papers assess Pure Mathematics and one, Applied Mathematics.

In Pure Mathematics the disciplines of Algebra, Calculus, Geometry and Number are all covered. There is some overlap with the more demanding topics in IGCSE Mathematics, but the course moves rapidly onto new, more advanced content.

Applied Mathematics is split into Statistics and Mechanics. These must both be studied; they are examined on a single paper, 50% Statistics and 50% Mechanics.

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 very good performance at IGCSE, particularly in the more demanding aspects of Algebra.

Experience has shown that students who have not performed well at IGCSE rarely succeeded in modular A-level and the demands of this new linear course are greater.

For what kind of student is this course suitable?

The course is most suitable for the student who enjoys mathematics and is willing to spend time wrestling with demanding problems. Mathematics is excellent preparation for a wide range of university and career choices and can be combined with any other A-levels. It is important to discuss the suitability of this course with your current teacher.

How is Further Mathematics structured?

Mathematics and Further Mathematics are two distinct A-levels, however Further Mathematics can only be taken with Mathematics as a double course. This means you will have twice as many mathematics lessons each week. The entire Mathematics A-level course is taught in the first year and assessed by written examinations in the summer of that year. The Mathematics course is described above.

Further Mathematics A-level is taught over one year (in the Upper Sixth) and assessed by written examinations in the summer of Upper Sixth. There is no controlled assessment. Further Mathematics is assessed through four 1½ hour written examination papers, two of which contain compulsory content (Further Pure Mathematics) and two of which contain optional content. The optional content, which carries equal weighting with the compulsory content, allows candidates to choose from: Further Pure, Further Statistics, Further Mechanics and Decision Mathematics. Staff at the two Colleges will advise Students on their optional choices based on performance in the A-level Mathematics and university degree or career aspirations.

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

A very good performance at IGCSE is a pre-requisite for this course, especially in algebra. It is heavily timetabled and will take you into new and interesting areas of mathematics not studied thus far.

For what kind of student is this course suitable?

This intense course is for the best mathematicians, those who have excelled at IGCSE and who genuinely enjoy doing lots of mathematics and who are prepared to take on a high-level challenge that, at times, might not be straight forward. Those aspiring to study Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Physics, Engineering or Computer Science at university would be advised to consider this course most carefully. It will be important to discuss the suitability of this course with your current teacher of Mathematics.

MUSIC

Examination Board: OCR

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 A-level Music course, but it is not compulsory. You should be able to perform to at least Grade 5 standard on voice or on your main instrument before starting the course and to have taken your Grade 5 theory examination.

What will I learn on this course?

A pathway will be chosen as students can choose to weight their A-level on composition or performance.

Pathway A: Performing 25%: Recital of at least 6 minutes
Composition 35%: Composition portfolio of 2 pieces + exercises (8 mins combined duration)

Pathway B Performing 35%: Recital of at least 10 minutes
Composition 25%: Composition portfolio of 2 pieces (4 mins combined duration)

Both pathways: Listening and appraising 40%: Written examination: Listening and evaluating works from 4 areas of study, including set study works

Year 1

Recital: Preparation will take place throughout the year and practice recitals will provide constant feedback to you and your peripatetic teacher. This unit provides the opportunity to perform as a soloist and/or as a member of an ensemble. Teachers and students can choose music in any style. Submitting a realisation using music technology may be an option. Any instrument(s) and/or voice(s) are acceptable as part of an assessed performance.

Composing: This unit encourages students to develop their composition skills leading to the creation of two separate compositions. One of these is to a set brief, the other to a brief written by the candidate. Candidates choosing this pathway will also be required to compose three short technical exercises.

Listening and appraising: This unit focuses on listening to familiar music and understanding how it works, as well as recognising and appraising features of unfamiliar works. Set recommended works from the Board provide the focus for this unit. Students are required to supplement this list by self-directed listening and research. Critical listening, score analysis and understanding the historical and cultural contexts of works form key knowledge.

Year 2

Work this year is designed to extend the skills introduced during the first year, culminating in presentation of coursework to external examiners and consolidation of skills and 4 Areas of Study for written examination. Final recitals will take place during the examination window set by the exam board. Submission of composition portfolios will take place in May. All candidates are required to perform and compose, but can weight their course by choosing the most suitable pathway.

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

Music suits anyone who has an interest in performing, creating and listening to different styles of music and wishes to broaden their experience and deepen their understanding of both live and recorded music. You will be given the opportunity to study musical works from a range of genres.

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

Students who have taken A-level Music go on to pursue a wide variety of courses at university. The discipline and academic rigour required for the study of A-level Music 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. Former students can be found participating in a wide variety of community ensembles, including church choirs and local orchestras.

PHYSICS

Examination Board: AQA

What is studied in this course?

- Measurements and errors
- Particles and radiation
- Waves
- Mechanics and materials
- Electricity
- 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 Mathematics 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 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

Paper 1: Topics include Social influence, Memory, Attachment and Psychopathology: written examination, 33.3% of A-level

Paper 2: Topics include Biopsychology and Research methods: written examination, 33.3% of A-level

Paper 3: Topics include Issues and Debates and Options: written examination, 33.3% of A-level

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 assessment includes extended writing (12/16 mark essays) therefore good written communication is advantageous. **GCSE Mathematics, English and Science grades 9-6 are 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, as well as interpersonal skills, all of which are essential for Higher Education and beyond.

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

As Psychology is such a broad subject, fostering many different skills including valuable interpersonal skills, it can lead to many pathways. 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 degree courses including Business, Biology, Nursing, English and Research fields or have gone straight into work (including Finance and PR).

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Examination Board: OCR

Course structure

Within this course we do the Religious Philosophy, Religious Ethics and the Development of Religious Thought units. These three units will be studied to A-level.

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 concepts and 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 by universities. It is recognised as being a subject 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

How will I be assessed?

In Y13 you will take three exams. Paper 1 is 50% of the total marks available; Paper 2 is 20% and Paper 3 is 30%. You will be given a certificate with a grade between E and A*, with A* being the highest.

Paper 1 Listening, reading and translation: In the listening section of this paper, you will respond to spoken passages from a range of contexts and sources covering different registers. For one question you will need to summarise in Spanish what you have understood from a passage. In the reading section, you will also answer multiple-choice and comprehension questions in Spanish, based on a variety of written passages. You will also translate a passage from English into Spanish.

Paper 2 Written response to works, grammar and translation: In this paper you will write about two books, or one book and one film that you have studied throughout the year. There will also be a translation of a passage from English into Spanish.

Paper 3 Speaking: Before this exam you will have 5 minutes to prepare a discussion based on a stimulus card you are given. You will then discuss the topic of the card with your examiner, who is usually your teacher. You will also give a presentation on an independent research project on a topic you will have chosen.

What will I learn?

A-level Spanish helps you explore a wide range of topics, which will add to your understanding of the language and country. Topics are: evolving society in Spain; political and artistic culture in Spanish-speaking countries; immigration and multiculturalism in Spain; Franco's dictatorship and the transition to democracy. The books (or book and film) you study may link to the topics, giving you further insight into Spanish culture. You will also learn new grammar and vocabulary and you will be able to translate into and out of Spanish. You will develop your critical thinking, creativity, independence and skills of analysis.

Is this the right subject for me?

If you enjoy meeting and talking to people from other countries, finding out about their cultures and developing your knowledge of how language works, studying A-level Spanish is a good choice for you!

Why should I study a language?

Learning languages encourages you to meet people from different countries and find out more about them. You will learn many skills which are useful in a wide range of careers, such as the ability to communicate clearly, be confident about speaking in public, use problem-solving strategies and write coherently. You will discuss interests, ideas and opinions with other people who speak the language.

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

If you have knowledge of a variety of topics, and can express your opinions, you are ready to build on this at A-level, though you can start from scratch. You will learn about different aspects of Spanish culture, literature and film, and be able to use more complex grammar and vocabulary. This enables you to develop an understanding of the language, the countries where it is spoken and the people who speak it.

What can I do after I have completed the course?

People with language skills and knowledge usually have an advantage over people without them. They stand out as talented and successful people, with broad and exciting horizons. You will add an extra impressive international dimension to your CV and be in a stronger position to get a job in companies with international links. You may progress to study a degree in Spanish. You will be able to work or study in a Spanish-speaking country in later life. You will also add a useful skill if the primary focus of your A-level subjects is not languages: languages support careers in a range of areas including management, business, science and tourism.

SPORT & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Examination Board: AQA

Course structure

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students will sit all their exams and submit all their non-exam assessment at the end of the course

How will I be assessed?

2 Written exam papers: 2 hours - 105 marks per paper - 70% of A-level

Practical Assessment: Internal assessment, external moderation - 90 marks - Students are assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity. There is also a written and/or oral analysis of performance.

What will I 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.

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.

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 and want to follow a course that develops the theoretical aspects of human performance through practical involvement.

