COURSE GUIDE

Lawrence Sheriff School

A National Teaching School Hub

Current Entry Requirements For 2027

Minimum Entry Profile

Eight GCSEs: 4 GCSEs graded at 5 and 4 GCSEs graded at 6 or above
These must include
English: Grade 5 or above in either Language or Literature
Maths: Grade 5 or above
Genuine interest in chosen A Level subjects

Subject-Specific Entry Profile

Art and Design	6 Art	Further Mathematics	8 Maths and as this requires studying 4 subjects you must achieve an average of grade 8 in best 8 GCSE's
Biology	6 Biology (6-6 Combined Science)	Geography	6 Geography
BTEC Engineering	6 Maths **AND** 6 Science subject	German	6 German
Business	6 English OR 5 if studied GCSE Business	History	6 History **AND** 6 in English Literature or Language
Certificate in Mathematical Studies	No specific subject requirements	Mathematics	7 Maths
Chemistry	6 Chemistry (6-6 Combined Science) **AND** 6 Maths	Music	6 Music **AND** a pass in Grade 5 Theory. Grade 5 Practical **OR** equivalent ability to read music.
Classical Civilisation	6 English Literature **OR** 6 History **OR** 6 Classical Civilisation	Philosophy and Ethics	6 English **AND** a genuine interest in Philosophy
Computer Science	6 Computer Science (Grade 7 in Maths if Computer Science is not studied) **AND** evidence of an interest in programming and problem-solving	Physical Education	6 in **EITHER** Biology, Chemistry, Physics **OR** 6-6 Combined Science
Economics	6 Maths	Physics	6 Physics (6-6 Combined Science), 6 Maths
English Language	6 English Language	Politics	6 English Language **OR** English Literature, **AND** 6 in History **OR** Geography, **AND** a genuine interest in Politics
English Literature	6 English Literature	Psychology	6 in Maths **OR** Psychology
Extended Project	No specific subject requirements	Spanish	6 Spanish
French	6 French		

Contents

4 Art and Design
6 Biology
8 BTEC Engineering
9 Business
10 Certificate in Mathematical Studies
11 Chemistry
13 Classical Civilisation
14 Computer Science
15 Economics
16 English Language
17 English Literature
18 Extended Project
19 French
20 Further Mathematics
21 Geography
22 German
24 History
26 Mathematics
28 Music
29 Philosophy and Ethics
31 Physical Education
32 Physics
34 Politics
35 Psychology
36 Spanish

Art & Design

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.

Grade 6 or above in GCSE Art or Design Technology, Graphics or Photography.

How the course is assessed.

60% coursework portfolio, 40% externally set assessment.

Exam board.

AQA

7201, 7202, 7203, 7204, 7205, 7206

Where does it lead?

Art A level opens doors to a wide range of exciting and dynamic Creative careers. From designing buildings as an architect To creating bold fashion, innovative products, or engaging Animations and videos, there are endless possibilities in a Multibillion-dollar global industry.

These careers allow you to turn ideas into reality, shape the world Around you, and be part of fast-growing creative Industries. Many students go on to pursue these pathways Through further study or specialist training, leading to Rewarding roles across the Creative sectors. Ultimately, These pathways start with A Level Art, so a must if you Are considering any creative career, or simply, just for Arts's sake - both are equally valid reasons to select this subject.

Course overview

This is fully flexible qualification which will allow you to follow a broad, open course, or to specialise in one of the endorsed titles.

At A level students produce one problem solving unit of their choice which includes practical work, art journal as well as a dissertation of approximately 1,000 to 3,000 words. They conclude their A level by completing an externally set exam unit consisting of preparations studies, art journal and a final fifteen-hour examination.

You can expect to:

- Have opportunities to generate practical work and ideas about the creative process
- Research from primary and contextual sources
- Develop your knowledge and critical understanding of a range of art, craft and design
- Experiment with media and materials
- Express ideas and opinions through visual and written annotation
- Develop and refine ideas presenting their outcomes
- Write a dissertation based on art critical studies of approximately 1,000 to 3,000 words.

Other useful information

Students will have the opportunity to take part in inspiring art trips, including visits to London and Amsterdam or Paris, where they can experience world-class galleries and creative environments. The course can embraces a more commercial approach, incorporating digital art alongside traditional techniques to reflect modern creative industries.

It is useful for students to have access to a digital camera or a phone with a camera to capture ideas and reference material. Basic art equipment for work at home is also required to support independent creative development.

Biology

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Biology or 6-6 in Combined Science.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination (with a practical endorsement).
Exam board.
OCR. A Level Biology A H420

Where does it lead?

Many students go on to complete Biology-based courses at University including Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Physiology, Biochemistry or Biological Sciences. However a good grade in A Level Biology will also be useful for non-science based courses such as Law and English.

Course overview

If you enjoyed studying Biology at GCSE and are fascinated by living organisms, their structure and function then you will enjoy the depth of the A Level Biology course. Many of the topics will be completely new and not really touched upon at GCSE. The course is content heavy, particularly when compared with the other science A Levels. It also requires significant mathematical skills. Full course content can be found on the OCR website.

You can expect to:

- Develop research skills.
- Develop strong practical skills.
- Analyse information and draw conclusions from data.
- Answer essay type questions.
- Present information.
- Carry out group work.

Other useful information

- All students will need a text book which can be loaned to students for the duration of the course.
- We also recommend that you purchase a revision guide, any brand, but it should be relevant to the OCR specifications.

Students' views …

"More interesting than GCSE Biology because you go into much more details particularly on topics like the heart."

"We got to do some dissections! Which really help you to understand how organs work."

Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Wheeler
Wheeler

BTEC Engineering

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.

Grade 6 or above in GCSE Mathematics.

Grade 6 or above in a GCSE Science subject.

How the course is assessed.

Unit 1: *Engineering Principles - An external examination set and marked by Pearson*

Unit 2: *Engineering Applications - An external examination set and marked by Pearson*

Unit 3: *Engineering Design - An externally set design problem internally assessed and moderated.*

Unit 4: *Engineering Project - An externally set project internally assessed and moderated.*

Exam board.

Pearson.

Where does it lead?

Engineering is currently one of the brightest parts of the UK economy. The success of companies like Jaguar Land Rover, Aston Martin and Bentley are some well-known examples of booming success stories over recent years. In the West Midlands, we have a long tradition of engineering companies with worldwide reputations. All of these companies, especially those in the high tech areas, are keen to recruit young people and provide them with a well-paid, rewarding career. Especially those with good A Levels, a BTEC qualification and plans to study to post graduate level.

Course Overview

Pearson Level 3 Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQ) BTEC National in Engineering (Extended Certificate).

Unit 1: Engineering Principles - Students will develop the skills and knowledge required to solve mechanical, electrical and electronic-based engineering problems by applying appropriate mathematical and physical science principles.

Unit 2: Engineering Applications - In this unit students will explore how advances in modern technology are shaping how a wide range of engineering sectors function. They will also explore how engineers use their understanding of materials and processes to devise sustainable solutions to engineering problems.

Unit 3: Engineering Design - Students will create a design solution in response to an engineering design challenge by developing three-dimensional (3D) models and two-dimensional (2D) detailed drawings including the use of a computer-aided design (CAD) system and other modelling techniques.

Unit 4: Engineering Project - An externally set project internally assessed and moderated. Students apply project management principles to undertake an individual project and will develop conceptual or practical solutions to a chosen engineering problem related to a relevant engineering specialist area.

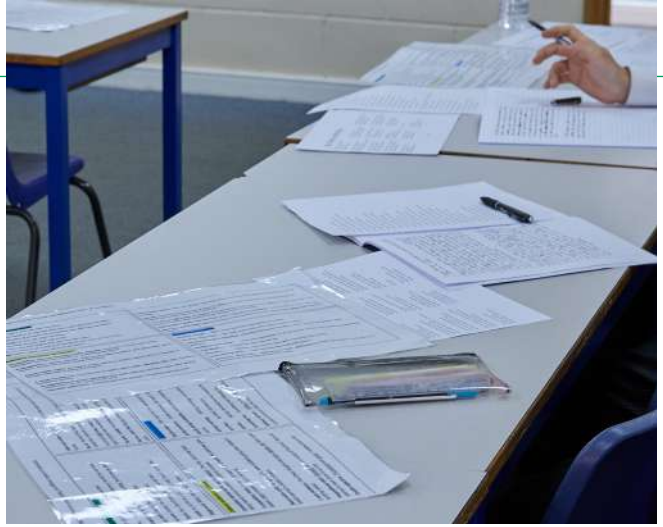
Other useful information

Assessment is by a variety of methods, some internal, others external. All units are either marked by the examination board or, if internally assessed, the work is standards verified by the examination board annually.

Business

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE English, or Grade 5 if studied GCSE Business.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
EDUQAS A Level.



Where does it lead?

Choosing A-level Business will equip you with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in life. Whatever career you choose to pursue you will either be working for your own, or for someone else's business. Studying Business will give you an insight into the intricate inner workings of these organisations and also provide you with the expertise to set up a successful Business of your own.

As part of the course students gain an understanding of the world of business and develop the skills necessary for reading a variety of subjects at university. A significant proportion of our students have gone on to study Business, Economics, Management, Finance, Marketing, Human Resources (HR), Mathematics and Social Sciences. This course also strongly prepares students for vocational routes and many have successfully gained places on prestigious apprenticeships at well-known engineering and financial institutions.

Course overview

Would you like...

- To know how to make intelligent investments to make money whilst you sleep?
- To find out how to ace that interview to get that job role you really want?
- To be your own boss running your own successful business to increase your net worth?
- To discover how to motivate people and get the best out of them?

As part of A-level Business students study the following topics:

Year 12 'Business Opportunities' and 'Business Functions'
Year 13 'Business Analysis and Strategy' and 'Business in a Changing World'

Through the use of interesting corporate case studies, immersive projects, and practical visits to real-life Businesses such as Cadbury and BMW, students gain a broad understanding of key business topics, whilst also developing a range of transferable skills such as data Analysis and problem-solving. The chance to participate in a variety of business challenges and competitions help to further enhance students' practical experience of Business and fully prepare them for life after education. These include opportunities like the Social Enterprise club, ran in partnership with Rugby School, where students design and produce a product that solves a local or global issue, eg litter, sustainability or pollution.

You can expect to:

- Learn about a wide range of private and public organisations and the markets they serve.
- Investigate businesses from the perspective of a range of stakeholder groups.
- Be fully prepared for assessments in order to perform highly and achieve excellent results.

Students' views ...

"Mr Stokes and Miss Frater bring the best out of you and support you to achieve greatness...I like the structure and organisation of the lessons, especially the advice I get given to ensure I achieve the top marks."

"Business A-level is enjoyable because it has many links to current affairs and everyday life."

Certificate in Mathematical Studies

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Maths.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

Mathematical Studies is studied alongside your other 3 or 4 A-level subjects. The qualification supports learners to:

- Explore real world applications of maths, including financial calculations such as income tax, inflation, mortgages and loans
- Continue your studies and experience of Mathematics beyond GCSE
- Develop the increasingly important skill of data analysis
- Acquire a post-GCSE Maths qualification that is recognised and highly regarded by universities
- Gain a qualification that provides the equivalent of an AS level in UCAS points

Course overview

Mathematical Studies is assessed 100% through examination (No coursework). There are two exams sat at the end of year 12. Each Is 1 hour 30 minutes and allows the use of a calculator:

Paper 1 – covers Personal Finance, Analysis of Data and Estimation techniques

Paper 2 – covers Critical Path and Risk Analysis

Student views

"Maths is a strength of mine; I really enjoy it, and with my A-level subjects being reasonably numbers-based I thought it was a great fit. It also really supported the number skills needed in my other subjects. It has enhanced my abilities in problem solving, practical mathematical knowledge and analytical thinking."

Archie, studied mathematical Studies alongside A-Level Business and Economics

"Mathematical Studies has provided me with essential knowledge for my future, especially with topics such as income tax and student loans. This makes the subject relevant and enjoyable. I have found studying Mathematical Studies alongside A-level Biology especially useful as there is some crossover in terms of the maths topics."

Sofia, studying Mathematical Studies alongside A-level Biology and History

For more information on Mathematical Studies please Scan the QR code.

Note: Mathematical Studies is unable to be studied alongside A-Level Mathematics

Chemistry

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Chemistry or 6-6 in Combined Science.
Grade 6 in Maths.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination covering theory and practical skills.
Exam board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

In recent years the department has sent pupils to study at most of the top universities in the UK. These include Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Nottingham and Warwick for courses as varied as Chemistry, Medicine, Veterinary Science, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Engineering, Law and Geology. It can also lead to degree apprenticeships in fields across Science.

Course overview

The course itself is taught over six lessons a week by two members of staff. There are three modules entitled:

Unit 1– Physical Chemistry: This includes developing knowledge of atomic structure, bonding, kinetics and equilibrium.

Unit 2 – Inorganic Chemistry: This module is all about identifying and explaining trends in the groups and periods of the Periodic Table.

Unit 3 – Organic Chemistry: The content in this module will develop your understanding of organic substances, including alkanes, alkenes and alcohols. As well as introducing you to new organic compounds and their reactions.

You can expect to:

Experience a variety of teaching methods, not least practical skills and analysis. Also each student will be provided with an electronic copy of past papers, extensive PowerPoint presentations and notes. Your work will be assessed twice every half term and individual feedback given to you to make improvements. Informal opportunities for revision will also be provided so you can Access help from the staff in a relaxed environment.

Other useful information

It is important to stress that the primary responsibility for learning lies with the pupil. Homework will be set on a regular basis and pupils who are serious about top grades are expected to spend at least the same amount of time spent in lessons a week on the course in their own time. The Chemistry staff will provide additional support when required and it is this commitment to the pupil that produces results consistently above the national average.

Students' views …

"A really interesting course."

"The practical work is fascinating."

"Essential if you want to become a doctor, dentist or vet."

Copper
Chloride

Classical Civilisation

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
English Literature - 6 ***OR*** *History - 6* ***OR*** *Classical Civilisation - 6.*
How the course is assessed.
100% examination at the end of Year 13.
Exam board.
OCR.

Where does it lead?

Studying Classical Civilisation at A Level offers both intellectual enrichment and practical value, whether you're aiming for university or entering the workforce. By exploring the ancient Greek and Roman worlds, students not only gain fascinating historical and cultural knowledge, but also highly transferable skills. These include the ability to analyse complex sources, construct well-reasoned arguments, and develop independent, critical, and evaluative thinking—skills that are valued in a wide range of academic and professional fields.

Classical Civilisation A Level is highly regarded by university departments across the UK. Studying Classical Civilisation at A Level can provide a strong foundation for a wide range of degree subjects, including Classics, Drama, English, History, History of Art, Philosophy and Politics. Its broad, interdisciplinary nature makes it an excellent choice for students with diverse academic interests.

Classical Civilisation appears on UCL's list of preferred A Level subject and is recognised by Trinity College as a 'Generally Suitable' Arts A Level. UCAS data shows students who take Classical Civilisation go on to study diverse subjects including Medicine, Veterinary Science, and Chemistry, demonstrating its versatility.

Course overview

This qualification is made up of three varied components, each offering a unique insight into the ancient world:

The World of the Hero

This core component focuses on the cornerstone of Classical literature: epic poetry. Students will study two of the most influential texts of the ancient world—Homer's Iliad and Virgil's Aeneid. Through close reading and analysis, students explore themes such as heroism, fate, honour, and the relationship between mortals and the gods, gaining deep insight into both Greek and Roman values.

Greek Theatre

This unit delves into the rich tradition of ancient Greek drama, combining the study of three key plays—a tragedy by Sophocles or Euripides, a comedy by Aristophanes, and the cultural context of theatre in ancient Athens. Students examine themes like justice, power, gender, and satire while also exploring how drama reflected and challenged social and political life in classical Greece.

Politics of the Late Republic

In this unit, students investigate the political thought and historical figures of the Roman Republic, focusing on a time of immense change and conflict. Through the study of Cicero, Caesar, and other key sources, students examine issues of power, leadership, morality, and political philosophy—many of which still resonate today. This unit develops students' ability to think critically about politics, ethics, and the nature of government.

You can expect to:

- Interpret and analyse a wide range of classical sources within their social, historical, and cultural contexts.
- Evaluate evidence critically and construct well-reasoned, analytical responses supported by clear and persuasive arguments.
- Debate and discuss key ideas, values, and practices from the ancient world, exploring how they compare with or challenge modern perspectives.

Students' Views…

"Classical Civilisation helped me see how the ancient world still shapes modern life—from politics and philosophy to art and literature. It made me think in ways no other subject did."

"Classical Civ wasn't just about the past—it was about how to think critically, argue clearly, and see the bigger picture. I use those skills every day."

"It was one of the most engaging A Levels I took. The discussions were always lively and the topics were so different from anything else on the timetable."

Computer Science

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Computer Science (Grade 7 or above in GCSE Maths if GCSE Computer Science is not studied).
Evidence of an interest in computer programming and problem solving.
How the course is assessed.
A Level
2 1/2 hour on-screen exam – 40% of A Level.
2 1/2 hour written paper – 40% of A Level.
Non-exam assessment– 20% of A Level.
Exam board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

Computer Science is suitable for students wishing to follow a career in a range of science based subjects, including Computer Science and Engineering. It is also suitable for a future in business,Medicine or Law.

Course overview

The course is not about learning to use tools or just training in a specific programming language. There is an emphasis on abstract thinking, general problem solving, algorithms and mathematical reasoning.

You can expect to:

- Engage in problem solving, write and use algorithms.
- Learn to write and test programs.
- Learn about hardware and software, networks and the Internet.
- Understand the ways in which data is represented in a computer system.
- Understand the ethical and legal constraints when using computer systems.
- Use relational databases.
- Understand the system development lifecycle and the needs of a real end user.

Other useful information

Free online resources are also used throughout the course. Installation of the free Visual Studio programming suite on a home computer is recommended.

Students' views …

"The A Level contained a good mix of coursework and theory that covered all basic knowledge and in some cases stretched us to learn very important topics in the study of Computer Science."

Economics

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
A grade 6 at Maths GCSE is required.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
Edexcel.

Where does it lead?

Many Sixth Form economists go on to take a degree in the subject but many more will find that they have to study some economics at university in courses such as Finance, Business Studies, Surveying and Economic History. Economics provides students with analytical and evaluation skills which are useful in many other careers, including financial services, business management and consultancy, marketing, law, civil service and engineering. With the state of the current Economic climate those who have an understanding of the Economic world are well respected by future employers.

Course overview

Economics has long been considered the choice subject of many society's leaders. Economics gives us an insight into the levers of wealth and well-being. Economists today analyse problems in the economy and attempt to create innovative ways to correct them. The World needs bright young people with a clear understanding of the challenges and opportunities of the 21stCentury global economy. Studying A Level Economics is a fabulous opportunity to begin developing this understanding.

You can expect to:

- Learn the tools that economists use to understand how markets and economies work, why they might fail and how to improve them.
- Analyse and apply economic theories to a range of real-world contexts but, by learning to think like economists, you will learn a wide range of holistic skills.
- Learn how to effectively structure a balanced argument and how to evaluate the significance of different factors over different timescales.

Other useful information

- Economics is a topical and fluid subject and you are encouraged to read widely from quality newspaper and journal articles to a variety of digital sources.
- Text books used including 'Economics A Level' – Alain Anderton.
- There are six lessons a week, delivered by two teachers.

Students' views …

"The A Level course has made me much more aware of how economies work and fail. I've really enjoyed the learning experience in economics, particularly the discussions."

"The economics course made the news make sense! I am now able to explain to my family what is going on in the UK Economy."

"Economics fits really well with my other A Level subjects. If you like thinking, this is the subject for you."

English Language

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE English.
How the course is assessed.
20% coursework. 80% examination.
Exam board.
Eduqas.

Where does it lead?

Many graduates who study English Language go on to start their careers in the media as some form of journalist, working on a newspaper, or for a magazine or website. Publishing is another popular career choice. English students acquire strong research skills, which makes them suitable for a researching role while working behind the scenes on television or radio or even as an archivist or librarian. Surprisingly the largest percentage of recent English graduates went into Business Management or Marketing training schemes.

Course overview

A Level English Language is an exciting and integrated course in which students learn to be 'language scientists', collecting and examining examples of language from different contexts and testing different theories and ideas about how language works. The course is essentially a study of social linguistics and you will discuss the reasons for the variations in ways people speak and communicate.

You can expect to discuss:

- Has social media influenced the way people use language?
- Why some words are considered wrong, unacceptable or obscene? And is it always wrong to swear?
- The application of linguistic knowledge, methods and insights to the forensic context of law, crime investigation, and judicial procedures.

Other useful information

- We describe different varieties of language, not state what is right or wrong.
- We focus on language in its social contexts: how we change the language we use according to who is speaking and where it is being spoken or written.
- We study the ways politicians and marketing companies use language to exercise power and influence audiences.

Students' views …

"It's a fascinating and relevant insight into the language used in everyday and real life contexts."

"It's really thorough and detailed. It's really useful to be able to discuss the ways writers and speakers communicate. We can improve our language skills which can then be applied to all subjects, not just English."

"I've liked learning more about how professional writers use language. I have decided to study Sports Journalism at university as a result of my studies in English Language."

English Literature

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE English Literature.
How the course is assessed.
20% coursework. 80% examination.
Exam board.
Edexcel.

Where does it lead?

English Literature is both academically challenging and hugely enjoyable when studied at A Level. Some students choose it because they want to study Literature at higher education level. Others choose it simply because they enjoy reading and studying authors' works. Graduates of English Literature often pursue careers in law, journalism, teaching and business management.

Course overview

The course covers a wide range of poetry, drama and prose literature. At A Level, the course is more independent. Students are expected to read widely and independently, with guidance from the teachers. Students have told us they very much enjoy being able to make their own text choices and set their own coursework tasks.

You can expect to:

- Read widely and independently both set texts and texts selected by yourselves.
- Engage creatively and develop your knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation.
- Explore the historical and social contexts of the texts and other critics' interpretations of them.
- Deepen your understanding of the changing traditions of literature in English.

Other useful information

Students often ask about our choice of texts. We have a very experienced team of A Level English Literature teachers and set texts are chosen with the groups' personal interest in mind. Set texts include: Othello, A Streetcar Named Desire, Frankenstein, A Handmaid's Tale, A Thousand Splendid Suns and Wuthering Heights. Students will study a range of poetry taken from a particular poetic movement such as the Romantics.

Students' views …

"Learning about the significance of cultural concerns of the author's contemporaries, and the historical, social and political contexts in which the famous works of literature were written is fascinating."

"The teachers show a real and genuine enthusiasm for the subject. We are challenged to read and discuss books and concepts we may not have chosen ourselves."

"I've enjoyed learning how Literature shapes our culture, ethics and values so much that I've applied to study English Literature at University."

Extended Project Qualification

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
There are no specific subject requirements.
How the course is assessed.
100% coursework. Which takes the form of a dissertation/report/artefact and a formal assessed presentation.
Exam board.
Edexcel.

Where does it lead?

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) will enable you to develop research skills, produce detailed extended writing, undertake academic reading, construct an argument, evaluate and communicate your ideas effectively. All these skills are required for higher education and in many careers.

Course overview

The EPQ is an opportunity to extend and develop subject knowledge and personal interests. Most students complete a dissertation based upon a research question which, for the most part, is developed independently and chosen to reflect individual interests. Students have explored a range of topics: cryptography, genetics, artificial intelligence, history of conflict in the Middle East, alternative medicine, cardiovascular diseases, the impact of social media, the Russian Revolution, the Coen brothers, performance enhancing drugs in sport and many other diverse and interesting subjects. For those who are more creative or practically minded there is an option of doing an artefact based project or a field study/ investigation style project.

You can expect to:

- Be writing about a subject that interests you.
- Learn how to reference your work appropriately.
- Read widely at an academic level.
- Have a dedicated supervisor to help guide you through this independent Project.
- Gain a number of valuable skills.

Other useful information

Universities greatly value the Extended Project Qualification: the skills demonstrated throughout the Project process are ones that are in great demand. Some universities will reduce grade offers if you have an EPQ. An EPQ will enable you to demonstrate to university professors that you have a gained a much deeper understanding of an aspect of a subject than A Levels alone will allow. .

Students' views …

"EPQ is a way to learn and discover things you wouldn't ordinarily."

"EPQ teaches us useful research and essay skills which are vital for later in life."

"EPQ is a great subject where we have the freedom to develop our knowledge in a subject of our own interest."

"A great way to learn something that isn't on the school syllabus."

French

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE French.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

Languages can be used these days in almost all areas of the working world; business, finance, teaching, translation, retail, civil service and international organisations. Many university courses can also be combined with a language to give you that extra edge to your qualification.

Course overview

As the world gets smaller, British holidaymakers travel the world and businesses become increasingly international, there has never been such an important time in our history to study a foreign language in depth. We aim to open your mind to the fascinating aspects of the language, life and times of France and its people. Full course content can be found on the AQA website.

You can expect to:

- Read and understand authentic texts.
- Listen to and comprehend the spoken language.
- Understand the key social and cultural aspects of France.
- Express ideas and opinions about key modern issues in written form.
- Write extended essays.
- Talk about important issues in French.
- Study two cultural topics in greater depth in the second year.

Other useful information

Textbooks used are 'AQA A-level French' (Hodder Education), 'AQA French A level Year 1'(OUP), and AQA French
A Level Year 2' (OUP).

Students' views …

"It's been much more interesting to learn French at A Level because you go into much more detail and you get much more knowledge about how the language works."

"I've really enjoyed reading French newspapers and watching the French news which we didn't do at GCSE."

"The grammar was difficult at first but I soon got to grips with it."

"I found the listening exercises much easier than I'd expected as you can listen to the passages through headphones as often as you like!"

Further Mathematics

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics and as this requires studying 4 subjects you must achieve an average of grade 8 in best 8 GCSE'sn GCSE Mathematics.

How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
Edexcel.

What is Further Mathematics?

Further Mathematics is an A level qualification which both broadens and deepens the mathematics covered in A level Mathematics. Further Mathematics is taken alongside an A level in Mathematics as a fourth subject.

Where does it lead?

Almost three quarters of Russell Group universities mention Further Mathematics in their entrance requirements for BSc Mathematics. This course should be the first choice for any student intending to specialise in Mathematics or subjects that require a high level of mathematical competence, for example, Computer Science, Theoretical Physics or Engineering.

Course overview

The course is designed to allow specialisation in the subject by the study of a wide range of topics, as well as a more sophisticated approach to some topics that are included in the Mathematics A level.

You can expect to:

- Study further content in Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics, including branches of Mathematics which are not covered in A-Level Mathematics, like Complex Numbers and Matrices.

Other useful information

A calculator with advanced statistical functions is required. The Casio fx-85GT PLUS or fx-991ES PLUS, used at GCSE, are no longer sufficient for A-level Mathematics. The school will endeavour to make a suitable model available for purchase at below high street cost. More information will be available on joining the Sixth Form.

Students' views …

"I have two teachers who make themselves available to help me however trivial the problem."

"The pace of this course was difficult to cope with until I scheduled regular times out of lessons to work on practising the skills that had been introduced in the lessons."

"It has been both enlightening and very interesting to see the skills learnt in the A Level course come into play in higher mathematical concepts."

Geography

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Geography.
How the course is assessed.
A Level – 3 exams and an independent investigation.
Paper 1– Physical systems – 22%.
Paper 2 – Human interactions – 22%.
Paper 3 – Geographical debates – 36%.
Independent investigation – 20%.
Exam board.
OCR.

Where does it lead?

Geography is highly valued by universities as an A-level choice. Geographers are among the most employable university graduates because of the broad range of skills they develop. The subject gives students a perspective on a wide range of exciting issues such as managing natural hazards, trade, and power and borders; and complements a wide range of subjects including Economics, Maths, Biology and Politics.

Geography is uniquely both a science and a humanity. From the global scale through to the local, Geography is an ever changing discipline; and our teaching evolves at real time to explore the contemporary issues. Whether you prefer the physical side or the human, A-level Geography leads naturally to university-level courses. Recognised as a 'facilitator' subject by Russell Group universities, Geography allows students to progress to the top universities.

Geographers have the ability to plan, collect and analyse primary data; synthesise and evaluate a variety of data sources, craft debates, and target, plan and progress through their own learning journey. These skills are developed through an individualised learning approach in a supportive environment.

You can expect to:

- Develop understanding of global issues and broaden global perspectives.
- Engage with very topical and up to date case studies and topic content.
- Opportunities to attend field trips (cost involved), to study fieldwork skills.
- Complete a geographical investigation of your choice to investigate key geographical theory covered by the specifications.
- Develop a range of skills – presentations, essays, projects, ICT skills, debates.
- Be part of a department with consistently outstanding A Level results.
- Enjoy the course!

Students' views …

"The course is loads better than the GCSE one - the global issues and topics are really contemporary and relevant to your life. It's my favourite subject and so interesting."

Royal Geographic Society

"Geographers enter a very wide range of career areas and put simply there is no such thing as a geography job, there are jobs that geographers do."

21.

German

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE German.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

Languages can be used these days in almost all areas of the working world; business, finance, teaching, translation, retail, civil service and international organisations. Many university courses can also be combined with a language to give you that extra edge to your qualification.

Course overview

As the world gets smaller, British holidaymakers travel the world and businesses become increasingly international, there has never been such an important time in our history to study a foreign language in depth. We aim to open your mind to the fascinating aspects of the language, life and times of Germany and its people. Full course content can be found on the AQA website.

You can expect to:

- Read and understand authentic texts.
- Listen to and comprehend the spoken language.
- Understand the key social and cultural aspects of Germany.
- Express ideas and opinions about key modern issues in written form.
- Write extended essays.
- Talk about important issues in German.
- Study German film and literature in greater depth in the second year.

Other useful information

Textbooks used are 'AQA A-level German' (Hodder Education), 'AQA German A Level Year 1'(OUP), and AQA German A Level Year 2' (OUP).

Students' views …

''It was a far more relaxed atmosphere at A Level than at GCSE and we do much more interesting activities.''

''I enjoy the challenge of becoming increasingly fluent in German and speaking German in creative contexts.''

''Small class sizes mean that we can get individual help and support.''

''I like the fact that we go into the Language lab every week and get to work more independently.''

Fighting
for our food
The chemistry of insecticides
HODDER EDUCATION
review
Appeasem
Mistake or nec
HiSTORY
A NEEDLESS CATASTROPHE?
Burying the princes in the Tower
How Richard III and Henry Tudor tried to erase them from history
Victorian murders
Who was the best-dressed person in British history?
HUNTED WITCHES
The English
Searching for meaning
Economist
Let's party like it's 1793

History

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
*Grade 6 or above in GCSE History **AND** Grade 6 in English Literature or Language.*
How the course is assessed.
A Level: 80% examination; 20% coursework (NEA).
Exam board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

History is a highly respected academic discipline for university entrance and leads on to a wide variety of career options. These include the legal profession, journalism, the media (written and broadcast), finance, the civil service and local government, the armed forces, museum, archival and library services, the heritage industry, teaching and almost any career that involves a management capacity. History is also valuable and interesting for its own sake and one of the best reasons for choosing it is because you have a genuine interest and enjoy it.

Course overview

The course centres on British and World History, considering continuity and change over time and in-depth investigation. We currently study Tudor England 1485-1603, Russia in Revolution 1917-53 and offer the Causes of World War One for the NEA/Coursework component.

You can expect to:

- Investigate historical problems through the study of texts, written sources, visual records and film or documentary material.
- Engage in group and class discussion on a range of historical issues.
- Deliver seminars and presentations.
- Develop your independent research skills.
- Use your analytical and evaluative skills to produce coherent, detailed and persuasive written and verbal responses to specific historical tasks and issues.

Other useful information

There are opportunities for participation in field trips both related to the History course and conferences provided by universities to aid understanding, appreciation and insight into the various aspects of historical study.

Students' views …

"History has really improved my communication skills. I can now put a fluent argument together in essays and presentations. This really helps my progress in other A Levels."

"I now understand the modern world so much more by studying the past."

BORO
3.3

Mathematics

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 7 or above in GCSE Mathematics.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
Edexcel.

Where does it lead?

Mathematics is a means of communication, a tool of analysis and a problem-solving resource. It is important as a language in a technological world. An understanding of mathematics leads to a better understanding of the world around us. The world relies so much on technology that people who possess a high level of mathematical knowledge and competence are valued and very highly regarded by Higher Education and employers alike. Some of the areas of employment with a significant mathematical content include: Accounting; Actuarial work; Architecture; Computer Science; Economics; Electronic Data Processing; Engineering (all disciplines); I.T.;Medicine; Operational Research; Sciences; Statistics; Teaching.

Course overview

Mathematics is a very challenging course and it assumes knowledge of the whole GCSE course, including the most demanding material. Can you answer the following questions with an emphatic 'yes'? If so, A level Mathematics may be a right choice for you.

1. Have you obtained a grade 7 or better at GCSE?
2. Do you enjoy the way that new concepts expand your understanding of the whole subject?
3. Do you understand algebra?
4. Are you prepared to work on your own initiative and persevere with challenging problems until you reach a solution?

You can expect to:

- Deepen and extend your knowledge of Algebra, Trigonometry and Statistics, and be introduced to Calculus and Mechanics.
- Apply these new skills for yourself by solving problems that involve several stages of logic.
- Have six lessons per week and spend an average of one hour per night practising these skills.

Other useful information

A calculator with advanced statistical functions is required. The Casio fx-85GT PLUS or fx-991ES PLUS, used at GCSE, are no longer sufficient for A-level Mathematics. The school will endeavour to make a suitable model available for purchase at below high street cost. More information will be available on joining the Sixth Form.

Students' views …

"I found algebra difficult at first but by spending more time practising I got better."

"Thoroughly understanding a topic enables you to answer any question that you are asked."

Music

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Music and a pass in Grade 5 Theory. Grade 5 practical or equivalent.
Ability to read music.
How the course is assessed.
Option A - 35% Performing [Public Recital], 25% Composing [Coursework], 40% written exam.
Option B - 35% Composing [Coursework], 25% Performing [Coursework], 40% written exam.
Exam board.
Eduqas.

Where does it lead?

Music can lead to a vibrant career as a performing musician, working as a composer/arranger in the TV and film industry, teaching, music therapy, publishing and music journalism. Music develops many transferable skills, such as teamwork, leadership, analysis and communication.

Course overview

This is a two year A level course. You will perform regularly on your instruments, compose original music, and study music taken from the western classical tradition, Rock and Pop and 20th century music. Full course content can be found on the Eduqas website.

You can expect to:

- Perform regularly in public and to the class.
- Continue lessons on your instrument.
- Critique and analyse your performances.
- Compose original music of your own choice and also to a brief set by Eduqas.
- Study the development of the symphony, including 2 set works.
- Study rock and pop as well as early 20th century music.

Other useful information

The minimum standard for performing at A Level is approximately equivalent to ABRSM grade 6. To achieve the highest mark bracket the standard is approximately grade 7. As this is a two year course we would expect students to a minimum of grade 5 when they begin in year 12. All instruments and musical styles are acceptable. Students are encouraged to perform as regularly as possible, both as a soloist and as a member of an ensemble. To undertake this course you should be able to read music.

Students' views …

"I enjoyed the compositional aspect as it gave me the chance to write music in my favourite style."

"Studying music was a welcome creative complement to my other maths and science based courses."

"I really enjoyed the lively and encouraging atmosphere the department offered."

Philosophy & Ethics of Religion

Religious Studies

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE English and a genuine interest in Philosophy.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
OCR.

Where does it lead?

Quite apart from philosophy being the basis of human thought, this A level is highly regarded by Universities for the development of thought it enables and encourages. For future employment in the fields of politics, business strategy and law the philosophy element is most apt. Careers in medicine, law and the environment most obviously apply to the ethics section.

Course overview

Ever wondered why? Not why anything in particular, just why? Philosophy has been the joy of thinking humans through the centuries, and remains an important ideal today. It is not always about answers, it is about exploring questions. Ethics continues to be one of the most important fields of study in society too, as humanity pushes forwards its boundaries of knowledge, we have to ask: Is it right to spend money on space exploration above educating children? Who determines the right to die? What IS right and wrong?

Following this the Christian beliefs that have shaped western society are addressed and dissected thoroughly identifying some key challenges of secular thought.

You can expect to:

- Read and understand philosophical and ethical works, from Plato to Dawkins.
- Express your own opinions on issues such as sex God and existence.
- Write extended essays.
- Discuss and debate with peers.

Other useful information

Textbooks cover the entire course, but these are yet to be published and so further details will be available closer to the time. A good book to start with is the Puzzle of Ethics (Peter Vardy) or An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion (Third Edition, Brian Davies). There is an expectation of other reading too though and a list of recommended reading will be given to you at the start of the course. You will also be invited to the weekly Philosophy and Law reading group to support you with this.

Students' views …

"This course is the first genuine opportunity you get in school to think freely without being marked down for it."

"We argue a lot, with the teacher, with each other, it's fantastic, it has really challenged my beliefs."

"Philosophy and Ethics is by far the best preparation for university."

Physical Education

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 at GCSE in one of the separate sciences (either Biology or Chemistry or Physics) or a 6-6 in Combined Science).
How the course is assessed.
70% examination, 30% practical and Oral assessment.
Exam board.
OCR.

Where does it lead?

The course is ideal for students who wish to pursue a career in Physical Education, Teaching, Medicine, Sports Science, Sports Coaching, Physiotherapy, Sports Psychology, Leisure Management, Sports Development Officer etc.

Course overview

The specification takes a multi-disciplinary approach, encouraging the development of different methods of enquiry drawn from a wide range of disciplines, with the focal point being the performer and the performance. The specification is based on the interaction between the theory and practice of Physical Education.

Full course content can be found on the OCR website (H555).

https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234833-specification-accredited-a-level-gce-physical-education-h555.pdf

You can expect to:

- Study a thorough programme over a 2 year A-Level.
- Be assessed in ONE practical activity from the list; https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/234840-guide-to-non-exam-assessment.pdf (you **MUST** be playing your chosen sport regularly in an external club setting).
- Be assessed in both Technique and by Effective Performance (15%).
- Produce an oral Evaluation and Analysis of Performance for Improvement in a chosen activity (15%).
- Theory Content: Skill Acquisition, Sports Psychology, Sport and Society, Contemporary Issues, Applied Anatomy and Physiology, Biomechanics, Exercise Physiology.
- Written exams are worth 70%.

Other useful information

All practical activities require video evidence to support the mark awarded and you will be expected to provide overlaying annotation and commentary, as well as a performance log.

We aim to run two A Level PE trips to supplement learning – History of Sport at Rugby School and the Application of Exercise Physiology at a University.

Students' views …

"The pictures and practical demonstrations used during teaching make it easy to see and understand."

"It is much more interesting and in depth than GCSE."

"If you like sport then you will love PE A Level!"

Physics

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Physics or 6-6 in Combined Science.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Maths.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
Edexcel (Specification for 2015).

Where does it lead?

Physics is accepted worldwide as being a demanding and rigorous qualification at A level. Apart from the more obvious employment opportunities in areas such as engineering and medicine, physics is also an avenue into a number of sectors of work, including law and accountancy.

Course overview

Physics plays an enormous role in our understanding of why many of the processes we see on Earth (and beyond) occur. It gives us an insight into both the benefits and risks of many physical processes, such as radioactivity and electricity. However, it also enables students to express their mathematical understanding of concepts such as forces, cosmology and quantum theory. As with any A level science course, practical work forms a large part of our lesson time at this level. However, this is not assessed as a separate unit, but incorporated into the written examinations.

You can expect to:

- Undertake practical work, including planning, obtaining results, analysing and evaluating.
- Explain the nature of physical processes.
- Perform calculations.
- Discuss theoretical aspects of Physics.
- Produce presentations about topics in Physics.

Students' views …

"Inspired greater interest in the subject."

"A variety of visual aids and experiments were used to explain theories."

"Supported me, answered my questions, and helped me when I was stuck!"

"Opportunity for lunchtime and after school advice and revision was invaluable."

Politics

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 in GCSE English.
Grade 6 in GCSE History ***OR*** *Geography.*
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

Politics fits very well with subjects like Economics, History and Psychology and it can also be a valuable essay subject to complement Maths and Science subjects. Many students go on to read Politics at university and it is excellent preparation for a career in law, the civil service and public sector, business and management, the media, and the voluntary sector.

Course overview

The two-year A Level course consists of three units:

- Government and Politics of the UK: our different elections and electoral systems; referendums; political parties and pressure groups; our constitution and judiciary; the role of parliament; how our prime ministerial and cabinet system operate; and finally, local and devolved government and the main institutions of the European Union.
- Government and Politics of the US and comparative politics: in which students cover US presidential and congressional elections, the US Constitution and role of the Supreme Court; Congress; and the Presidency. We then compare and contrast the main features of British and American government and politics.
- Political Ideas: in which students look at the main ideas of socialism, conservatism, liberalism and one other from a list that includes feminism and anarchism.

You can expect to:

- Be aware of the main political stories on a daily and weekly basis.
- Participate in a lot of debate and discussion.
- Develop a good understanding of British and American politics and political ideologies.

Other useful information

Each year we visit Parliament and the Supreme Court. We will certainly aim to meet up with the MP for Rugby, John Slinger.

Students' views …

"Politics has become one of my favourite subjects and it has helped my understanding of international and global society which is what I would like to follow at university."

"It has helped me to learn about the inner workings of government and interested me to engage in political discussion due to my improved knowledge."

"Lessons have typically been engaging and intriguing. I'm much more interested in now in the news thanks to class discussions."

Psychology

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Mathematics or Psychology.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam Board.
Edexcel.

Where does it lead?

The A-Level Psychology course covers a broad range of topics in Psychology and is an excellent foundation for students who go on to study Psychology at University. This then opens up a wide range of future careers, from Sports Psychology and Clinical Psychology to working as a researcher.

However, this course will also benefit students who are looking to pursue other courses or careers. For example, the Social Psychology module is relevant to anyone considering studying Business and Management, while the focus on mental health disorders may appeal to those considering a future in Medicine. However, the development of key skills, such as the ability to think critically and to construct an effective argument, will be beneficial to a range of fields.

Course overview

The initial part of the course focuses on examining behaviour from different 'approaches', applying this to issues such as prejudice, aggression, phobias and memory. In the second year of the course students then look at the practical applications of these approaches by applying knowledge to Criminal Psychology and Mental Health Disorders. Throughout the course students will also develop an understanding of research methods, ethics and data analysis through a series of practicals, and the course culminates by looking at the wider issues and debates within the subject.

Overall the course offers something for everyone, and links are consistently made with both current and historical events.

You can expect to:

- Learn about a range of behaviours, from obedience to schizophrenia.
- Be taught to question what you learn and the world around you.
- Develop your writing skills.
- Undertake your own research, both on your own and in groups.
- Reflect on the decisions you make as a researcher.

Other useful information

A wide range of additional support and extracurricular opportunities is available to all students, for example, Psychology mentoring, lunchtime clubs and subject competitions. Advice and guidance is also on offer for students considering studying Psychology at university.

Students' views …

"Psychology is a constantly interesting subject which has challenged my beliefs and misconceptions on how the mind works. While you can expect it to be a challenge, it never becomes boring."

"An engaging course that allows for debates and discussions."

"A lot more scientific than you would originally expect."

"Psychology opens your eyes!"

"Psychology is a subject that is not only interesting but allows you to understand yourself and others around you so much better."

Spanish

Fact Focus

Subject specific entry requirements.
Grade 6 or above in GCSE Spanish.
How the course is assessed.
100% examination.
Exam Board.
AQA.

Where does it lead?

Languages can be used these days in almost all areas of the working world; business, finance, teaching, translation, retail, civil service and international organisations. Many university courses can also be combined with a language to give you that extra edge to your qualification.

Course overview

As the world gets smaller, Britain plays its part in the EU, holidaymakers travel the world and businesses become increasingly international, there has never been such an important time in our history to study a foreign language in depth. We aim to open your mind to the fascinating aspects of the language, life and times of Spanish and its people. Full course content can be found on the AQA website.

You can expect to:

- Read and understand authentic texts.
- Listen to and comprehend the spoken language.
- Understand the key social and cultural aspects of Spanish.
- Express ideas and opinions about key modern issues in written form.
- Write extended essays.
- Talk about important issues in Spanish.
- Study two cultural topics in greater depth in the second year.

Other useful information

Textbooks used are "AQA A-level Spanish'' (Hodder Education), 'AQA Spanish A Level Year 1'(OUP), and AQA Spanish A Level Year 2' (OUP).

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