MAIDEN ERLEGH
SCHOOL



SIXTH FORM
PROSPECTUS

FOR COURSES
COMMENCING SEPTEMBER 2027



Welcome to
Maiden Erlegh Sixth Form

Dear Students and Parents

Thank you for the interest which you have shown in our Sixth Form. We are very proud of the opportunities at Maiden Erlegh, and of our students and their achievements.

Maiden Erlegh is among the best schools and sixth forms in the country, and Ofsted graded the school outstanding in 2020 and we maintained this standard in the most recent Ofsted inspection carried out in 2025. Students here overwhelmingly meet or exceed their potential at A level; indeed, progress is typically well above average. As a result, students go on to their chosen university courses, including Oxbridge and other prestigious establishments, but also increasingly they are securing advanced and degree level apprenticeships.



We are a large Sixth Form but we work with students as an individual as they embark on their 16-19 Study Programme. Students will have their own individual learning plan based on their personal aspirations for the future.

> "Students in the sixth form excel."
>
> ***- Ofsted 2025***

For students, the main part of this plan is taken up with A level and/or Technical courses and the independent study underpinning them. Our responsibility is to ensure students have the information and skills necessary to secure the best destination for them when they leave us, and that they are equipped and confident to go forwards into adult life. To this end, the individual learning plan includes a programme of sessions and events which will help them prepare for life beyond the Sixth Form.

This includes work related learning, enrichment, PSMSC (Personal, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education) and a period of work experience which we expect all students to undertake.

In addition to this formal plan, students will have extra-curricular and student leadership opportunities which we encourage all students to participate in. Student Committees are lively and active in decision making as well as in arranging social events. The Student Leaders and their deputies liaise regularly with senior staff to ensure the student voice is heard. Through opportunities such as these, not only will students grow in confidence and develop a range of "soft" skills ready for life after the Sixth Form, they will also meet fantastic people, give back to the school community and have fun!

We offer a formal induction programme to help students make the transition from school as we recognise that young people need a different type of care and support in the Sixth Form. They will have a personal tutor who will review their individual learning plan with them on a regular basis and they can access a range of additional support as appropriate including academic mentoring, expert advice on post-18 applications, careers guidance and a range of other support, for example counselling.

Please take time to read the prospectus carefully, as the choices made are not just important now, but will also affect university and careers options.

Like me, the students at Maiden Erlegh are extremely proud of their Sixth Form and we look forward to meeting you to discuss any questions which you might have about the Sixth Form at Maiden Erlegh and also to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely

Anne Cheshire
Head of Sixth Form



KEY DATES

SEPTEMBER 2026

Thursday 24 September
Sixth Form information evening for current MES Year 11 students

OCTOBER 2026

Thursday 01 October
Sixth Form Open Evening for all prospective applicants

Wednesday 21 October
Maiden Erlegh Year 11 Parents' Evening

DECEMBER 2026

Friday 11 December
Deadline for applications

APRIL 2027

Conditional offers sent to parents/guardians and students

JUNE 2027

Monday 28 June
Induction course for external students

Tuesday 29 June and Wednesday 30 June
Induction course for all students

AUGUST 2027

Thursday 19 August
Key Stage 4 results day

Friday 20 August
Sixth Form enrolment and completion of final admissions documentation



Sixth Form Life and Culture

We expect students to contribute to our culture and ethos of purposeful and professional working, where people present themselves well, are kind and respectful to others, and whom younger students can aspire to become in the future.

Good Sixth Form Study Habits

The key requirements for success are motivation, enthusiasm and to contribute to the life of the Sixth Form and wider school; the key skills are self-discipline to work very hard, resilience and the willingness to listen and respond to advice and feedback. Studying for a post-16 course is demanding and in order to be successful, students should expect regular supervised study and homework from each of their courses. In general we suggest that students match timetabled hours for each subject with study outside the classroom.

Dress Code and Appearance

The dress code mirrors what is appropriate for an adult, professional working environment and distinctly different from the uniform worn in the rest of the school.

Students are required to wear blue, black or grey normal business style trousers or tailored skirt or dress - stretch or short skirts are not permitted. Tops should be plain and smart; please note that vest tops, strappy/spaghetti strap tops or crop tops are not permitted.



Students can if they wish wear a suit jacket or smart jumper over their smart plain top or shirt. Jumpers should be plain, without a logo or writing, and without a hood of any description. Sweatshirts and hoodies are not permitted. Plain black, navy or grey abayas may be worn. Ties are optional. Students will be provided with a lanyard which must be worn around a student's neck at all times whilst on site. A student's lanyard must be visible at all times. Students should wear black or brown leather shoes. Boots may be worn but must be no higher than the knee. Shoes must not have a visible sports brand. Shoes/boots should be sensible, i.e. not have thick soles or high heels/wedges. Trainers, canvas shoes etc. are not appropriate and students should not wear them (including Vans and Converse).

"A strength of the Sixth Form is treating Sixth Formers more like adults and giving us our own responsibilities."

Sixth Form Student

Equipment

There is an expectation that students bring the equipment, folders, notes and books they need for each day. We provide a range of resources but students are expected to provide their own stationery and purchase their own text books in some cases.

Registration and Attendance

In almost all cases, individual learning plans are based on a commitment to full time education. This means students must attend school each day and arrive on time for school and for each timetabled session. Students are expected to be in the Sixth Form area at 8.25 am and register personally with tutors at 8.30am.

We ask students not to make commitments outside school before 4.00pm and to keep part time work to a maximum of 10 hours a week, reducing their hours at examination times. Medical appointments, driving lessons, and other similar commitments should be arranged outside the school day and holidays should not be taken during the school terms.

As part of our safeguarding procedures we ask that parents/guardians notify the school of a student absence by 8am on the day of absence.

Identification

All Sixth Form students are required to wear a photographic identification badge. This is for their own safety, but also for the safety of all students, as in that way all people on site can be easily identified as having a right to be there. We will provide all students with a badge and lanyard which they must wear every day. If they forget or lose their badge, they will be required to pay for any subsequent badges.





Study Area

The Study Area is a purpose-built space for use solely by the Sixth Form between 8am and 4pm. It is an area where students work independently and silently on tasks set by their teachers or ones they have identified themselves which will help them improve. For certain periods students will be timetabled in this area and those sessions are a compulsory part of their Individual Learning Plan. Students who are free and wish to study are welcome to use the facility and take up any free spaces.

Technology

Every Sixth Former is entitled to bring their own device into school and have access to the school network and the school's WiFi. Once activated they can then use their devices in the Study Area and Common Room and in lessons where teachers permit it.

Free Time

Students will work very hard while they are with us, but their time here will include free time.

During that time they can relax in the Common Room with friends, use the time to volunteer in school or do extra-curricular activities. Students in Year 12 are required to give up one free hour a week to undertake community service in school and/or the wider community.

Progress Monitoring and Student Support

Every student is allocated to a Tutor Group and their Tutor will be the person who guides them through the two years and helps review progress through their Individual Learning Plan. Students' progress is closely monitored to ensure that all are on track to meet or exceed their potential.

Tutors may also deliver parts of the Personal Development Programme which covers such topics as careers and recruitment skills, destinations post-18, health and wellbeing, preparing for adult life and managing relationships.

Students also have access to our counselling and/or School Nurse services and we can source external mentors too where appropriate.

Financial Assistance

The Post 16 Bursary is available to students who are struggling to cover costs associated with attending Sixth Form eg: transport, books and trips. For more information please see our website.

Student Leadership and Representation

Each year two student leaders are appointed, following applications to the Headteacher and a series of formal interviews. They are supported by Deputy Student Leaders and a Senior Team who take on a range of leadership roles.

Responsibilities include leading the School Council and Sixth Form Committees, representing the school on formal occasions, hosting events, charity fundraising and participating in the appointment of new staff.

Senior students meet regularly with the Head of Sixth Form and Headteacher to discuss new initiatives as well as offering their views on current practice and policy.



Extra-Curricular Activities

Sixth Form students have the opportunity to become involved in a wide range of activities, such as sport, music, drama, debating and public speaking. Students who have particular interests are encouraged to organise new societies.

Examples of Sixth Form societies and events are:

- Debating Society
- Afro Carribean Society
- Environment club
- Sporting tournaments
- Staff & 6th Form Book Club
- Peer Mentors

Recent trips have included: physics trip to CERN, business trip to New York, work experience in France and Germany, geography and biology field work, drama and music performances, art and photography trips to museums.



"The quality of discussion and debate in the sixth-form lessons is exceptional. Students are mature and articulate. They talk with confidence and insight about their learning."

Ofsted 2025

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Where students have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) they would work with our inclusion team who would advise teachers about reasonable adjustments which can be made to support their progress through their Individual Learning Plans. Concessions staff will also work with staff, students and parents to understand if examination access requirements are applicable and which ones reflect students' successful usual ways of working.



Provision for the more able

All students are challenged and supported to be aspirational for themselves and then to reach or indeed exceed their potential. We recognise that more able students sometimes need specialist guidance especially as they move into the Sixth Form and as they make their choices and apply to university or apprenticeships. Maiden Erlegh has an excellent reputation for our work with the more able both in class and outside. More able students succeed because they follow an academic curriculum which is delivered by inspiring experts. Nevertheless, it is essential that the students themselves also display a hunger for learning and passion for their subjects which goes beyond the taught course. We provide them with, and signpost them to, enrichment activities and wider reading. We also help them to develop highly effective learning skills and habits. We expect them to embrace all of these opportunities and we will work closely with them so they can then progress to a destination of their choice.

Where necessary we provide individual coaching and mentoring and also provide support for entrance exams and interviews where necessary. Over a third of our applicants go to Russell Group universities, including Oxbridge, and every year we have students who go on to highly competitive courses such as medicine, veterinarian science, law and engineering. We also frequently have students who secure places in well-known art and performing arts colleges.

Students who have an average point score of 7.8 and above are invited to join the Platinum Group. They are given bespoke support and guidance from both the internal staff body and external professionals in applying for Oxbridge, and the most competitive courses at the top Russell Group Universities. As part of the Platinum Group Programme, students have the opportunity to attend events, presentations and support sessions, both in school and at external venues.

Platinum Group Programme

- Attendance to an 'Oxbridge and competitive Universities' talk with local secondary schools
- Extended tutorial sessions: UCAT admission test, interview technique, writing personal statements, academic and scholarly reading, academic writing and choosing a University and course.
- Talks from Alumni Oxbridge students.
- Presentations from Medicine, Veterinary and Dentistry students
- Access to a bespoke Google Classroom page



Equality

We are very proud of how inclusive and cohesive our Sixth Form is. Students in Years 12 and 13 work and socialise with each other and they also model this to the younger students. Students will be expected to share these values and show respect to others at all times.



Destinations Information, Advice and Guidance

We start our 'Future Pathways' process in Year 12. We organise a series of Careers Seminars led by professionals from a wide range of sectors, for example PwC and AWE. We also hold an annual Careers Fair, which showcases many different careers and apprenticeship experts, as well the charitable and voluntary sector. Students can speak to representatives about training, qualifications and real life experiences to help them decide their Future Pathway.

In the Summer term, we start the formal process for those aspiring to university or advanced or degree level apprenticeships. Our specialist advisors lead on a programme of support and guidance so that students can make successful applications. The tutor is responsible for writing the student's UCAS, apprenticeship or work reference and they will also provide coaching on the writing of personal statements and application letters.

Work Experience and Work Related Learning

We expect all students to undertake formal work experience, usually in Year 12. It must be approved by us as part of the wider scheme of work related learning. We strongly recommend that students arrange their own work experience placements. This will ensure that students will benefit from developing important employability skills such as good communication, presentation skills and writing a CV. Students will also gain a better understanding of the application, interview and recruitment process. Information, advice and guidance will be offered throughout the process. If a student is unable to find a placement despite their best efforts, the school can arrange it on their behalf.

Personal, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Programme (PSMSC)

In addition to sessions preparing students for applying for places after the Sixth Form, the programme is not only designed to provide students with a range of information about how to keep themselves safe and well, both now and as they move on, but also to raise awareness in students about important social issues.

Topics covered include: financial awareness and budgeting, mental wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, tolerance, study skills, cyber-literacy and cyber awareness and life in modern Britain.

The programme is delivered through a mixture of tutor-led sessions, assemblies, outside speakers and off-site events.





Admissions

Students entering the Sixth Form are required to achieve a strong pass in at least 5 courses at grade 5+ (or Merit+ in equivalents). If the 5 passes do not include English (language or literature) and mathematics of grade 5+, students must, in addition, achieve at least a grade 4 in English (language or literature) and mathematics. In addition each course has specific entry requirements. Please consult the subject pages for details. Students who have achieved the minimum entry requirements through Pass grades on Level 2 Technical courses are expected to study Level 3 Technical courses in the Sixth Form. Through their individual meetings with the Key Stage 5 pastoral team, students will be guided to one of the pathways.

Applications from students who have taken GCSE examinations elsewhere or equivalent qualifications are welcome. These applications are subject to the same entry criteria as those from students in Year 11 at Maiden Erlegh. In some instances, places have to be limited for particular courses (e.g. due to health and safety regulations regarding numbers of students in laboratories or workshops, or due to teaching capacity available). External applicants are referred to our Oversubscription Criteria on page 6 of our Admissions Policy which can be found on the school website.

Please note that due to reduced student uptake in some subjects, we reserve the right to reduce the teaching hours to 2 or 3 hours per week, and/or combine Year 12 and 13 classes to enable students to have access to this subject.

We reserve the right to withdraw a Year 12 course if there is insufficient uptake.

Entry Criteria for Year 13

Students whose half termly progress data and pre-public examination results suggest they would fail two or more courses would mean that transition into Year 13 would not be recommended. Level 3 courses are two year courses and students must complete the necessary coursework in Year 12 and achieve a minimum of a pass in order to continue into Year 13.

PATHWAY 1	Five grade 5's or higher	• 3 A levels or applied general courses in Years 12 and 13 • Supervised study sessions • 30 hours work experience • Possible EPQ
PATHWAY 2	Five grade 7's with maths at grade 8 or higher	• 4 A levels including maths and further maths in Years 12 and 13 • Supervised study sessions • 30 hours work experience • Possible EPQ
PATHWAY 3	Eight grade 6's including English and Maths	• 3 A levels in Year 12 and 13 • Supervised study sessions • 30 hours work experience • Possible EPQ
PATHWAY 4	Eight grade 7's including English and Maths	• 4 A levels in Year 12 and 13 • Supervised study sessions • 30 hours work experience • Possible EPQ



Making Your Choices

COURSES

- Art, Craft and Design
- Fine Art
- Photography
- Biology
- Business Studies A Level
- Business Studies BTEC
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Economics
- English Language
- English Literature
- Film Studies
- French
- Geography
- German
- History
- Further Mathematics
- Mathematics
- Medical Science BTEC
- Music
- Philosophy and Ethics
- Physical Education
- Physics
- Product Design
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Spanish
- Sport & Physical Activity Cambridge Technical
- Theatre Studies

Entry to the Sixth Form is dependent on achieving certain grades at Key Stage 4. Entry onto specific courses is based on students meeting the professional recommendations for course entry criteria. This is because our professional experience has shown us that specific foundations are necessary to do well on different courses. Some courses are limited in number and priority will always be given to students meeting the full entry criteria. Our examination results over the years show that Maiden Erlegh Sixth Formers succeed.

The majority of students will select three courses which they will continue throughout Year 12 and 13. It is important that they are committed to these subjects. A levels are linear courses and that means that they will not be taught or assessed in modules and that the majority of the final grade will come from a final examination. Students will, therefore, be required to build up knowledge, understanding and skills over time and potentially use them all with a great deal of precision by the end of Year 13.



If a student wishes to enter an AS examination, we will support them to do so independently but they will need to prepare and pay for it themselves.

Before students make their choices they need to ask themselves some key questions:

- How well will I do in my GCSE examinations?
- Which pathway will I most likely be on? (page 8)
- Which are my favourite subjects?
- Which subjects am I best at?
- Am I aiming for Higher Education, apprenticeship or training at the age of 18? (The UCAS website will tell you if you need particular qualifications to get access to Higher Education courses at 18.)
- What sort of career am I likely to be interested in when I start looking for work?

Students may be aiming to carry on with subjects that they have studied at GCSE but there are some post-16 courses of which they will have no experience.

- Find out as much as you can about the content of the courses you are interested in.
- Talk to teachers and students who have experience of the courses.
- Read the details in the prospectus.
- Visit the examination board web sites to find out more.
- Make sure you take advantage of additional opportunities in lessons, assemblies and after school meetings to find out about Sixth Form courses.
- Talk to teachers who are closely involved with the work of the Sixth Form.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

- AQA: www.aqa.org.uk
- EDEXCEL: www.edexcel.org.uk
- OCR: www.ocr.org.uk
- UCAS: www.ucas.com



"My teachers are passionate about their subjects and have good understanding and so are able to help students well."

Sixth Form Student



Message from the Headteacher



As the Headteacher of Maiden Erlegh School, I am extremely proud of our outstanding Sixth Form and what it offers to our students. For us, our responsibility is not only to ensure all of our students reach their full academic potential during Sixth Form, but it's also about ensuring our students develop strong moral values, resilience, and ambition during their time with us, enabling them to leave as well-rounded young adults who are fully prepared for their next steps, whatever they may be. I hope this prospectus provides you with a taste of our wonderful Post 16 provision.

The Sixth Form is an integral part of our whole school, and many sixth form students take on leadership roles to support the wider school community. Our students are regarded as role models for the rest of the school and, as a result, are offered many exciting opportunities to lead our younger students both in lessons and in our extracurricular provision.

As a school we understand that each sixth form student will have their own set of strengths and unique qualities. This diversity only enriches our Sixth Form and makes it an exciting and vibrant place to study. Our holistic programmes of study are key to ensuring that we deliver a rounded education to our students that prepares them exceptionally well for the world beyond school.



One of the benefits of being a large Sixth Form is depth of the curriculum offer. This offer allows students to specialise in subjects which may not be available elsewhere. Lessons are delivered by subject specialists who know what students need to do to achieve the top grades. Our Sixth Form students are allocated a tutor to support them academically and pastorally. Tutors work closely with their students, to ensure they are enjoying Sixth Form life and successfully managing both their studies and personally wellbeing. Tutors also play a pivotal role in ensuring their tutees make progress, by monitoring their Individual Learning Plans with them, advising on finding work experience placements, and supporting applications for university, employment, or apprenticeships. It's incredibly important to us that students develop an understanding of how to combine their academic studies with other activities in a balanced way, and the tutor plays a key role in supporting their tutees in achieving this.

I am continually impressed by the calibre of our Sixth Form students, the overwhelming majority of whom actively participate in the wider school community and enjoy working with the younger students. It is commonplace for Maiden Erlegh's Sixth Form students to return to us well after they have left Sixth Form to share their experiences of university and/or work with current students.

We make no apology for having high expectations of our Sixth Form students. Our drive for excellence has led to exceptional examination results year on year, with many students going on to study at prestigious universities or pursuing high quality apprenticeships. Our Sixth Formers must share our ambitious pursuit of excellence, and we expect all students to demonstrate this not only in their approach to their studies, but also in the way they present themselves and in their interactions with other members of the school community.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for showing an interest in our Sixth Form and I hope to be welcoming you into our community very soon.

Steve Jump
Headteacher

Alison Morgan
Head of School

Ceri Burns
Head of School





Art & Design

Why Study Art and Design?

All the art and design courses provide the opportunity to develop a reflective and personal approach to aesthetic awareness and expression. In addition the courses provide a valuable foundation for further study and career development in a wide range of areas: architecture, animation, digital imagery, film, special effects, make–up, fashion, footwear, textiles, graphic design, product design, theatre design, jewellery, millinery, printmaking, photography, visual communication, art history, fine art, ceramics, surface decoration, stained glass, fashion marketing or journalism, conservation, museums and galleries curating, bookbinding, illustration, landscape design, interior design and furniture design.



Background Needed

A GCSE pass in art and design at grade 4 or above is needed to take an A level course. Students who have not studied art at GCSE will be asked to present a portfolio of work which will be used to assess their ability to pursue an A level course. Prior knowledge of the use of image manipulation software, such as Photoshop, is an advantage for the photography course.

Sketchbooks will be used in all three options, as drawing underpins every aspect of art and design. Sketchbooks will include written analysis of the work of artists, designers and photographers. Students need to be independent and resourceful in developing an individual, intuitive and creative approach in response to set projects. Every student is expected to develop their own visual identity and teaching will include tutorials with individuals. There will be workshops at the start of the course where the class will be experimenting with the use of media, processes and techniques. Students are expected to become responsible for their own learning and should show initiative in directing their study.

Art, Craft and Design

This is a broad-based course and candidates are expected to explore a range of media, processes and techniques. The examination board stipulates that candidates should produce work associated with two or more of the titles, i.e. fine art, graphic communication, textile design, 3-dimensional design and photography. E.g. a student may try one outcome in ceramics, another in photography and another in painting a portrait or creating a wall-hanging in textiles. Any media, techniques or processes may be used including drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, fashion, graphic design, film, animation and installation. Written analysis and context utalisation of the work of other cultures, artists, designers, photographers, and architects is essential as are visits to galleries and museums.

Fine Art

This deals with art for its own sake and involves studying artists' work and the ideas and concepts behind it. The messages, which may be implied or conveyed in the work, might deal with issues about society today. Traditional examples of fine art include painting from the figure, the portrait, still life, abstraction, architecture and landscape. Understanding of pictorial space and the elements of composition form an important part of the study. Media and techniques to be explored will include: drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, film, and installation. Written analysis of the work of other artists, both contemporary and of the past, is essential as are visits to major galleries and museums.



Photography (lens-based and light-based media)

This course encourages students to develop their aesthetic, intellectual, creative, imaginative and intuitive powers through the use of lens-based media. As in the other endorsements students are expected to show an understanding of art, craft and design in contemporary society and in other times and cultures; sketchbooks and journals are essential for recording this information. Students will need to develop their lens-based skills in order to record experiences and observations in visual form. It is necessary to work in one or more of these areas: portraiture, landscape, still life, documentary, photo journalism, experimental imagery, photographic installation, video, TV and film. It will be important to learn to make appropriate choice of camera types and their application together with being able to use image manipulation software. An understanding of techniques related to the developing and printing of photographic images, presentation, layout and mounting is sought. The interpretation of ideas, feelings and meanings are explored in the context of chosen areas of photography. Historical and contemporary styles and genres will be examined. This course will use digital photography and students will need to have their own camera.



Opportunitites for Enrichment

The department runs trips and visits to major national galleries, museums and sculpture parks throughout the year.

Extra curricular classes are run in life drawing and students are offered workshops in printmaking and other aspects of the curriculum. Students are also encouraged to take part in the wide range of community arts courses on offer both as participants and assistants.



What the Students Say...

Students say that they enjoy the initial workshops in Year 12 as these give them a good grounding in many areas of the subject and a chance to explore new ways of working. In Year 13 they like having their own bay in the Sixth Form studio, in which they have a "home" for all their work.

"We enjoy a sense of independence whilst also being supported by staff. We are lucky to be able to create our own individual learning journey."

CONTACT
Miss K Wragg
Head of Department

Assessment

Component 1 is worth 60% of the A level grade. Students are expected to develop a personal investigation based on an idea, issue, concept or theme leading to a final outcome. This may be a finished single outcome or a series of related finished outcomes. The personal investigation includes a written communication of 1000-3000 words and must be in continuous prose.

Component 2 is the final 15 hour externally set assignment and is worth 40% of the A level grade. Within each component there are four assessment objectives: A01 - Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding. A02 - Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops. A03 – Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress. A04 – Present a personal and meaningful response that realizes intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements.







Biology

Why Study Biology?

Biology is a popular A level choice which enables students to further their understanding of living organisms and their interactions with the world around them. Students will develop a range of skills, such as problem solving data analysis and mathematical skills. Biology is a key subject for lots of STEM careers and will open up a number of exciting career possibilities such as forensic science, medicine, nursing, dentistry, psychology, environmental science and oceanography. The skills you gain in A level biology will also support non-scientific careers and is held in high regard by universities and employers alike.



Background Needed

Students applying to study biology in the Sixth Form must have achieved a grade 6 in biology or a grade 6/6 in combined science. Students must also gain a grade 6 in both GCSE English and mathematics. Those who intend to pursue biology or related subjects in Higher Education are also advised to study chemistry at A level.

Course Content

Studying biology aims to develop an awareness of advances in technology for example genetic engineering, a recognition of the value of biology in society and an appreciation of the relationship between different aspects of the subject. Students gain an appreciation of the physiology of human digestive, gas exchange, transport and control systems. The impact on human health of non-communicable diseases relating to lifestyle is also considered. The extensive variety of life is studied in terms of the similarities and differences in biochemical basis, cellular organisation and adaptations in organisms. We examine the influence of genetic and environmental factors on living things and study how variation in DNA results in genetic diversity. Topics will include; human biology and diseases, genetics, biochemistry, plant biology and ecology.

An understanding of scientific methods is emphasised and throughout the course different kinds of investigations will provide students with experience in designing experiments, handling quantitative information and evaluating their practical work.

Opportunitites for Enrichment

We are part of the medic mentor group which provides support for students considering applying to medical, dental and veterinary schools. This includes online conferences to provide support in how to be a successful applicant. There is also a biology conference to develop examination technique as well as an opportunity to take part in the Science Fair.

Students are provided the opportunity to take part in Biology Olympiad which is a national competition where students solve complex biological challenges under timed conditions.

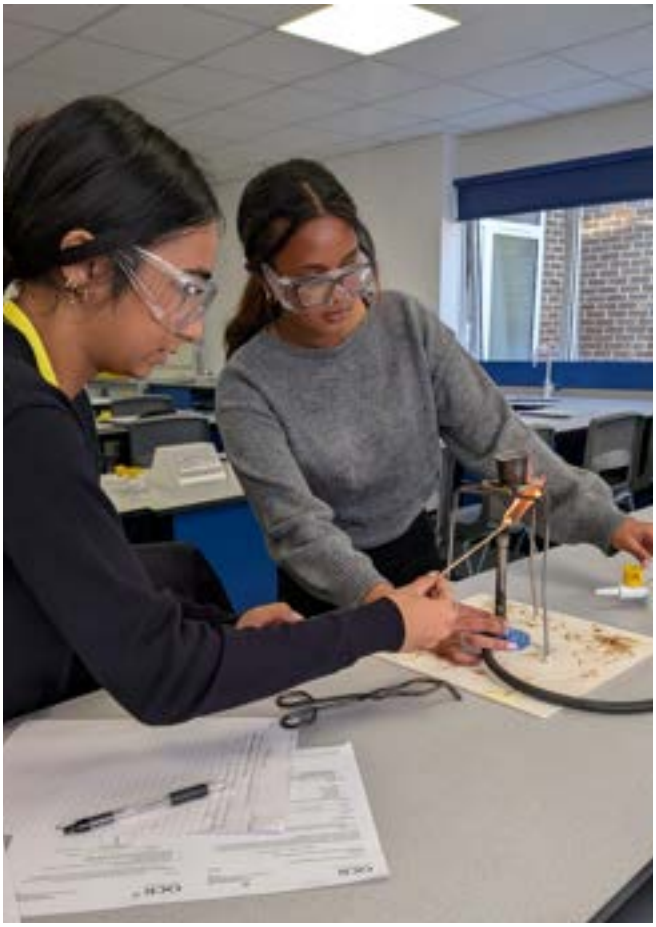
In addition to these opportunities, talks at the Med Society at Eton College and practice Mock MMIs for medicine are also organised.

Assessment

The A level will be assessed through three two-hour examinations. Examination papers will consist of written theory papers and assessment of practical skills.

A level examination papers will consist of a mixture of short and long answer questions including comprehension and synoptic questions, which will include an essay question.

Students will carry out a number of required practicals. Understanding of practical skills and investigations will also be assessed in the written examination papers.



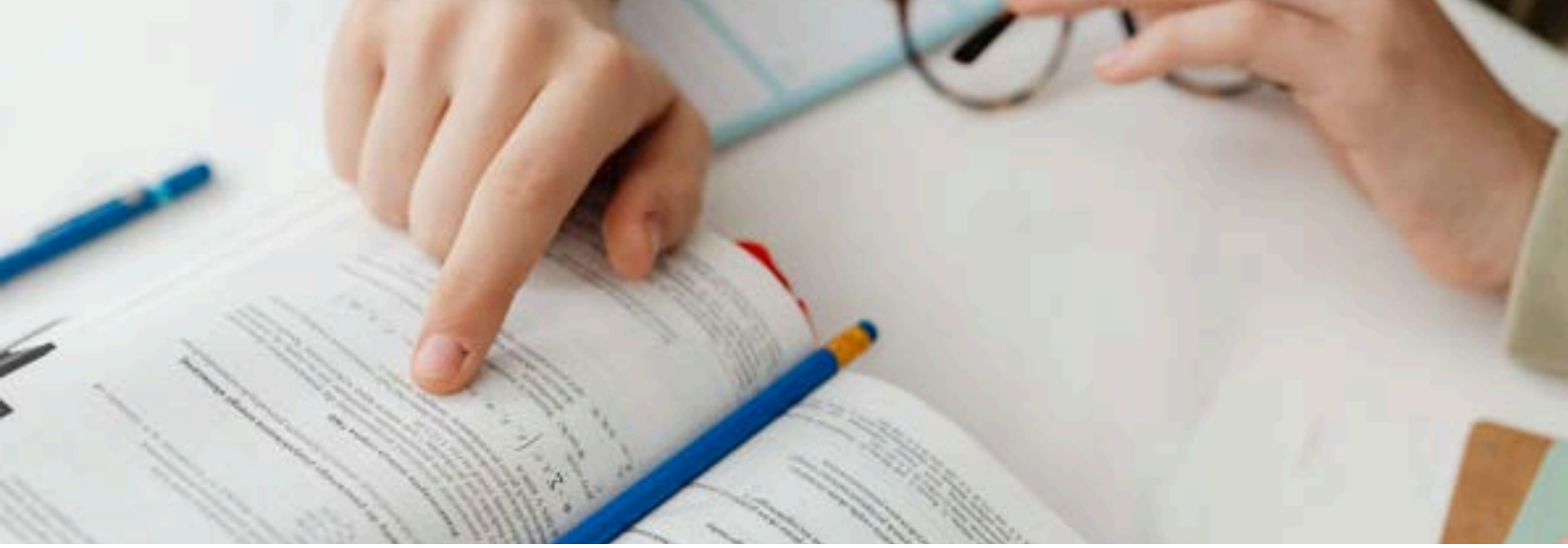




CONTACT
Mrs M Bhattacharjee
Head of Department

What the Students Say...

"The teachers are really helpful. they say we can go round and see them whenever we need to."



BTEC Business

Why Study BTEC Business?

Business is a key element in our society and the things that businesses do are coming under increasing scrutiny. Our students will learn what goes on behind the shop window or the office desk and why businesses make the decisions they do. BTEC Business provides an interesting way of learning about business decision making, in a measured way where there are no final examinations. All lessons are delivered in a way that brings the topic to life and real world examples are used regularly.



Background Needed

Students require five grade 4's or above at GCSE. Sound mathematical and English skills and a strong ability to work independently are also highly desirable for this course.

Assessment

Each unit will have a task-based project, which will be graded as Pass, Merit or Distinction. Unit 1 is an internally assessed unit. Unit 2 is an externally assessed unit under supervised conditions. Learners will be given a case study two weeks before a supervised assessment period in order to carry out research. During the supervised assessment period, learners will be required to complete a task where they prepare a rationale and then plan a marketing campaign for a given product or service. Pearson sets and marks the task. Unit 3 is externally assessed and involves a written examination set by Pearson. The examination will be two hours in length. The final unit is internally assessed and involves the study of an operational department within a well-known business; analysing how it contributes to its overall success.

Course Content

In the first year of study, students begin by preparing for Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign. This is a practical unit which allows students to investigate the role that marketing plays in business success. Learners will develop a sound understanding of marketing concepts and how a marketing campaign is developed. This will also include interpreting and using data to suggest an appropriate marketing campaign for a business and justifying why the campaign will suit the needs of the business. Students will be exposed to a wide range of examples of successful and less successful campaigns. This is an externally assessed unit which is examined in January.

Unit 1: Exploring Business. Students will bring their knowledge of business through their experiences as consumers, customers or perhaps as employees. The unit encourages students to research about local, national, and international businesses in different sectors. Students will look at the key ingredients for business success– how businesses are organised, how they communicate, the characteristics of the environment in which they operate, and how this shapes them and their activities.

In the second year of study, students study Unit 3: Personal and Business Finance. This unit includes aspects of both personal and business finance. Personal finance involves the understanding of why money is important and how managing your money can help prevent future financial difficulties. It is vital students understand the financial decisions you will need to take throughout their life and how risk can affect them and their choices. This unit will also give the learner an insight into where they can get financial advice and support. The business finance aspects of the course introduce them to accounting terminology, the purpose and importance of business accounts and the different sources of finance available to businesses. Planning tools, such as cash flow forecasts and break-even, will be prepared and analysed. This is externally assessed in January.

Unit 8 Recruitment and selection process. Recruiting the right people is essential to the success of a business. It is important that the processes and procedures involved in recruitment and selection meet the needs of the business and comply with current regulations. Students will learn that successful recruitment is key to maintaining the success of a business, as people are often considered to be the most valued resource. They will explore the various selection tools and the enhanced use of technology in this area. Businesses with an effective recruitment process in place are more likely to make successful appointments. In a competitive labour market this is a major advantage and will support business success. This unit gives you the opportunity, through role play, to take part in selection interviews. They will need to be organised and prepared so that they demonstrate their communication skills in this work-related competence.



Opportunitites for Enrichment

The business studies department offers extra curricular activities including a trip to New York to explore the business capital of America.

CONTACT
Mrs J Kaiser-Cook
Head of Department



Business Studies

Why Study Business Studies?

After leaving full-time education many students will work in business. Whether they set up their own company or work for a large multinational, it is important that students understand how it works. Business studies at A level offers this opportunity in a structured, stimulating and interesting way. Universities offer a wide range of courses in many different areas. By studying A level business studies students will gain an insight into which specific area interests them most. Above all, studying business studies allows students to understand how businesses make decisions and why these are made. The business studies department believe in a business like work ethic. Lessons are innovative and interesting, based on a wide range of teaching and learning styles which help to bring the subject alive.



Assessment

The exams will measure how well students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge of terms, concepts, theories, methods and models to show an understanding of how individuals and organisations are affected by and respond to business issues.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding to various business contexts to show how individuals and organisations are affected by and respondto issues.

AO3: Analyse issues within business, showing an understanding of the impact on individuals and organisations of external and internal influences.

AO4: Evaluate quantitative and qualitative information to make informed judgements and propose evidence-based solutions to business issues.

Background Needed

Students will require at least five grade 5s or above at GCSE or equivalent; sound mathematics and English grade 5 or above, coupled with a strong ability to work independently are desirable. Sound mathematics is particularly important for the accounting and finance aspects of the course. A level business studies is open to anyone regardless of whether or not they have studied the GCSE course.

Course Content

The course follows the AQA syllabus and studies a variety of contexts e.g. large/small, UK focused/global, service and manufacturing firms.

It considers:

- The importance of the context of the business in relation to decision making.
- The interrelated nature of business activities and how they affect competitiveness.
- The competitive environment and the markets in which businesses operate.
- The influences on functional decisions and plans including ethical and environmental issues.
- How technology is changing the way decisions are made and how business operate and compete.
- Use of quantitative and non-quantitative data in decision making.

Opportunitites for Enrichment

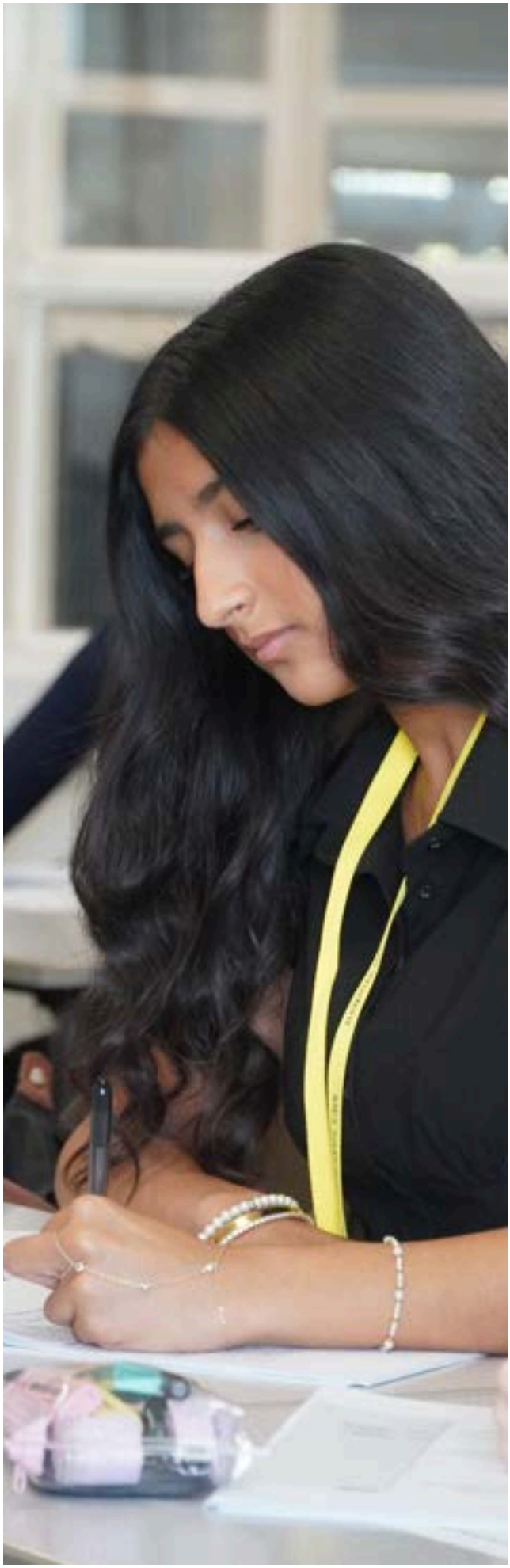
The business studies department offers extra curricular activities including a trip to New York to explore the business capital of America.

What the Students Say...

"A level business studies broadens knowledge of the subject area and helps develop skills in business generally. The teachers help to ensure we have a very good understanding of the subject and make it enjoyable to learn."

"The course is stimulating, it provokes thought and gives a deeper understanding of how the business world works."

CONTACT
Mrs J Kaiser-Cook
Head of Department





Chemistry

Why Study Chemistry?

As well as being a compulsory requirement for such courses as medicine, dentistry, forensic science and pharmacy, chemistry is a highly regarded qualification, which complements other STEM subjects. Chemicals like cosmetics, foods, medicines, fertilisers and fuels all play a very important role in our lives, and therefore generate numerous interesting employment opportunities. By helping to develop analytical thought it is a real asset to those seeking careers in such areas as law and business management. The course is designed to stimulate and sustain interest in chemistry. It shows the relationship between the development of the subject and its application to our lives. It illustrates its value to society and how it may be used responsibly. It fosters imaginative and critical thinking as well as the acquisition of knowledge. Through practical work, skills in laboratory procedures and techniques are developed, and some of the concepts underlying the subject are discovered.



Assessment

Paper 1: Periodic table, elements and physical Chemistry (2.25hrs, modules 2, 3 and 5).

Paper 2: Synthesis and analysis (2.25hrs, modules 2, 4 and 6).

Paper 3: Unified chemistry (1.5hrs, all modules).

Students must complete a minimum of 12 core practical tasks. The concepts met in these will be will assessed through examination questions in all three papers. Students also receive a stand-alone grade for their practical competency (pass/fail), which does not contribute to their overall A level grade.

What the Students Say...

"Lessons have been relaxing and undeniably fun due to the enthusiasm of the staff. They are willing to help students in every way possible."

"Chemistry is a synoptic subject through and through which, surprisingly, makes it easier to understand, and pleasantly challenging."

Course Content

Students follow the OCR A syllabus. The course content takes familiar themes from GCSE and develops them further, as well as introducing new ideas.

The programme of study is as follows:

Module 1:
Development of practical skills in chemistry: this module is taught in context throughout the two years.

Year 12

Module 2: Foundations of chemistry: structure of an atom; bonding; chemical calculations; acids and bases; redox reactions.

Module 3: Periodic table and energy: modern periodic table; periodicity; group 2; halogens; enthalpy changes; rates of reaction; chemical equilibrium.

Module 4: Core organic chemistry: basic concepts; alkanes; alkenes; alcohols; haloalkanes; analysis.

Year 13

Module 5: Physical chemistry and transition elements: further rates of reaction; further chemical equilibrium; further acids and bases; thermodynamics; redox and electrode potentials; transition elements.

Module 6: Organic chemistry and analysis: aromatic compounds; carbonyls and carboxylic acids; amines, amino acids and polymers; organic synthesis; further analysis.

CONTACT
Mrs S Gibson
Head of Department

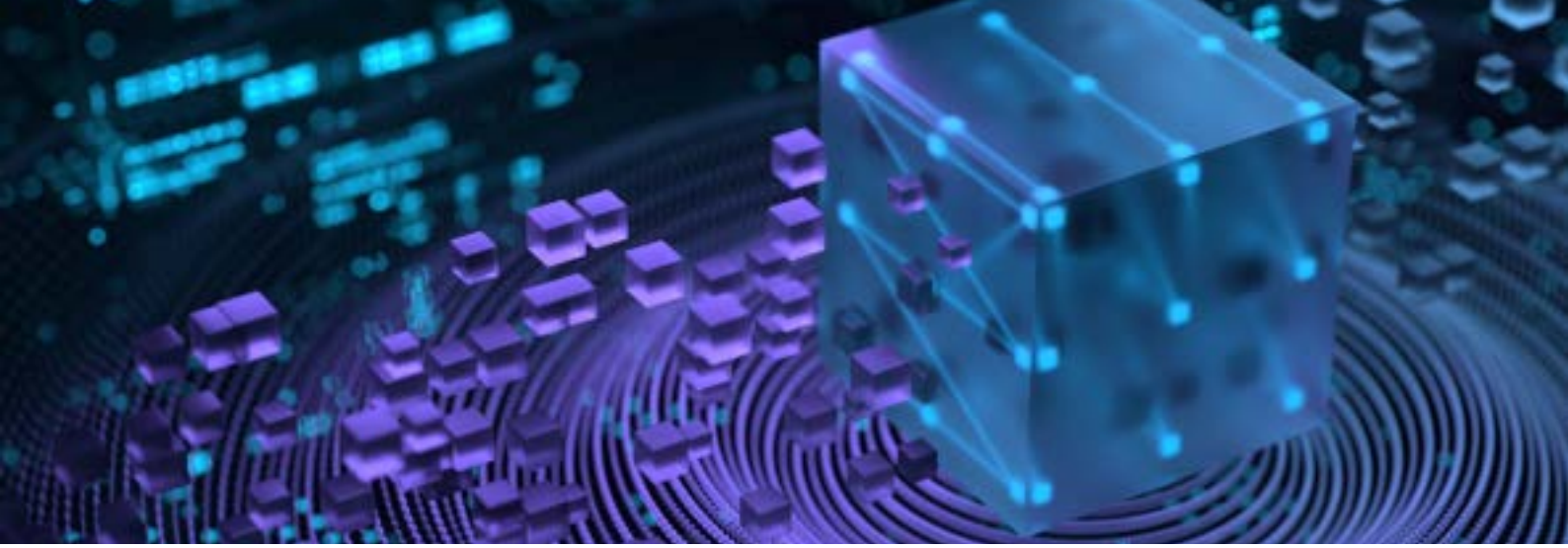


Opportunitites for Enrichment

Each year some of our Year 13 students take part in the British Chemistry Olympiad. We are also encouraging Year 12 students to take part in the online Cambridge chemistry challenge. We have links with Reading University, and students have attended Careers Fairs and Spectroscopy Master Classes there.

Background Needed

Students applying to study chemistry in the Sixth Form must have achieved a grade 6 in chemistry or a grade 6/6 in combined science. Students must also gain a grade 6 in mathematics.



Computer Science

Why Study Computer Science?

This course will mostly suit students wishing to pursue a career in software engineering and/or games development but will develop a range of skills that are transferable to many other career paths. Students will learn to devise systems and programs for a range of applications. In addition to gaining a strong theoretical knowledge of the science of computing and programming, students will develop their problem solving skills through tasks that require them to provide real solutions to real problems, such as writing computer games, applications of artificial intelligence or developing mobile apps. Whilst students will obviously develop their Computer Science skills further through studying this course, they will also gain important experience of working independently, planning and managing their time effectively and their written communication skills. Computer Science is an exciting, interesting and highly relevant course for A level students.



Assessment

There are two exam papers which account for 40% of the marks each. The NEA accounts for 20%. For the exam papers you will be expected to answer a series of short questions and write/adapt/extend programs. You will also be given preliminary material, a skeleton program and test data for use in the exam.

Assessment (NEA)

This is fundamentally a computer project. The project will allow you to develop your practical skills in the context of solving a realistic problem or carrying out an investigation. The project is intended to be as much a learning experience as a method of assessment; you have the opportunity to work independently on a problem of interest over an extended period, during which you can extend your programming skills and deepen your understanding of Computer Science. The most important skill that will be assessed through the project is your ability to create a programmed solution to a problem or investigation.

Course Content

This course will test your ability to program, as well as your theoretical knowledge of Computer Science. There are two exam papers and an assignment covering a range of topics, including:

- Fundamentals of programming, data structures, data representation and databases
- Systematic approach to problem solving
- Theory of computation
- Fundamentals of computer systems, computer organisation, functional programming and architecture
- Consequences of uses of computing
- Fundamentals of communication and networking
- Big Data

Opportunitites for Enrichment

In the past, the department has offered conference trips on specific topics within the A level to UCL. There are additional trips or points of interest advertised on Google Classroom.

Students are encouraged to take part in the Computer Science and robotics afterschool club and to attend additional classes after school, allowing students access to the network to explore additional languages or topics.

Background Needed

Grade 5 in GCSE Maths and Grade 5 in GCSE Computer Science/Computing. Students must be highly logical and have an analytical approach to problem solving. They must overall be patient and never give up on trying to solve problems.

CONTACT
Mrs S Blight
Head of Department

What the Students Say...

"We think that this is a very valuable subject to study because the whole world uses computer science in so many different sectors."

"The teachers are very friendly and approachable and ready to support you in every way they can."







Economics

Why Study Economics?

A level economics is a rewarding intellectual experience, offering highly marketable skills in a way that is both stimulating and analytically rigorous. We encourage students to take a varied interest in current affairs and an understanding of what is going on around them within electronic and printed media. This course provides students with an insight into key issues in the news affecting everyday life. Why are oil prices so high? Why does the government provide free education for people up to 18? Why do economies experience recessions? Why is unemployment so high in some countries and what can be done about it? The study of economics provides us with answers to these questions and many more. Economics is at the heart of what drives many decisions in our modern world.

Background Needed

Students will require at least five grades 5 or above at GCSE or equivalent including at least a grade 5 in English and mathematics. Sound English language skills coupled with a strong ability to work independently are also desirable for this course. Therefore, students should have achieved at least a 5 grade in English language or literature. In addition to this, a natural interest in current affairs and the economy would be an advantage. A level economics is open to anyone regardless of whether or not they have studied the GCSE course.



Assessment

Students will sit three A level papers. Paper 1 will assess microeconomics and questions will be drawn from Themes1 and 3. The paper is worth 35% of the overall qualification. Paper 2 will assess macroeconomics and questions will be drawn from Themes 2 and 4. This paper is also worth 35% of the overall qualification. Paper 3 will assess content across all four themes. Students are required to apply their knowledge and understanding, make connections and transfer higher-order skills across all four themes. This paper is worth 30% of the overall qualification.

Course Content

Students will cover the following four key themes:

Theme 1: students will study microeconomic concepts. Students will develop an understanding of the nature of economics, how markets work, market failure and government intervention.

Theme 2: students will study macroeconomic the measures of economic performance, aggregate demand, aggregate supply, national income, economic growth and macroeconomic objectives and policy.

Theme 3: this theme develops the microeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 1 and focuses on business economics. Students will develop an understanding of business growth, business objectives, revenues, costs and profits, market structures, the labour market and government intervention.

Theme 4: this theme develops the macroeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 2 and applies these concepts in a global context. Students will develop an understanding of international economics, poverty and inequality, emerging and developing economies, the financial sector and the role of the state in the macroeconomy.

Students build knowledge and understanding of core economic models and concepts in Themes 1 and 2, and then build on this and apply their knowledge to more complex concepts and models in Themes 3 and 4. Students will need to apply their knowledge and understanding to both familiar and unfamiliar contexts in the assessments and demonstrate an awareness of current economic events and policies.

CONTACT
Mr A Stringer
Head of Department



What the Students Say...

"Economics plays a key role in all aspects of life and is an important subject worth knowing more about."

Opportunitites for Enrichment

The Economics department offers many extracurricular activities to enrich the course. Such activities include a trip to New York to explore the economic capital of America.





English Language

Why Study English Language?

English language encourages students to develop their interest and enjoyment in the use of English, through learning more about its structures and functions. They learn to express themselves in speech and writing with increasing competence and sophistication. By learning about the concepts and linguistic frameworks for the study of language, they are able to investigate their own and others' use of speech and writing. English language is a subject for those who are intrigued by written and spoken texts in all forms, and develops linguistic, analytical and investigative skills.



Assessment

Examinations (three papers) 80%
Non-Examination Assessment 20%

Course Content

We are following the Edexcel English language Specification.

Component 1 (language variation) students will explore how and why language varies depending on mode, field, function and audience; they will also learn how and why language has changed from 1550 to the present day.

Component 2 (child language), students will explore how children learn to speak and write English up to the age of 8, and develop an understanding of some of the key theories of children's language development.

Component 3 (investigating language) allows students to develop their research and investigation skills, selecting a topic in which to develop their personal language specialism.

Component 4 (crafting language) is the NEA. Students will producetwo pieces of original writing in the same genre for different audiences and an accompanying commentary reflecting on their linguistic choices.

Opportunitites for Enrichment

Students are encouraged to attend the English Language Conference.

Background Needed

Students should have followed GCSE courses in English language and English literature, and gained grade 5 in English literature and at least a grade 5 in English language. An enthusiasm for discussion and writing, and an interest in the way language is constructed for different audiences and purposes, are important attributes to bring to the course.

What the Students Say...

"The subject is interesting and intriguing ... it is fascinating to see how language works and changes in so many different contexts."

"I find myself actively learning outside school because of what I've studied on the course."

"Coursework allows you to be really independent and creative."



CONTACT
Mrs A Webb
Head of KS5 English



English Literature

Why Study English Literature?

The course focuses on the connections that exist between texts within a literary genre. In this way, students can gain a solid understanding of how texts can be connected and how they can be interpreted in multiple ways in order that students can arrive at their own interpretations and become confident autonomous readers. Genre study is at the heart of English literature and we choose to focus on tragedy. Working with genre involves looking at ways in which authors shape meanings within their texts. It also involves thinking about a wide range of relevant contexts, some of them to do with the production of the text at the time of its writing, some (where possible) to do with how the text has been received over time, and most of all in this specification contexts to do with how the text can be interpreted by readers now. Looking at texts as generic works involves connecting individual texts with others, as the whole idea of genre is a connective one. And finally, because genres and their qualities are not fixed, this means that interpretation is not fixed, and that multiple interpretations are possible.



Course Content

We are following the AQA English literature B specification. Students will study a range of texts on the course.

For Paper 1 (Literary Genres – Tragedy), students will cover three texts: a Shakespeare play (currently Othello), another drama text (currently Death of a Salesman) and one further text (currently Tess of the D'Urbervilles).

For Paper 2 (Texts and genre – political writing), students will again cover three texts: one post-2000 prose text (currently The Kite Runner); one collection of poetry (currently 'William Blake' Songs of Innocence and of Experience) and one further text (currently The Handmaid's Tale). The non-exam assessment or coursework (Theory and Independence) requires the students to produce two essays, one on poetry and one on prose, informed by the study of a critical anthology.

Assessment

Examinations (two papers) 80%
Non-Examination Assessment 20%

Opportunitites for Enrichment

Evening theatre trips may be arranged, which may or may not be directly related to the plays being studied.

Background Needed

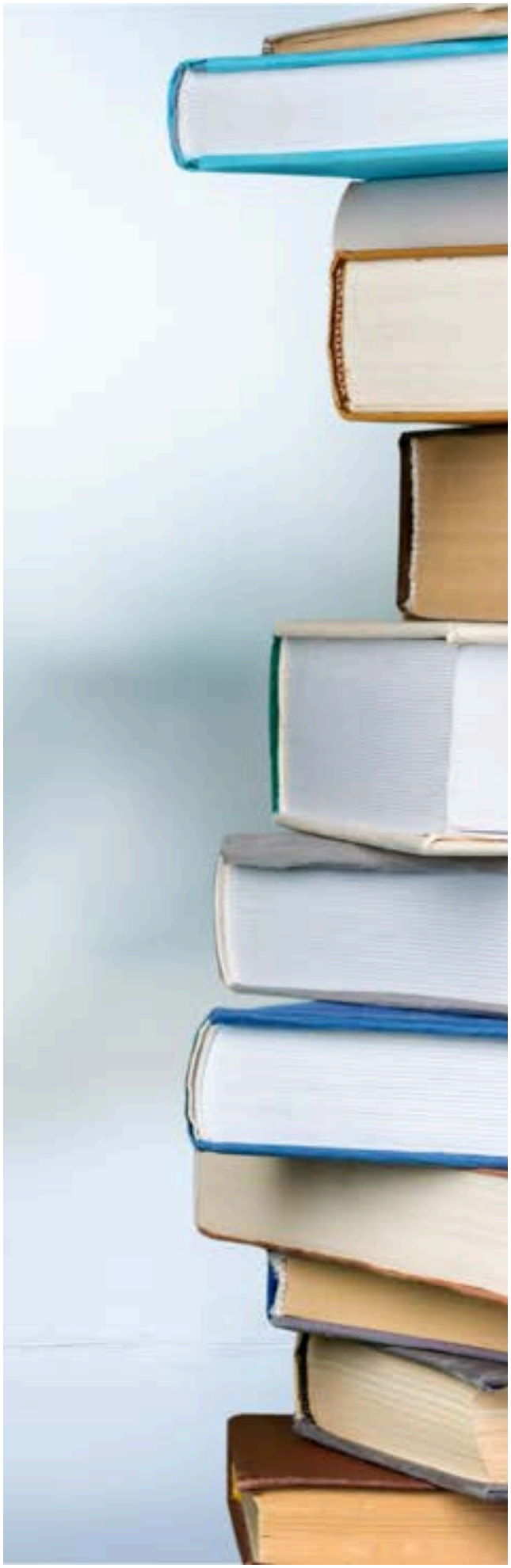
Students should have followed GCSE courses in English language and English literature, and gained grade 5 in English literature and at least a grade 5 in English language. An enthusiasm for discussion and writing, and an interest in the way language is constructed for different audiences and purposes, are important attributes to bring to the course.

What the Students Say...

"It's really challenging and enjoyable ... I love the discussions in lessons."

"Studying such great texts has really helped me develop analytical, critical and evaluative skills."

"It gives you the chance to embrace your inner bookworm!"



CONTACT
Mrs A Webb
Head of KS5 English



Film Studies

Why Study Film Studies?

Film studies not only gives students an appreciation of film as an art form in terms of its visual story telling, but studying film can also enhance their understanding of the world in terms of competing values, attitudes and beliefs. Students will be challenged and excited by the course. Not only will it change the way they watch film, but more importantly it will challenge them to think in new ways and question or change their perspective on a whole host of issues, for example, representation of race or gender. Studying films allows students to understand important issues and developments within history, society and culture, using film as the medium with which to gain a greater insight into these areas.

Film is one of the most relevant subjects today. Employment in the screen industries has grown by over 20% since 2009 and will substantially outpace the economy wide increase of 3% if the skills shortages in this area are fulfilled. Career paths for students of Film may, of course, include practical avenues such as Film-Making, Directing and Editing or more theoretical pathways such as Film Criticism, Journalism, Teaching and Education. A qualification in Film Studies, develops transferable skills, such as: analysis, communication, literacy, creativeand critical thinking.

Students of Film Studies are the students of the future, gaining the skills needed to develop successful careers and great academic minds.



Background Needed

An enthusiasm for the oral aspect of analytical discussion, creative ideas and a genuine enjoyment of film are important attributes to bring to the course. There is no requirement to have studied Media or Film at GCSE level; however, due to the analytical nature of the subject, a grade 5 in either English literature or English language is desirable



Course Content

We are following the WJEC Eduqas Film Studies A level specification. The students will study a range of texts on the course.

Component 1 (Varieties of film and film making), students will cover six feature length films: two mainstream American films from the past (Hollywood 1930-1990); two mainstream American films from the present (American film since 2005) and two British films since 1995.

Component 2 (Global film making perspectives), students will study five feature length films (or their equivalent): two Global films (one from Europe and one from outside of Europe); one Documentary film; one Silent film; and, one Experimental film.

The non-examination assessment or coursework (Production), requires students to produce either a short film (4-5 minutes) or a screenplay for a short film (1600-1800 words) plus a digitally photographed storyboard of a key section from the screenplay. The practical work is then supported with an evaluative analysis (1600 - 1800 words).

Assessment

Examinations (two papers) 70%
Non-Examination Assessment 30%

Opportunitites for Enrichment

Evening cinema trips may be arranged to further students' understanding of the film industry. Students will also be encouraged to shadow and submit their own practical entries in to national student film competitions.

CONTACT
Mrs L Reardon-Morgan
Head of KS5 Film Studies





French

Why Study French?

The study of French offers students the opportunity to learn one of the world's key languages, spoken by more than 220 million people on five continents. French is also the only language, alongside English, that is taught in every country in the world and the official language of the United Nations, the European Union, UNESCO, NATO, the International Olympic Committee, the International Red Cross and international courts. The ability to communicate in French therefore, gives you an advantage on the job market and opens the door to working for French and francophone countries globally. In terms of travel, France is a major tourism destination in its own right, and speaking French will enhance your enjoyment of travel across the francophone world. And finally (and perhaps most importantly) French is the language of love, reason and culture.

The study of A level French will not only develop linguistic fluency through the study of grammar, syntax and vocabulary, but will also introduce you to different elements of French and francophone culture, society, politics, and art. You will perfect a variety of skills including summary, prose and translation as well as comprehension and essay writing.

A key element of the new course is research skills and presentation. In addition you will study film and literature in general but through two key pieces of work. It is a stimulating and fascinating subject in its own right, but an excellent complement for a range of other subjects, academic and technical.

Course Content

We have opted for the AQA A level course. A range of generally contemporary topics are studied eg:

- The changing nature of family
- The 'cyber-society'
- The place of voluntary work
- Positive features of a diverse society
- Life for the marginalised
- How criminals are treated
- A culture proud of its heritage
- Teenagers, the right to vote and political commitment
- Demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power?
- Politics and immigration.

Students also study a French film (Au revoir les enfants by Louis Malle) and a literary work (No et moi by Delphine de Vigan).

Please note that where numbers are small, we teach this as a combined course for Years 12 and 13.



Background Needed

In order to cope with the rigours of A level French some linguistic competence is essential, but it is not the preserve of the most able linguists. We expect students to have gained at least a grade 5 at GCSE but also a passion for language and meaning and a desire to experiment with new vocabulary and grammar. You will need to be disciplined in working independently as well as collaboratively and have an ability to commit language to memory accurately.

What the Students Say...

"Speaking French and German has offered me huge advantages in life: I have been able to find a wide variety work in France and Germany – a second language is also vital for finding a job in an increasingly multicultural world. More importantly, my time spent improving my language skills by integrating into a foreign society has led me to appreciate various different cultures and to make life-long friends on every continent. This time also represents the greatest and most enjoyable challenge of my life, and has taught me that there is much more to the world outside the borders of the United Kingdom."

Opportunities for Enrichment

There is a proposed cultural visit to Paris. We also arrange speaking practices for students.

CONTACT
Mrs C Brayle
Head of Department

Course Content

AO1: Understand and respond:
-in speech to spoken language including face-to-face interaction
-in writing to spoken language drawn from a variety of sources.

AO2: Understand and respond:
-in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources.
-in writing to written language drawn from a variety of sources.

AO3: Manipulate the language accurately, in spoken and written forms, using a range of lexis and structure.

AO4: Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically and analytically to, different aspects of the culture and society of countries/communities where the language is spoken.

Across assessment objectives AO1 and AO2, no more than 10% of the total marksfor the qualification may be used for responses in English, including translation into English







Geography

Why Study Geography?

Geographers have a unique viewpoint combining political and economic aspects with an understanding of the physical processes. Geography develops the ability to combine scientific principles with economic awareness, environmental concern with an appreciation and tolerance of peoples' attitudes and values. Geography gives a balanced viewpoint, which is great preparation for the world of work.

Geographers are trained to be excellent decision makers who look at all aspects of a situation. Some jobs make direct use of geographical knowledge such as those in tourism, town planning and environmental management and teaching.
Geography is also useful for law, journalism, medicine and working in the media for example because it combines the understanding of the facts of the sciences with the perception of the arts.



Course Content

A level will consist of three components:

Component 1 is physical geography paper (2hr 30mins) worth 40% of the A level.

1. Water and carbon cycles
2. Coastal systems and landscapes
3. Hazards (volcanic, seismic, and storm hazards).

Component 2 is human geography paper (2hr 30mins) worth 40% of the A level

1. Global systems and governance
2. Changing places
3. Contemporary urban environments.

Component 3 is a geographical investigation where a student will write a 3,000-4,000 word project on one part of the course, linked to fieldwork worth 20% of the A level.

Assessment

Components 1 and 2 will both be assessed at the end of year 2 with two examinations worth 80% of the A level. The geographical investigation is worth the last 20% and is marked by teachers and moderated by the exam board and is started in the summer term of year 1.

Background Needed

The most important attributes for good geographers are an inquisitive mind and a wish to learn more about the world around us. This course is suitable for students who gained a grade 5 or above in GCSE geography and you should ideally also have a grade 5 or above in GCSE English and mathematics. Geographical skills are assessed throughout the A level. Geographical skills is where students will develop cartographic, graphical, statistical and ICT skills with particular reference to fieldwork.

Opportunities for Enrichment

All students are required by the exam board to undertake fieldwork in relation to processes in both, physical and human geography. Students must undertake four days of field work during their A level course. This is an opportunity to learn many new skills both subject related and personal.

We offer the following field trips

- Carbon sequestration fieldwork in Windsor
- Coastal fieldwork skills day at Southsea,
- Portsmouth
- Study of place and urban redevelopment in Oxford
- Fourth day is to collect data for their NEA, so will be dependent on the project title.

What the Students Say...

"I really enjoy geography. I chose it for A level because I loved it at GCSE. Everything in this subject relates to things you see around outside."

CONTACT
Mr T Hutchinson
Head of Department





German

Why Study German?

Students enjoy learning German as it is logical, ordered and distinct. Working out the meanings of long compound nouns or simply words which resemble the English can be rewarding. In fact, students of German are known to acquire good vocabulary skills, a better understanding of the English language, have improved literacy and higher reading achievement, as well as enhanced listening and memory skills. Clearly, becoming linguistically aware develops higher thinking skills and improves the interpersonal skills required in every day life and in any career.

Studying German at A level certainly gives students an edge. It is regarded as an academic subject and an extremely useful language by universities and employers alike and as Germany's role in Europe and in business increases, German has never been so important. Particularly in business, it should not be assumed that everyone speaks English; they do not. Foreign business partners feel at ease when conversing in their own language and meetings flow more easily. Therefore being able to offer German in a competitive market is sought after.

As of 2026, around 109,000 to 137,000 IT positions remain continuously vacant across German companies and public sectors in fields like cybersecurity, cloud architecture, data engineering and artificial intelligence/machine learning. Therefore, there are currently very exciting opportunities for those interested in IT and German. Job applicants with IT skills and German will be much favoured over those who only speak English.



Opportunities for Enrichment

To complement some elements of the course we hope to arrange a study trip to Berlin in the spring term. In the summer term we will go to London for a German themed day linked to the curriculum. This will link to art, architecture and culinary delights. Wherever possible, we offer extrra German speaking practise.



Background Needed

In order to cope with the rigours of A level German some linguistic competence is essential. We expect, therefore, students to have gained at least grade 5 GCSE in German. Students should also be keen to deepen their knowledge of the language and their understanding of the culture and society of the German speaking world.

What the Students Say...

"German is a great subject to take, especially at A level. The lessons are challenging but very rewarding."

"Learning languages enriches your life – it's worth learning verb tables for!"

"Speaking in a foreign language is a wonderful skill. I plan to study Pharmaceutical Engineering with German which will enhance future opportunities."

Course Content

We follow the AQA course and the textbook we use is called 'AQA German A level' published by Oxford University Press. Students not only have access to the book but also the e-book including listening activities, online grammar activities and comprehension tasks including answers to check afterwards.

Topics in the first year of the course include the changing state of the family, the digital world, youth culture: fashion and trends, music and television, festivals and traditions, art and architecture and cultural life in Berlin, past and present. In the second year of the course, the following topics are studied: immigration, integration and racism, Germany and the European Union, politics and youth and German re-unification and its consequences. We also study a book and a film and make sure students have rigorous grammar practice.



"Leaders have developed a highly inclusive sixth-form provision."

Ofsted 2020

CONTACT
Mrs E Peduru
Head of Department



History

Why Study History?

The past causes the present, and so the future. Only through studying history can we grasp how and why things change or stay the same. History teaches students key skills that are highly valued by universities and employers: to conduct academic research; to assess arguments and evidence of others; to analyse and evaluate; and to construct convincing and coherent arguments in an academic and persuasive way. Students who study history are better prepared for further education and have learnt life-long transferable skills. History provides a distinctive education by providing a deep sense of the past, and an awareness of the development of differing values, systems and societies.

Course Content

Year 12
Students study two units:

- England 1547-1603: the later Tudors
- Democracy and dictatorships in Germany 1919-1963

Year 13
Students study two units:

- Civil rights in the USA 1865-1992
- NEA – 'Coursework' (nominally on Elizabeth I but students can pick anything!)

CONTACT
Mr T Stewart
Head of Department

Background Needed

To undertake A level history students will have obtained a grade 5 or above in GCSE history or English literature. Students must be motivated, organised and committed, willing to work independently and as part of a group, but above all have a high level of interest and enjoyment in history.

Assessment

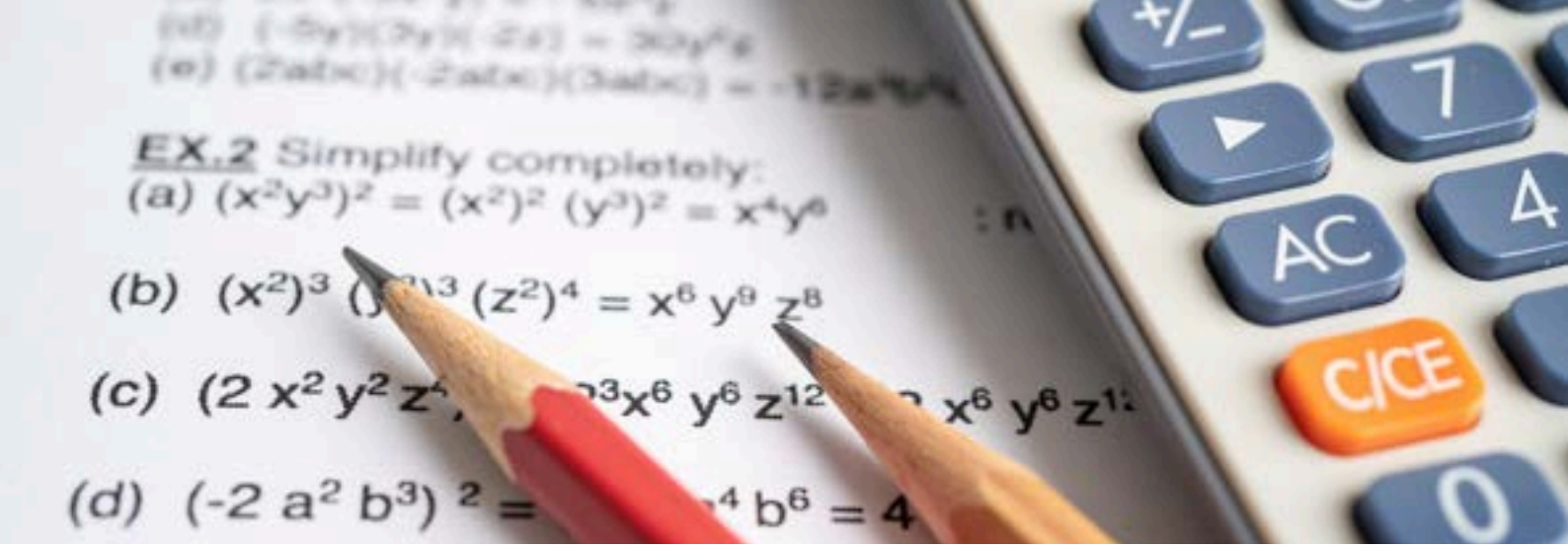
Assessment at A level is through three written examinations all taken at the end of Year 13. There is also one piece of internally assessed, board approved NEA, which is then externally moderated. This is a 3,000-4,000 word essay.

What the Students Say...

"I love that history encompasses political and social issues which you can relate back to the present day – it's always relevant."

"History has always been important but even more so in the 21st century and beyond: if you want to know how our 21st century world got to where it is, then study A Level History!"





Mathematics

Why Study Mathematics?

Following an A level course in mathematics enables students to develop the skills of mathematical reasoning; to extend their knowledge of mathematical theory and techniques; to become confident and competent in applying their skills to a variety of situations, including some encountered in other subject areas. Students will become resourceful in problem solving and appreciate the importance of mathematics in other academic disciplines and the wider world. Mathematics is of interest and practical use to a wide variety of students. Students studying any of the sciences, economics, design & technology, computing or geography may well benefit from building up their Pure Mathematics skills, as well as the statistics and mechanics content. Mathematics fits comfortably into most combinations of A level subjects and is a valuable qualification both for Higher Education and future employment.

Assessment

Throughout the course, students will be set assignments on a regular basis, and are expected to consolidate classroom learning through further practice between lessons. In addition there will be formal assessments at appropriate intervals conducted under examination conditions. External assessment is based entirely on three terminal examinations of two hours each, two on Pure Mathematics and one on Applied Mathematics (statistics and mechanics).

Background Needed

It is essential that students have a sound foundation of mathematical skills and knowledge. This should be reflected in a good GCSE result. Students must provide evidence to show that they have been consistently working at grade 7 or above throughout Year 11. A grade 7 is required as most topics in A level mathematics involve algebraic manipulation. A strong grasp of all areas of algebra is essential for you to succeed on this course.



Opportunities for Enrichment

Students are invited to participate in the UK Senior Maths Challenge which takes place in November each year and is open to both Year 12 and Year 13.

Course Content

A level Mathematics includes Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics, with a two-thirds weighting towards Pure Mathematics. In Pure Mathematics students are introduced to analytical and logical processes and a range of problem solving techniques, which include the development of a high level of competence in algebraic manipulation. Topics studied include mathematical proof, geometry, trigonometry, exponentials and logarithms, calculus and vectors. These are developed in the second year with a focus on trigonometry and calculus but also introducing sequences and series, and numerical methods for solving equations. With advanced skills in trigonometry, students will be able to solve a wider range of equations, and by linking in calculus, will solve problems with rates of change and areas enclosed by curves. The solution of differential equations is introduced, and working with 3-dimensional vectors.

In Statistics, students study statistical sampling, presenting and analysing data, modelling data using statistical distributions, statistical hypothesis testing and probability theory. A large, real-life data-set is used to appreciate the challenges of working with real data. The emphasis is on analysis and decision making based upon statistical techniques. Students will need a calculator with the ability to compute summary statistics and access probabilities from standard statistical distributions.

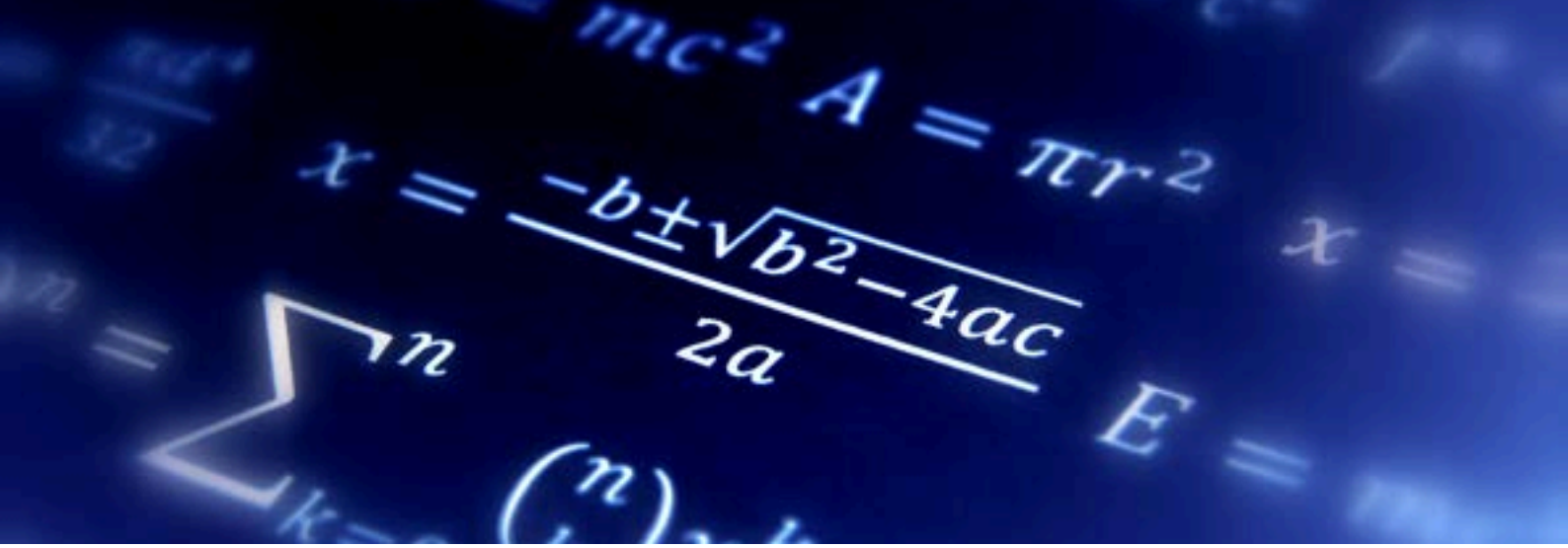
In Mechanics, students learn about quantities and units in mechanics, kinematics, forces and Newton's laws of motion. They develop an appreciation of mathematical modelling and its applicability and limitations in different situations. The mechanics content complements work done in Physics (if the student is studying it) but with the emphasis on mathematical problem solving.

What the Students Say...

"If you want a challenge, give it a go".

CONTACT
Mrs A Drazic & Mrs H Williams
Co-Heads of Mathematics





Further Mathematics

Why Study Further Mathematics?

For students who enjoy mathematics, the study of Further Mathematics provides additional challenge, and the opportunity to explore new mathematical concepts. Students enhance their skills of analysis and mathematical reasoning. Further Mathematics forms a bridge to degree courses with a mathematical foundation such as the sciences, engineering, computing, economics, or, of course, mathematics itself. It develops a rigour of logical argument that is beneficial for success in many other disciplines at University level. Students of Further Mathematics also find that it reinforces and consolidates skills required for the standard mathematics A level, and find it a rewarding and enjoyable subject to study.

Background Needed

It is essential that students studying this course have a considerable interest and appreciation for mathematics, together with a proven aptitude for the subject. Students must have a grade 8 in mathematics.

Opportunities for Enrichment

Students are invited to participate in the UK Senior Maths Challenge which takes place in November each year and is open to both Year 12 and Year 13.

Assessment

Throughout the course, students will be set assignments on a regular basis, and are expected to consolidate classroom learning through further practice between lessons. In addition there will be formal assessments at appropriate intervals conducted under examination conditions. External assessment is based entirely on four terminal examinations (two on pure mathematics and one in each of statistics and mechanics).



Course Content

Further Mathematics A level includes topics in pure mathematics (about 50% of the course), as well as statistics and mechanics (about 25% each). In pure mathematics students are introduced to aspects not previously encountered, such as complex numbers, matrices and further methods of mathematical proof. The course also builds upon skills introduced in A level Mathematics in the fields of vectors, calculus and functions. In the second year of study we develop these ideas further and introduce additional techniques such as polar coordinates, hyperbolic functions and differential equations.

In Further Mechanics students extend their skills from the mathematics course, covering topics such as momentum and impulse, collisions, centres of mass, work and energy, elastic strings and springs. These complement work they are doing in Physics (if they are studying it) but approach the subject from a more mathematical, problem solving direction.

Further Statistics includes linear regression, discrete and continuous statistical distributions, correlation, statistical hypothesis testing and chi-squared tests. These are all extremely useful techniques for students who may need to do statistical analysis of data in other subjects or in the future.

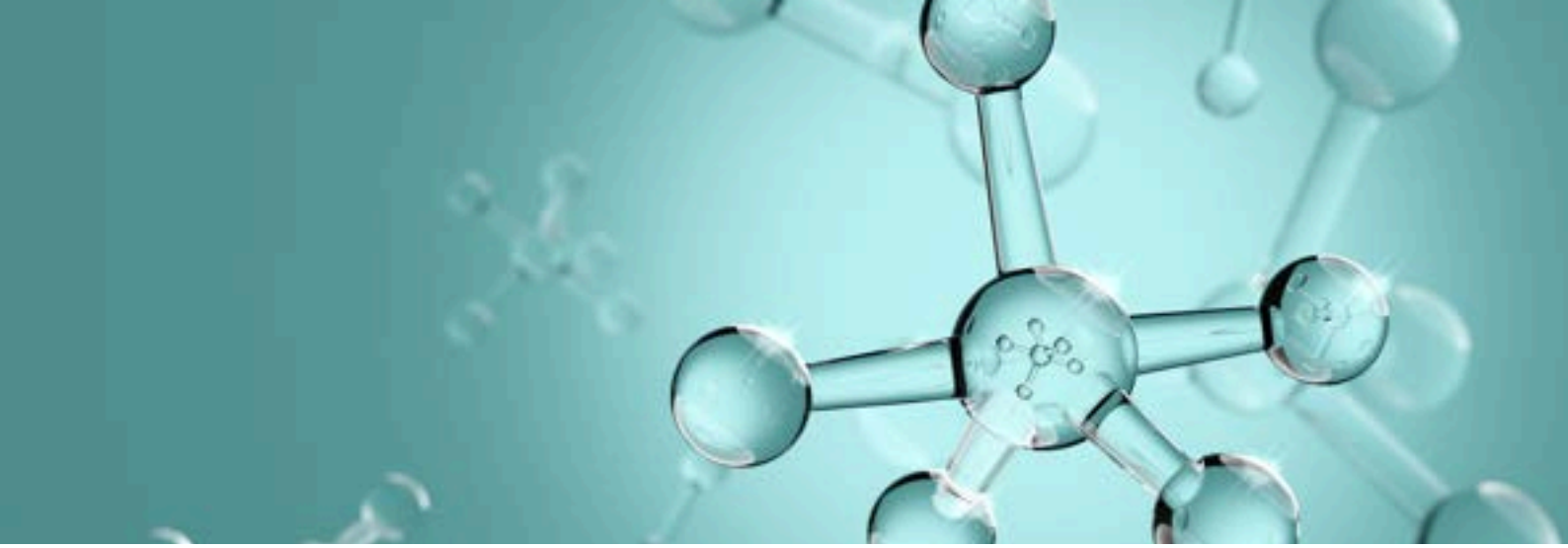
The combination of the techniques studied in pure mathematics, and their application in statistics and mechanics allow students to use mathematics to model some quite sophisticated real-life situations and gain the satisfaction of predicting results that actually work, as well as appreciating the applicability and limitations of mathematical models.

What the Students Say...

"Further maths gave me the confidence and inspiration to take on maths at university."

CONTACT
Mrs A Drazic & Mrs H Williams
Co-Heads of Mathematics





Medical Science BTEC

Why Study BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Medical Science?

BTEC Nationals in Medical Science is a great choice for students looking for a career where they can make a difference to the health and lives of others. The course gives students a broad understanding of biological principles including cells, tissues, biological molecules, genetics, immunology and practical microbiology as well as diseases, diagnostic techniques and treatments. BTEC Nationals are widely recognised by higher education and industry as the vocational qualification of choice at Level 3.

Background Needed

Students applying to study BTEC extended certificate in Medical Science in the Sixth Form must have achieved 5-5 for Combined Science or 5 for GCSE Biology. Students must also gain a grade 5 in both GCSE English and Mathematics. The following subjects would be suitable to combine with this qualification: Psychology, Sociology, Physical Education and Sport. This qualification can lead to progression onto a variety of courses like BSc Nursing, BSc Psychology, and BSc Physiotherapy.

Course Content

Everyone taking this qualification will study three mandatory units and an optional unit, covering the following content areas:

Unit 1: Principles of Human Physiology, Anatomy and Pathology

Unit 2: Health issues and scientific reporting

Unit 3: Practical Microbiology and infectious diseases

Optional unit: This has been designed to support progression to health and health science courses in higher education. This topic deepens the understanding in a specific specialist area to further develop students' knowledge and skills.



Assessment

Assessment is specifically designed to fit the purpose and objective of the qualification. It includes a range of assessment types and styles suited to vocational qualifications in the sector. There are three main forms of assessment that you need to be aware of: external, internal and synoptic.

Flexibility: combination of internal and external assessment increases flexibility and allows students to take more control of their learning. There is an external assessment of a 1 hour 30 minute written exam.

Opportunities for Enrichment

There will be opportunity to take part in the Science Fayre. Opportunities for work experience in allied healthcare are often shared with students via google classroom.

Progression routes: students can progress to an apprenticeship, higher education, or go direct to employment.

Practical learning: students will explore a variety of tests and techniques using essential laboratory practice. Unit 3, in particular, will provide the opportunity to carry out investigations which will enable students to understand the role of clinical microbiologists.



CONTACT
Mrs M Bhattacharjee
Head of Biology



Music

Why Study Music?

A music qualification is highly regarded in many occupational areas. Apart from leading to specialist careers in music and the arts, this qualification can highlight other attributes: the capability to work independently and as part of a group and the ability to show initiative as well as developing practical and academic skills.

The Eduqas syllabus is popular because of its variety and the fact that it covers all the key musical skill of performing, composing and listening. Students study a wide range of musical styles from classical to rock and pop, 20th Century music to musical theatre and jazz. The course is suited to anyone who has a keen interest in performing, creating and listening to different styles of music and who wishes to broaden their experience and deepen their understanding of both live and recorded music.



Background Needed

At the start of the course the ability to play an instrument (including voice) to at least grade 5 is essential for the practical demands of the course. Candidates who can read music and who have at least a GCSE grade 5 in music are more likely to succeed at A level. A love of music is also very important.

Opportunities for Enrichment

The Music Department regularly organises trips to see concerts and musicals to enrich the students' learning. As an A level music student, it is expected that you will regularly participate in at least one extra-curricular activity at school each week. This could be as a performer, a conductor, an accompanist or a coach for the younger years activities. There are plenty of extra-curricular opportunities to choose from and you are encouraged to start your own groups too. Our extra-curricular programme includes: senior and junior bands, musical theatre group, choir, woodwind, brass and strings groups, as well as out annual school production. A level music students are also expected to perform in the termly concerts.

Course Content and Assessment

Students can choose either option A where they specialise more in performing or option B where they specialise more in composing.

Component 1 – Performing

Option A: Performing (35%)

A performance consisting of a minimum of three pieces lasting 10-12 minutes in total. At least one of these pieces must be as a soloist. The other pieces may be either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. One piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one area of study. At least one other piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one other, different area of study.

OR

Option B: Performing (25%)

A performance consisting of a minimum of two pieces either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both lasting6-8 minutes in total. One piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one area of study.

This component is externally assessed by a visiting examiner and the standard expected level by the end of the course is grade 6 but students performing harder pieces will be able to access higher marks.

What the Students Say...

"A level is very different to GCSE Music. It requires more independent study and there are lots more opportunities for developing your performing skills..."

CONTACT
Miss J Pitman
Head of Department

Component 2 – Composing

Option A: Composing (25%)

Two compositions, one of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Students will have a choice of four set briefs released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition. The combined length of the two compositions is 4-6 minutes.

OR

Option B: Composing (35%)

Three compositions, one of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Students will have a choice of four set briefs, released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition must reflect the musical characteristics of one different area of study (i.e. not the Western Classical Tradition) while the third composition is a free composition. The combined length of the three compositions is 8-10 minutes.

This component is externally assessed by WJEC.

Component 3 – Appraising (40%)

Written examination – 2 hours 15 minutes. Students will develop knowledge and understanding of music through three areas of study from the choices below:

Compulsory area of study: The Western Classical Tradition (The Development of the Symphony)

Choose one area of study from: Rock and Pop, Musical Theatre or Jazz.

Choose one area of study from: Into the Twentieth Century or Into the Twenty-first Century



Philosophy & Ethics

Why study Philosophy, Ethics and Religion?

Philosophy, Ethics and Religion explores the way we view the world and how we understand human nature. Ethical issues dominate the newspapers and questions concerning the right and wrong way to behave are pertinent in every area of life. During lively lessons, students are encouraged to question, discuss and present their own arguments, comparing and contrasting these with the theories of great thinkers. The skills developed are applicable in careers such as medicine, law and business, as well as being valuable preparation for university.

This subject is also highly regarded by Russell Group universities.



Assessment

Three examinations will take place at the end of the course, with each exam lasting two hours.

Background Needed

Whilst it is a help, it is not necessary to have a GCSE in Religious Studies. Candidates will need at least a GCSE at Grade 4 in English. In addition to an interest in the subject, students will need to have a positive attitude towards background reading and developing a fluent essay writing style.

Opportunities for Enrichment

There is a wealth of excellent enrichment available to students on our three comprehensive google classrooms pages, including access to original source texts and podcasts from philosophers. We have an academic reading library to allow students to read around the subject and delve into the scholarly discussion surrounding each topic. Regular exposure to current affairs is also to be encouraged and news articles are regularly integrated into lessons. Also, a seminar is delivered by a local Buddhist to enrich students' understanding of Buddhism and a Christian organisation deliver sessions to students to enhance their understanding of the philosophy topics of the Problem of Evil and Religious Experiences.

Course Content

Year 12

In Philosophy, students will appreciate ancient philosophical influences and then evaluate the success of several classical arguments for the existence of God. The authenticity of religious experience will be questioned and finally the challenge of the problem of evil will be explored.

In Ethics, students will look at normative ethical theories and begin to apply these theories to contemporary moral dilemmas.

In Buddhism, students will explore Buddhist ideas about human nature, core Buddhist teachings such as the Four Noble Truths, and evaluate sources of religious authority.

Year 13

In Philosophy, students will delve into the nature of the soul, mind and body, the possibility of life after death, the nature of God and issues surrounding religious language.

In Ethics, the nature of ethical language will be analysed, alongside debates surrounding conscience and sexual ethics.

In Buddhism, students will explore the contemporary moral issues within Buddhism and analyse a range of Buddhist traditions from around the world.

What the Students Say...

"Philosophy and Ethics was definitely my favourite subject because I was able to learn about the things that exist between science and religion. This allowed me to better understand the world around us and gave me the opportunity to question the everyday process of ethical decision making."

"I enjoyed the course so much I decided to study Philosophy at university in order to continue to explore and challenge how we perceive the world."

CONTACT
Mrs S Thomas
Head of Department





Physical Education

Why study Physical Education?

A level PE allows students to explore a number of completely different aspects of sports participation. It is this breadth, together with the nature of the syllabus that allows us to offer a range of teaching and learning styles; students will often find themselves engaged in practical activity in order to further their understanding of theory. They will combine their practical performances, in one chosen activity, with academic assessments in pursuit of a strong overall grade.

Our large indoor sports hall, two designated classrooms and an Astroturf pitch provide for a thoroughly enjoyable learning experience.

A level physical education is recognised by all Universities as a scientific-academic qualification and is particularly useful in the pursuit of places on sports science, physiotherapy and sports related teaching courses.

Background Needed

A grade 5 or higher is required in GCSE PE or a grade 5 or higher in GCSE Combined Science.

Opportunities for Enrichment

A level physical education students will benefit from participating in a variety of sporting fixtures.

What the Students Say...

"The PE A level was a fantastic experience: I really enjoyed it! The teachers were very enthusiastic and delivered lessons that were entertaining and fun.
This subject is very enjoyable and I would certainly recommend taking it."

"I thoroughly enjoyed studying A level physical education, as it was an interesting, but challenging subject, taught by a team of enthusiastic and lively teachers."



Course Content

The syllabus currently has three strands, each of which allows students to study an entirely different aspect of sports participation and surrounding issues. The contemporary studies module offers students the chance to explore a range of issues surrounding the modern day sporting world. It is during this time that students will consider sociological elements such as football hooliganism and sponsorship and their impact on the development of selected, high profile sports.

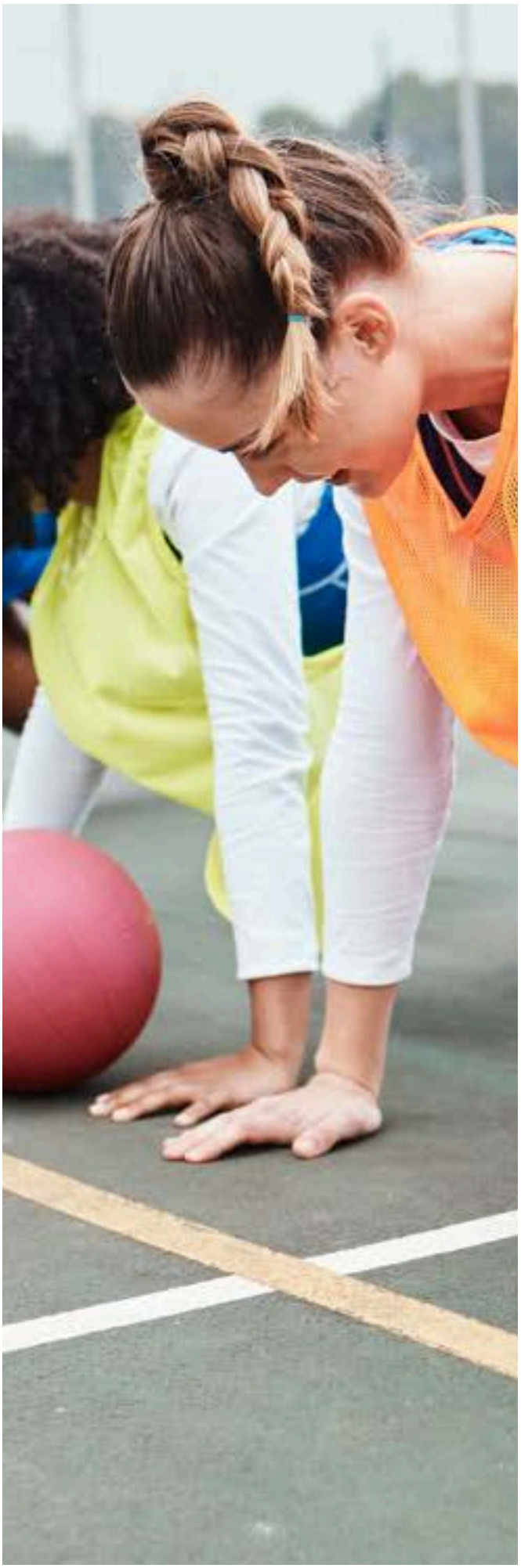
Physical Education students will also study anatomy and physiology. Following a brief section based around the workings of the bones and muscles in the human body, movement analysis projects become prevalent.

The Acquisition of Skill component of the syllabus focuses upon how humans learn. In particular, students will consider the coaching methods and learning environments that are beneficial to particular groups of individuals in a sporting context.

In the History of Sport component students will consider the factors in the development of several different competitive sports. For example, the Industrial Revolution, associated developments in transport links and the need for a release from the monotony of working life are considered in relation to the development of Association Football.

Exercise physiology focuses on how the body prepares itself for and recovers from exercise.

Sports psychology gives students an insight into how they can mentally prepare themselves for big events and ensure that peak physical conditioning is not undermined by anxiety and negative psychological factors.



CONTACT
Mr J Flynn
Head of Department



Physics

Why study Physics?

Physics is the study of the universe. A physicist studies everything from the smallest particle to the largest galaxy and everything in between. Physics is the most fundamental of the sciences and underpins chemistry, biology and engineering as well as many other scientific disciplines. As a highly regarded subject for higher education, studying A level physics does not restrict your options, it expands them. It is useful for courses such as medicine, finance and computing and is essential for courses such as engineering. Research also suggests that students with a physics A level will be more likely to enter higher wage professions upon entering the world of work as employers recognise the rigour of the course and the transferable skills that are acquired whilst studying it, making it a gateway subject for a vast range of careers. People with a background in physics are in increasing demand to monitor climate change, find sustainable ways of generating electricity, contribute to the advances in medical physics, conduct fundamental research and much, much more.

Opportunities for Enrichment

Students have in the past taken part in a variety of extra-curricular visits, such as to the Large Hadron Collider at CERN and the Medical Physics department at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Students have also been encouraged to lead on extracurricular clubs, such as engineering club and to demonstrate physics experiments during school open evenings.

Background Needed

The most important attributes for a good physics student are an inquisitive mind and a desire to learn more about the world around us. You should have gained a grade 6 or above in GCSE Physics or Combined Science. It is also important that you are highly numerate and have gained a minimum of a grade 6 at GCSE mathematics. The mathematical requirement for A level physics is demanding and it is highly recommended that you also study mathematics at A level. Indeed, most university courses that involve physics, would also require mathematics.



Assessment

For A level, students will sit three two-hour examinations. They will consist of a variety of multiple-choice questions as well as questions that require short and long answers.

Course Content

Year 12

Students will develop their understanding of topics studied at GCSE such as mechanics and electricity, and the study of forces will now be linked to the properties of materials. Some new, exciting topics such as particle physics and quantum phenomena will be introduced. Students will begin to understand the links between different branches of physics when topics such as waves and optics are connected to the quantum effects studied earlier in the year.

Year 13

Students will study further mechanics topics that are necessary to explain the natural world such as simple harmonic motion and circular motion. Magnetic and electric fields will also be studied and related to the workings of particle accelerators. Further work on gravitational fields will help explain the motion of the planets and stars.

The topic of thermodynamics will be covered as well as how the equation E=mc2 can be used to explain the processes of nuclear fission and nuclear fusion, the latter of which will be linked to the life of a star, and evolution of the Universe. There is an optional unit that is chosen during the second year of the course. In previous years, students have opted to follow the Engineering Physics or the Turning Points unit.

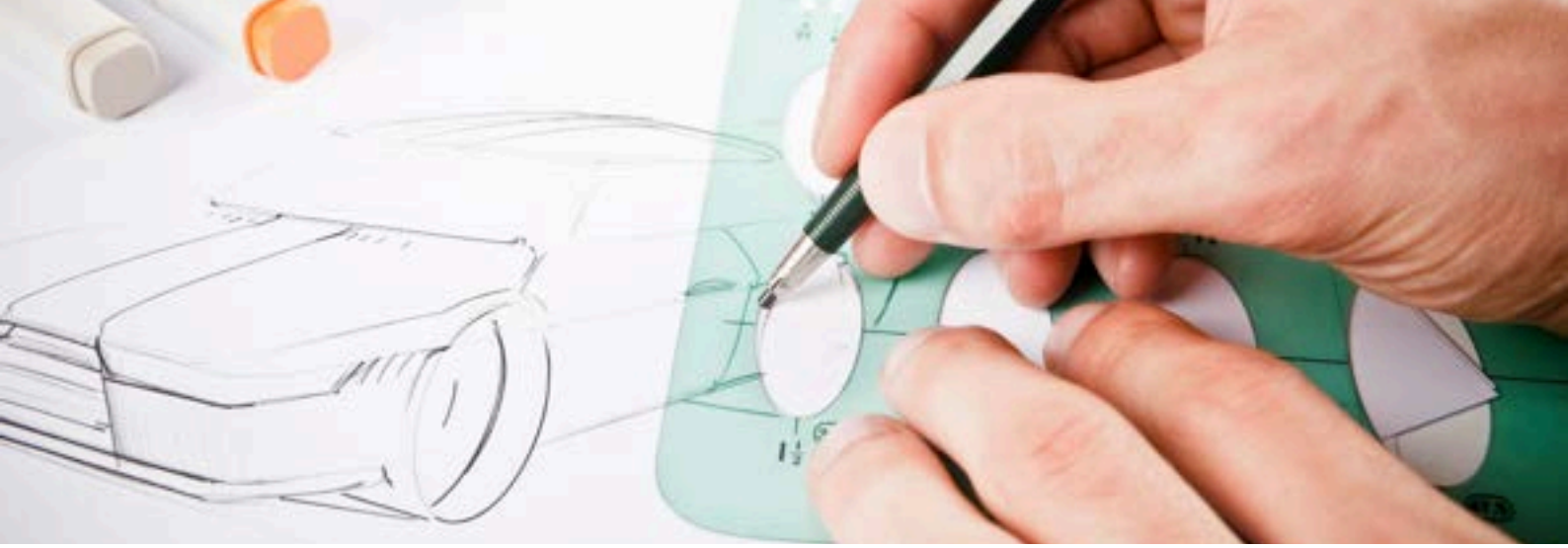
What the Students Say...

"Every lesson I come out thinking 'wow'"

"Melting glass and ice, blowing up capacitors, firing guns: What more do you want?"



CONTACT
Ms P Suraweera
Head of Physics



Product Design

Why study Product Design?

With a qualification in product design you could go on to higher education, further education in a very broad range of degree courses or work in the design, engineering, or manufacturing industries.

Former students who have followed this course now working in such diverse industries such as jewellery, formula one car design, general automotive design, domestic products, interior design, electronic goods, architecture and special effects design and manufacture.

Our students are highly sought after by top employers, consistently securing competitive degree apprenticeships in engineering, aerospace and creative industries.

Opportunities for Enrichment

Take your learning on the road with inspiring visits to world-class museums, hands on industry workshops and architectural city trips.

Assessment

The Non Examined Assessment is a design and make task, worth 100 marks, which should take 40 hours of work to complete.

Assessment is split between exploration, designing, making and evaluation.

Background Needed

Students will require at least a grade 5 in GCSE Design Technology, Maths and Science. Other subjects which would go well with design & technology are physics, mathematics, art or other subjects that involve creativity or a problem solving approach. The AQA product design specification builds on the experience of GCSE and allows you to further your studies through product design. You will have the opportunity to study, propose and realise prototype solutions to designing and making opportunities closely linked to the real world of product manufacture.



Course Content

The AQA product design course is a linear course students will study for two years.

During the first year they will start an NEA, Non Examination Assessment, worth 50% of the final A level. This project is based on a design context set by the examination board. In the second year students complete a second NEA but this time have the freedom to design and make a product of their own choosing.

The final 50% of the marks are available in two equally weighted two hour final examinations. 15% of the examinations will refer to scientific and mathematical questions at higher tier GCSE maths level. The examinations are a mixture of short answer questions, multiple choice, extended responses, product analysis based on visual images of products and two extended response questions based on commercial manufacturing questions



What the Students Say...

"The subject is a hard but enjoyable course in which you learn new skills that you can use in the future. It is such as broad subject where you get to learn about products in the market place and ways the market works. The development of products and the factors that need to be taken into place for the product to suit the market place. The course gives you a range of general knowledge and skills that you can use with many other subjects you may take in the Sixth Form."



CONTACT
Mrs I Sunthareswaran
Head of Department



Psychology

Why study Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of the mind and human behaviour. Psychologists conduct research to investigate the way humans act and interact. They try to understand what motivates, influences and potentially controls humans and use this understanding to help us tackle personal and social problems. If you study psychology, you'll be able to develop your analytical and theoretical skills. You will learn about scientific research methods, including collecting and working with data. Learning about human behaviour can also help to build your communication skills and improve your teamwork and leadership skills.

Psychology is useful for any job that requires lots of interaction or an understanding of human behaviour and development. People with skills in psychology are sought after in medical fields, public sectors such as schools, prisons and law enforcement, as well as the wider fields of business and management. Psychologists may work in a wide range of fields including mentalhealth care, academic research, or even in sports industry.



Background Needed

Psychology A level is scientific and research based. It requires a good understanding of biology and a willingness to develop this further. It involves the use of mathematics and the ability to read around topics (a mixture of scientific and other research texts). It also involves writing academic essays.

Typically, students will have achieved a grade 5 in English Language or Literature and grade 5 in mathematics and a grade 5-5 in combined science.

Opportunities for Enrichment

A once-fortnightly after-school psychology club will provide opportunities to practice the content learnt in lessons whilst exploring it more deeply. Also, there is an ad hoc film club with screenings throughout the year of films and documentaries that complement the topics being taught in class. Debates are scheduled throughout the year for students to volunteer for. Wider readings are posted on a weekly basis for all students to further develop their knowledge beyond the exam curriculum.

Course Content

Students will follow the A level AQA specification linear programme. The A level consists of three papers. The following content will be covered over the two years:

Paper 1 - Introductory Topics in Psychology

- Social Influence
- Memory
- Attachment
- Psychopathology

Paper 2 - Psychology in Context

- Approaches in psychology
- Biopsychology
- Research methods with inferential statistics

Paper 3 - Issues and Options in Psychology

- Psychology of relationships
- Forensic psychology
- Schizophrenia
- Issues and debates

Assessment

Students will be examined on each paper. Each written exam will be two hours, 96 marks in total and each paperis worth 33.3% of the A level.The paper will consist of each topic and they are assessed out of 24 marks.

Questions will consist of multiple choice, short answer, extended writing and application questions.

The skills that will be assessed are knowledge/ understanding, analysis/evaluation and application.

- Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology
- Paper 2: Psychology in Context
- Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology

CONTACT
Mr M Simon
Head of Department





Sociology with Criminology

Why study Sociology with Criminology?

Sociologists study human behaviour and its relationship to society. The United Kingdom has a population of approximately 65 million people. Each person is unique as an individual, yet together they manage to establish connections with one another. Sociologists ask questions such as: how does a person's ethnicity, gender, social class and age shape and influence what they experience during their life? How do societies evolve and change over time? What makes some societies thrive and be successful, while others deteriorate and experience chaos? Studying sociology allows students to explore the world, and their place within it.

Criminology is a particularly popular component of this course, allowing students to explore how we can best understand crime, criminals and the way that the criminal justice system deals with both.

Assessment

There are three examinations at the end of Year 13:

Paper 1 (2 hours):
Education with Theory and Methods.

Paper 2 (2 hours):
Families & Households; Beliefs in Society.

Paper 3 (2 hours):
Crime and Deviance (Criminology) with Theoryand Methods.

Background Needed

No previous study of Sociology is required, but applicants need to read widely, take an active interest in current issues and be able to write essays fluently. Candidates must have at least a grade 4 in English language or English literature.

Opportunities for Enrichment

A once-fortnightly after-school sociology club will provide opportunities to practice the content learnt in lessons whilst exploring it more deeply. Also, there is an ad hoc film club with screenings throughout the year of films and documentaries that complement the topics being taught in class. Debates are scheduled throughout the year for students to volunteer for. Wider readings are posted on a weekly basis for all students to further develop their knowledge beyond the exam curriculum.



Course Content

Year 12

Topics studied in Year 12 include Education, where we explore issues such as why are only 30% of students at university from working class backgrounds? Why do Chinese and Indian heritage girls top the performance tables at GCSE and A Level? How are gender differences in achievement understood? The study of Crime and Deviance (Criminology) asks what motivates a person to join a gang? Why are 80% of crimes committed by males? Why do over half of people released from prison end up back in prison within two years?

Year 13

Topics studied in year 13 include Families and Households, where issues such as why are fewer people choosing to marry these days? How have patterns of divorce changed? And why do people marry more than one person at a time in some parts of the world? The study of Beliefs in Society asks what motivates a person to join a cult? And why are women likely to be more religious than men? The study of Theory and Methods looks carefully at how research is conducted and what it is that sociology ultimately wants to achieve as a Social Science.

What the Students Say...

"I am so pleased I chose to study sociology! Each and every topic is not only interesting, but relatable to my own life. I am excited to be going off to university to study sociology next year!"

"I'd recommend everybody study sociology! You'll learn all sorts of interesting and thought-provoking facts about humans and their behaviour. I've enjoyed the lessons and find that the time flies by. My favourite subject!"

CONTACT
Mrs L Garner
Head of Department





Spanish

Why study Spanish?

Speaking and understanding another language is an invaluable skill which can be useful in many ways throughout life. In the future, you will be competing for jobs on a European and world level and your knowledge of another language and culture will really make you stand out. Students who have studied Spanish at A level go on to have careers in a variety of sectors including teaching, translating, sales and marketing, travel& tourism, journalism, fashion, work in the foreign office or secret service, interpreting, banking.

Spanish is the second most widely-spoken language in the world with over 400 million speakers. It's also one of the most spoken languages in Europe. Being able to speak Spanish can provide you with numerous academic and career opportunities. It will provide you with the opportunity to work and travel in Europe, Central and South America, and other Spanish-speaking countries. Through learning the language, you will be able to access the Spanish and Latin American cultures, which are rich in areas such as dance and literature.

Language skills alone are already an advantage in potential employers' eyes, but Spanish even more so, as it's so widely spoken. Many British and American companies conduct business in Spanish-speaking countries, and with over 30 million Spanish speakers in the US alone, it's a great skill to have if you're looking to work abroad.

South America is a huge agricultural producer, producing a large quantity of the world's coffee, sugarcane and bananas. Being able to speak Spanish could open up opportunities to work for global export companies. Similarly, in Spain, the manufacturing and textile industries are strong, providing further opportunities.



Background Needed

In order to cope with the rigours of A level Spanish some linguistic competence is essential, but it is not the preserve of the most able linguists. We expect students to have gained at least a grade 5 at GCSE but also a passion for language and meaning and a desire to experiment with new vocabulary and grammar. You will need to be disciplined in working independantly aas well as collaboratively and have an ability to commit langauge to memory accurately.

Course Content

We have opted for the AQA A level course. Students must study the following themes and sub-themes in relation to at least one Spanish-speaking country

- Aspects of Hispanic society
- Multiculturalism in Hispanic society
- Artistic culture in the Hispanic world
- Aspects of political life in the Hispanic world

In addition,

- literary texts and films

Students must study either one text and one film or two texts. Abridged editions should not be used. Students must identify a subject or a key question which is of interest to them and which relates to a country or countries where Spanish is spoken. They must select relevant information in Spanish and demonstrate their ability to initiate and conduct individual research by analysing and summarising their findings, in order to present and discuss them in the speaking assessment.

Finally, various aspects of Spanish grammar.



Opportunities for Enrichment

Looking at work experience or exchange with schools in Spain

CONTACT
Mr G Raso
Head of Department

Assessment

Assessment objectives (AOs) are set by Ofqual and are the same across all A level Spanish specifications and all exam boards. The exams will measure how students have achieved the following assessment objectives.

AO1: Understand and respond:

- in speech to spoken language including face-to-face interaction
- in writing to spoken language drawn from a variety of sources.

AO2: Understand and respond:

- in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources
- in writing to written language drawn from a variety of sources.

AO3: Manipulate the language;

- accurately in spoken and written forms, using a range of lexis and structure.

AO4: Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically and analytically to, different aspects of the culture and society of countries / communities where the language is spoken.

Across assessment objectives AO1 and AO2, no more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification may be used for responses in English, including translation into English.





Sport and Physical Activity

Cambridge Technical Level 3

Why study Sport and Physical Activity?

This exciting new course aims to allow students who have an interest in sport and exercise to specialise in this area. The course focuses on the vocational and practical aspects of working within the sports sector. This course will give you the correct skills to go on to university or gain employment within the sports industry. Career opportunities include sports therapy, sports nutrition and conditioning, sports coach, personal training, working in the media, sports psychology and teaching.

Background Needed

A grade 4 or higher in GCSE English Language and GCSE Combined Science a re needed for this course.



Opportunities for Enrichment

Students will benefit from participating in a variety of sporting fixtures.

Course Content

Students will study six different units from the list below chosen by the school over the two year course:

- Body systems and the effects of physical activity (C)
- Organisation of sports events (C)
- Physical activity for specific groups (C)
- Sports coaching and activity leadership
- Practical skills in sport and physical activity
- Nutrition and diet for sport
- Performance analysis in sport and exercise
- Sports injuries and rehabilitation
- Sport and exercise psychology
- Sport and exercise sociology

Assessment

Students will be assessed in a number of ways including extended work projects and unit exams.

CONTACT
Mr J Flynn
Head of Department



Theatre Studies

Why study Theatre Studies?

Our specification inspires students to become independent theatre makers with the skills they need to go on to higher education, whether that is to study a course in drama and theatre or another subject. It is varied, demanding and very rewarding, encouraging you to develop your own interests and skills relating to the world of theatre. Past students have gone on to Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, Central School of Speech and Drama and Goldsmiths University, London, to name but a few of the institutions that acknowledge the merits of this course. Career paths are as varied as acting or directing, lighting and sound technicians, teaching, working in the media, in personnel, or management – all careers where employers value the confidence and maturity this course engenders.

We want students to have an inspiring experience of A level Drama and Theatre. This qualification emphasises practical creativity alongside research and theoretical understanding. Students learn through experience, seeing theatre and making theatre for themselves. Students are introduced to a wide range of theatrical styles and contexts as they explore plays practically and devise and work on performances.

Students choose to develop as a:

- performer
- designer (lighting, sound, set, costume, puppets)
- director
- combination of these.

This qualification is linear. Linear means that students undertake all non-exam assessment (NEA) in the certification year and sit the written exam at the end of the course.



Background Needed

Applicants should have good literacy skills, as well a genuine interest in the study of plays and theatre.

Applicants should have a minimum Grade 4 in English language or literature. GCSE drama is highly desirable, but not essential. A good work ethic is of prime importance, as is a commitment to group practical work. Visits to the theatre and rehearsals out of school hours will be regular features of this course.

Course Content

The subject content details the knowledge, understanding and skills that students are expected to develop throughout the course of study.

The subject content for A level Drama and Theatre is divided into three components:

1. Drama and theatre
2. Creating original drama
3. Making theatre

In the practical components students may specialise in performing, lighting, sound, set, costume, puppets and/or directing.

Opportunites for Enrichment

Involvement in extra-curricular drama is a key feature of life for Theatre Studies students at Maiden Erlegh School. They can expect to become involved in all or some of the following: school production, visits to theatres and from theatre companies, backstage tours and workshops with professional actors, helping out and/or running lower school drama and directing clubs, assisting in drama lessons.

Assessment

There is one three hour examination, one devised piece, a working notebook, performance of an extract and a reflective report at the end of Year 13.

What the Students Say...

"Theatre Studies is hard work, yet the teaching methods and the teachers make the course fun and accessible for the individual."

"I did Drama at Maiden Erlegh and am now studying at Oxford University. Theatre studies was fun, exciting and character building."

CONTACT
Mrs K Parkington
Head of Department





Examination Results - Summer 2026

Subject	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U	% A*-B	% A*-E
Art - Art, Craft & Design	10	0	3	4	3	0	0	0	70.00%	100.00%
Art - Fine Art	5	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	100.00%	100.00%
Art - Photography	9	2	2	4	1	0	0	0	88.88%	100%
Biology Adv	39	2	12	4	10	7	3	1	46.15%	97.43%
Applied Human Biology BTEC	13	1	7	0	4	0	1	0	61.50%	100%
Business A-Level	26	2	3	5	6	9	1	0	38.46%	100%
Business BTEC	12	4	7	0	1	0	0	0	91.66%	100%
Chemistry	39	2	7	9	9	5	3	4	46.15%	89.74%
Computer Science	24	1	5	7	5	4	1	1	54.16%	91.66%
D&T: Product Design	11	0	4	2	2	2	1	0	54.54%	90.90%
Drama And Theatre	8	0	1	3	2	2	0	0	50%	100%
Economics	43	6	13	15	5	2	2	0	79.06%	100%
English Language	6	0	0	3	1	1	1	0	50%	100%
English Literature	19	0	4	7	4	4	0	0	57.89%	100%
Film Studies	9	0	2	5	2	0	0	0	77.77%	100%
Geography	24	1	3	11	4	3	2	0	62.50%	100%
German	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	100%	100%

Subject	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U	% A*-B	% A*-E
History	14	3	4	2	4	0	1	0	64.28%	92.85%
Law	29	3	3	10	7	4	2	0	55.17%	93.10%
Mathematics	111	20	30	21	12	9	11	7	63.96%	92.79%
Further Mathematics	17	5	7	2	2	0	1	0	82.35%	94.11%
Physical Education	11	0	2	2	5	1	1	0	36.36%	100.00%
Physics	50	6	12	9	7	7	5	4	54.00%	92.00%
Psychology	69	2	12	16	14	19	2	4	43.48%	94.20%
Religious Studies	14	1	6	5	1	0	1	0	85.71%	92.85%
Sociology Adv	67	6	14	18	13	9	5	2	56.71%	97.01%
Spanish Adv	10	2	1	0	2	4	1	0	30.00%	100.00%
Sport and Physical CTEC	17	10	7	0	0	0	0	0	100.00%	100.00%
TOTALS	**667**	**67**	**153**	**172**	**115**	**92**	**43**	**24**	**61.93%**	**98.30%**

Percentage pass rate 98.3%
Percentage of grades at grade A*- B 61.93%





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