



THE ROYAL MASONIC SCHOOL

FOR GIRLS

AT RICKMANSWORTH PARK SINCE 1934

SIXTH FORM PREVIEW

OCTOBER 2011

Rickmansworth Park, Rickmansworth, Herts, WD3 4HF, England
Tel: 01923 773168 Fax 01923 896729



TO PROSPECTIVE SIXTH FORM STUDENTS

From the Senior Team, past and present.

Sixth Form life is a completely new experience. Not only does it present you with the opportunity to gain more independence, maturity and freedom, but also the opportunity to make a completely *fresh* start. It is truly a time for new beginnings.

Since you now have the ability to choose your own subjects, classes are composed of people who genuinely enjoy learning more within their selected field. Although the workload does increase, the staff (and Year 13) will always be willing to help you out if you should encounter difficulties. The introduction of study (otherwise known as ‘free’) periods also means that although the work is harder, you have more time to study particular areas in depth and read around the curriculum.

There is a real atmosphere of community within the Sixth Form. The Common Room is a great place to work, relax and drink tea with your friends, and we all enjoy it and take part in improving it. Boarding in the Sixth Form is also an excellent experience because you feel more independent, living more like a university student, surrounded by your peers.

The Sixth Form is the best part of your school career. You will have new privileges, opportunities and be given greater and more exciting responsibilities. The best advice is simply to enjoy every moment of it, as there is far too much to encounter and experience in only two years!

Senior Team 2011-2012



WELCOME TO THE SIXTH FORM AT RMS

We are delighted to welcome you to the Sixth Form. We hope that you will have a rich and varied experience over the next two years and that you will relish the opportunities open to you.

What characterises Sixth Form life more than anything else is your growing independence. We are here to support, help and advise, but we want to encourage you to take more and more responsibility for your life and your success. You will find a different learning environment, where staff encourage you to express and share your ideas, where you must plan your leisure and work time yourself so that you have time to enjoy yourself, as well as to succeed at your studies.

From the very beginning, we want you to appreciate that the basis of Sixth Form life is co-operation. Of course there are appropriate ways of behaving in and out of School, and we expect the very highest standards of our Sixth Form students. We are proud that they rise to the challenge so readily, and we are confident that you will soon feel ready to take on the challenges and responsibilities of life at the top of the School.

In the coming weeks and months, you will be offered opportunities for leadership and for service to others. You will need to manage your time effectively so that you can balance the demands of these with your studies and with your personal relaxation time. Some of you may also have to balance the demands of paid employment. All this is wonderful experience and you can do all these things if you manage your time well, so be prepared!

At the back of this handbook, you will find a copy of the Agreement that all Sixth Form students are asked to sign. Our expectations of you are clearly set out, and we ask you to read these carefully, and to discuss them fully with members of your family before the start of term.

We are proud of your achievements so far, and we look forward to helping you develop further the talents and interests that will form the basis of your successful and happy future.

Nicole Wade

Mrs Nicole Wade
Head of Sixth Form



WHO'S WHO IN THE SIXTH FORM

Staff in 2011-2012

Head of Sixth Form

Mrs N Wade *nwade@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*

Tutorial staff

6R1	Mr Grogan	<i>fgrogan@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6R2	Mr Bannister	<i>mbannister@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6M1	Mrs Sears	<i>zsears@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6M2	Mrs Reeve	<i>sreeve@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6S1	Mr Dowds	<i>sdowds@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6S2	Mr Young	<i>nyoung@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6G1	Mr Mathieson	<i>dmathieson@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6G2	Mrs Bannister	<i>vbannister@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6H1	Mrs Kingston	<i>lkingston@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6H2	Miss Dines	<i>mdines@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>
6W1	Miss Williams	<i>swilliams@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk</i>

House staff

Head of Boarding Miss K Batty *kbatty@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*

Alexandra

Housemistress Miss K Davies *kdavies@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*

House Tutors Miss H Stanley *hstanley@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*
Mrs S Drummond *sdrummond@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*
Miss A Coates *acoates@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*

Zetland

Housemistress Miss K Lord *klord@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*

House Tutors Mrs D Norman *dnorman@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*
Mrs D Ronaldson *dronaldson@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*
Miss Y Whitfield *ywhitfield@royalmasonic.herts.sch.uk*



THE SENIOR TEAM 2011-2012

The Senior Team lead a team of Prefects who help and support girls, assist Form Tutors, and liaise between staff and girls.

Senior Team

Head Girl

Lauren Dixon

Deputy Head Girl – School Council

Anna Burgess

Deputy Head Girl – Charities

Lucy Deare / Sophie Van den Berg

Deputy Head Girl – Admin

Emma Cholwill

Deputy Head Girl – Boarding

Sahar McTough

Deputy Head Girl – PR

Eloise Neale / Jodie Rubenstein

Heads of Boarding House

Weybridge

Marianne Dickson

Harris

Emily Oliphant

Connaught

Samantha Addis

Alexandra

Scarlett Hughes

Zetland

Phoebe Bland

Heads of School House

Atholl

Georgina Luke

Cumberland

Amelia Fitzpatrick

Moira

Chanelle Eveleigh

Scarbrough

Sarah Hodges

Senior Prefects

Ruspini House

Clemmie Rubens

Cadogan House

Verity Thornhill

Year 7

Stephanie Frow

Year 8

Niamh Keeney

Year 9

Fiona Rackley

Year 10

Danielle Maguire

Year 11

Polly McCormack

Sixth Form Common Room Committee

Chair

Natalie Waller

Secretary

Olivia Scott

MACHIO

Julianne Chauhan

Environment

Katy Chambers/Tamsin Green

Mentoring

Charlotte Stout

International

Florence Leung

Values

Georgina Collings



STAFF 2011-2012

Heads of Department

Art	Mrs L Kingston
Business & Economics	Mrs V-A Bannister
Classics	Mr N Young
English	Ms V Gunn
Geography	Mrs C Freeman
<i>Maternity leave cover</i>	Miss K Cook
History	Mr F Grogan
Health and Social Care	Mrs D Ronaldson
Mathematics	Mr D Cox
Modern Languages	Mrs E Boast
Performing Arts	Mr D Hyde
PE	Mrs E Spendiff
Photography	Mr D Spain
Religious Studies	Miss S Hards
Science	Ms N Timoney
Textiles	Mrs R Bloomfield-Proud

Staff with subject responsibility

Biology	Mrs Z Sears
Chemistry	Mrs V Bayne
Design and Technology	Ms M Dines
Music	Mrs J Whitbread
Economics	Mr M Bannister
German	Miss C Lomax
ICT	Mr D Buddie
Politics	Mrs S Booth
Psychology	Mrs S Reeve
Spanish	Mr J Piqueiras
Resource Centre Manager	Miss L Cowburn
Examinations Officer	Miss G Smith
Oxbridge Coordination	Mr N Young
Head of Learning Support	Mrs A Ralph
Extra-Curricular Coordinator	Mrs Z Sears
MUN Coordinator	Mr F Grogan
DofE Coordinator	Miss H Brooks



SIXTH FORM LIFE

The School Day

You are required to attend Registration TWICE each day: 8.25am and 2.10pm, with your tutor in your tutor room. Failure to do so, without good reason, will be noted as being unreliable and recorded in references. Please arrive in School on time in the mornings, and register with your tutor before going to do any other duties.

If you wish to leave school unexpectedly, you must seek permission from the Head of Sixth Form, Mrs Wade first, and you must sign out at Reception. Day students should bring a letter from home requesting absence for dental and medical appointments. Absence for Open Days, Driving Tests should be requested by a Permission to be out of School Slip that should be completed and sent to Mrs Wade in the week prior to the expected absence.

In Year 12 you may leave school after registration and assembly at 2.45 pm, as long as you have no lessons. Your parents will need to have agreed to this privilege and we ask them to sign the Permission slip, and you should give it to your tutor to retain. Please ensure that you sign out at Reception.

In Year 13 you have the privilege of being allowed to leave school for one free double lesson each week; this lesson will be agreed at the beginning of the year and is then set. You may also leave school after registration and assembly at 2.45 pm, as long as you have no lessons. Your parents will need to have agreed to this privilege and we ask them to sign the Permission slip, and you should give it to your tutor to retain. Please ensure that you sign out at Reception.

Girls require special permission to be in a classroom, Music Room, Sixth Form Centre or the Resource Centre, before 8.00 am or after 4.15 pm. Those arriving before 8.00 am must go to the Day House.

Only Year 13 Sixth Form boarders may remain in their House during the lesson(s) they have allocated as their “free to leave” double period.

Sixth Form Common Room

This facility is available to all students as an important recreational centre. Students enjoy comfortable facilities with a kitchen, towards which every student is asked to contribute £10 annually. Subscriptions are collected on the Michaelmas Term bill.



Extra-Curricular Opportunities: Making the most of the Sixth Form

Helping the community within and beyond RMS

All members of the Sixth Form take responsibility with staff for ensuring that life runs smoothly and successfully.

- School tours are a very important responsibility that Sixth Form students undertake very successfully, and visitors comment regularly on how much they have enjoyed their visit because their guide has been so interesting and open.
- Some students support younger pupils with their studies.
- Resource Centre supervision is an opportunity to help the community and study at the same time.
- Assisting in the PE department, with clubs, practices and lessons is a popular choice.
- Peer Mentoring. Sixth Form students are offered the opportunity to train as peer mentors for younger students.
- Community Service, Community Arts and Sports projects

Clubs, Societies and other activities

Many Sixth Form students participate in activities outside the curriculum. Even though students' time is more limited with two continuous examination years, students still find time to participate in:

- Choirs, orchestra, musicals and plays
- Sports' teams
- Clubs and Societies
- Young Enterprise
- Debating and Public Speaking
- Model United Nations

Each year, OMGA, the Old Girls' Association, invites all members of the Sixth Form to the Annual Lecture and to supper after the occasion. It is a highlight of the year and students have enjoyed listening to a wide variety of speakers from all walks of life. **All members of the Sixth Form are expected to attend.**

General Studies Options

All Sixth Formers are required to participate in at least one general studies option. This is an opportunity to try something different and/or develop new skills. The options this year include

- Young Enterprise
- Critical Thinking
- Duke of Edinburgh
- Community Service

The Extended Project Qualification

What is the Extended Project Qualification?

The EPQ is a new qualification which has been developed over the past two years. It offers students the chance to research their own area of academic interest, and to write it up as a dissertation, with the help of a supervisor and a series of focused research skills seminars.



Alternatively, students may opt to produce an artefact; perhaps a piece of art or textiles, DVD, CD or even a stage production!

We are offering the EPQ to a limited number of Year 12 students.

What are the benefits of the EPQ?

There are a number of reasons why you wish to consider the EPQ:

- It carries as many **UCAS points** as an AS Level
- It will allow you to develop an area of **academic interest** outside the constraints of your AS subjects
- It will allow you to develop **research and writing skills** which are very close to both when it comes to applying for university, and when it comes to writing your own dissertation as an undergraduate at university.
- It gives you the chance to experience **one-to-one teaching** / supervision and seminar teacher.

Many top independent and local schools have already started teaching the EPQ.

What do universities think of the EPQ?

Top universities have been very supportive of the EPQ, with many stating how much they value the skills it develops, and even stating that in competitive subject areas, a preference will be given to candidates offering the EPQ.

Some statements from top universities:

Cambridge University: ‘The Cambridge Colleges welcome the introduction of the Extended Project...primarily because of the benefit we recognise in the skills it will develop in learners and the consequent easing of the transition from study in secondary to higher education’.

Glasgow University: ‘The University very much values the Extended Project and its role in preparing students for a successful higher education experience...in highly selective areas preference may be given to students entering from 2010 with A Levels, who also offer the Extended Project for entry’.

Warwick University: ‘Warwick welcomes the development of the Extended Project and we anticipate that this qualification will assist in our assessment of an applicant’s potential to succeed at undergraduate level study’.

Newcastle University: ‘We value the skills or research and independent learning that the Extended Project is designed to develop. We welcome applications from students offering the Extended Project alongside A Levels.’

Why do universities value this qualification?

There are several reasons why universities may value the EPQ:

- It shows you are able to pursue **your own academic interests** beyond the confines of the school curriculum (as you do at university)
- It demonstrates that you are capable of undertaking exactly the kind of **independent research and writing** that will be part of your university study.
- **It shows that you can benefit from** one on one tutoring and seminar teaching, both of which are central to university teaching (especially at Oxbridge)



- It makes you **stand out from other candidates**; with increasing numbers of students reaching the top grades in their AS and A2 exams, it is helpful for universities if you can differentiate yourself.

We are offering a limited number of places to students for whom the EPQ can offer the most benefits, by helping them develop their intellectual interests and learn new skills. It is also very important that the students we select are capable of managing their own time and workload. In particular, we are looking for students with: a strong academic record and potential or well developed creative skills; the ability to think about topics in unusual or original ways; the ability to plan and manage their school work and extra-curricular activities; high aspirations for their future.



LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

School Council

The RMS School Council was a new initiative introduced in 2008 to allow any pupil to improve our school by becoming an elected representative for their year group. It is particularly successful and beneficial to the RMS community as it enables pupils from all years to have their say on anything from boarding life and recycling to the significant lack of ketchup at lunch!

The Council is comprised of five sub committees on which each year group has one representative. These five committees each deal with a specific area of interest to make the Council more efficient. They are: environment, food, boarding, welfare and charity. These committees meet separately once a term and the Council as a whole also once a term to collate ideas. The meetings are chaired by the Deputy Head Girl for School Council and the minutes of the meetings are circulated to all form groups. Throughout the year students have opportunities to have input into the agendas of the meetings. Previous successes have ranged from more effective recycling to healthier packed lunches.

School Prefects

School Prefects are elected by the Sixth Form and Staff. The election for the School Prefects takes place in the second half of the Hilary Term. Year 12 are invited to stand for election and a ballot is held, first of Sixth Form students and then of the teaching staff. Students are informed of the results of the ballot by letter.

There is no pressure for a student to offer herself as a Year 12 Prefect, but we believe it is an opportunity to:

- develop leadership qualities
- develop personal responsibility as you take responsibility for others
- encourage, serve and support the school community

A student may withdraw from the process at any time. If she wishes to do so, she should make an arrangement to see the Head of Sixth Form.

Students undertaking this responsibility will be supported through performance monitoring by the Senior Prefects, the Senior Team and Staff. A student who experiences difficulties in fulfilling her responsibilities will be seen by a member of the Senior Team and together strategies will be put in place to help her. If the difficulties persist, the student will be referred to the Head of Sixth Form, who may suggest that the student resigns her responsibility.

The Senior Team

This group of senior students is made up of the Head Girl, the Deputies, Senior Prefects with responsibility for specific year groups and Heads of Houses. School Prefects are invited to apply in writing for a position on the Senior Team. Selection is made by a process that includes an interview and participation in a team exercise. An independent advisor is invited to lead the selection process.

The new Senior Team will be in position by the end of the Hilary Term and will expect to take over responsibility from the outgoing Team after a week's hand-over.

The Senior Team meets regularly with the Headmistress and the Head of Sixth Form.



Other appointments

- **A Senior Prefect may be** appointed on the recommendation of Miss Cowburn, the Resource Manager. Responsibilities include setting up rotas for Resource Centre supervision and monitoring the Resource Centre prefects.
- **A Language Laboratory Prefect** may be appointed on the recommendation of the Modern Languages Department. Responsibilities include the supervision of the laboratory.
- **Subject Ambassadors** are appointed on the recommendation of departments.

Peer Mentors

Year 12 students who would like to offer themselves for training to support the counselling and pastoral work in school are invited to submit themselves for selection to the School Counsellor through the Head of Sixth Form.

School Societies

Students are invited to offer leadership in these societies, organising events and hospitality.



THE ROLE OF THE TUTOR

Tutor groups

There are ten tutor groups in the Sixth Form of both Year 12 and Year 13 students. It is important to establish a good relationship with your tutor, who will be your mentor and guide for these important two years, helping you to focus your ideas about your future as well as helping you establish good study practice as you work towards your public examinations.

The role of the tutor and the tutor student relationship

Tutor groups are made up of students following similar courses of study, with a member of staff who is experienced and knowledgeable about the courses students are following. If you find you are having difficulties with any aspect of your studies, you should talk first to your tutor before the situation develops and you have lost valuable time. Keep your tutor informed too about your other interests so that, by the time he/she is ready to start preparing an outline university reference for you, we have as full a picture as possible. As a Sixth Form student, we shall expect you to show some initiative about these things; don't wait for your tutor to ask you. Remember: the more we know about you, the more positive your reference will be.

You will see your tutor in the short, twice-daily registration periods, and it is important that you are punctual as this is a vital means of people communicating with you. You will also see your tutor in the extended tutorial session and in the weekly PHSCE period. Tutorial times are very important opportunities for discussing progress with students individually, and for group and individual sessions on matters such as higher education.

Your tutor is responsible for monitoring your academic progress during your AS and A2 courses, and will speak to you regularly about it. You will be closely monitored throughout the two years. We are very concerned that you make the appropriate commitment to your studies, right from the beginning. If we find that you are falling behind, or are not producing work of the standard we expect, a subject teacher will ask for you to remain in School one evening until 6pm. Your name will be given to the Head of Sixth Form, and you will be given clear instructions about where the work should be done. This is a very last resort, and one that we expect to use very little.



THE SENIOR SCHOOL RESOURCE CENTRE

The Resource Centre stands in the centre of the Garth and is therefore well-placed to serve both the boarding houses and the curriculum areas. Every pupil in the Senior School is automatically made a member but, in order to activate their account, **pupils need to register** by 'fingerprint'. This uses a nonreversible algorithm technique, which it is not possible to reconstruct the fingerprint so it is a very safe method of storing information and does not in any way contravene the Data Protection Act. By this method, the Resource Centre is able to continue its self-issue system secure in the knowledge that only the person to whom the fingerprint belongs can access the account. Whether there are any staff available or not, pupils can issue items to themselves and return items that they have finished using.

Searching the catalogue is done using **OPAC** (Online Public Access Cataloguing), either with the computers in the resource centre or via any networked computer in the Senior School. It is possible, therefore, to search for material and identify whether it is (a) there and (b) available.

In a world of information, the ability to use resources in many formats is an essential. An understanding that work completed in and for lessons is only a part of the Sixth Form education is an important concept to grasp. **Wider reading beyond the textbooks and/or set books is a must** if a Sixth Former is to make the most of her courses. It is not a luxury that can be safely ignored but needs to be integrated into a working pattern from the outset. To this end, the Resource Centre is open Mon – Thurs until 9pm (Fridays until 6pm). This is to allow pupils access to resources to support their work and sensible sixth formers will make good use of this time. For all of these later sessions, staff are available for help in location of material or advice in support work.

But a resource centre is not just about work. Finding time to enjoy reading is also important and there is a **6th Form Reading Circle** that meets during the term to discuss books. All sixth formers are welcome. Talking about books gives an added dimension to reading. This group also welcomes parents to be part of the group. Do come along and join in the relaxed discussion about what we're all reading now and next.

The Resource Centre should be an important part of your sixth form life and I look forward to seeing you there.



SIXTH FORM DRESS CODE

Sixth Form Dress Code

- Suit** The school Sixth Form suit, consisting of a single breasted jacket and a pencil style skirt (which should be no more than 2 inches above the knee) or trousers must be worn. This should be purchased from:
Pullens, 50-52 High St, Northwood HA6 1BL Telephone: 01923 840050
www.howardbrosandpullens.co.uk
- Footwear** Smart sensible dark shoes should be worn. Trainers or sports shoes may not be worn other than for PE. Ugg-Style boots are not permitted.
- Tops** A smart buttoned blouse with a collar should be worn under the suit and should not extend further than the length of the jacket. Shirts should not have large obvious logos. Aertex polo shirts and hoodies are not permitted.
- Tights** Skin colour or opaque black or navy tights should be worn. Long socks are not permitted

Please note the following:

- Hair** Hair should not be dyed in non-hair colours eg red, blue, pink, green etc.
- Jewellery** This should not be overdone. Piercings, other than one in each ear, and visible tattoos etc are not acceptable.
- Make-up** This should be appropriate for day, not evening use.
- Nails** Extended gel nails are unsuitable for school.



THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM

8 periods are allocated each week to each AS examined subject. (Where group numbers are very small, this allocation will be reduced)

Untaught periods, on average 8 each week, are for study and relaxation, however two of these will be timetabled for compulsory PE/Sports Activities. One of the first differences you will notice about Sixth Form life is that you have to manage your time and the demands of your work effectively. It isn't easy and we are here to help you. We suggest that you spend about 5 hours studying on your own for each subject. If you do not do so, you will be in trouble by the end of the course.

Depending on your GCSE results, you will build your timetable as follows:

4 X AS subject choices + one General Studies choice and PHSCE

or

3 X AS subject choices + one General Studies choice and PHSCE

or

2 X AS subject choices + one General Studies choice and PHSCE

If you have not achieved a Grade C at GCSE in English Language and/or Mathematics, arrangements will be made to enable you to continue your studies in these subjects.

The GCSE results you achieve enable us to help you choose a programme of study suited to you and at which you should be successful.

You should remember the following:

- Each subject has entry criteria which is available to view on the website
- The number of passes at Grade B and above that you achieve indicates the number of subjects you will study at AS:
 - 5 + passes at grade B and above mean you should be able to study 4 AS subjects
 - 3 + passes at grade B and above mean you should be able to study 3 AS subjects
 - 1 + pass at grade B and above means you should be able to study 2 AS subjects

In *very* exceptional circumstances, a candidate with very high grades may take 5 AS subjects.

For new/overseas students

Please note that in order for your daughter / ward's AS subject choices to be confirmed the original copy of their GCSE (or equivalent) certificates must be given to their form tutor when they arrive at RMS in September, along with any other supporting documents mentioned in her offer letter e.g. IELTS Certificates.



EXAMINATION SUBJECTS

The following subjects are offered for two years as both AS and A2 options:

Art
Applied Business
Business Studies
Classical Civilisation
Design and Technology
Drama and Theatre Studies
Economics
English Language
English Literature
Further Mathematics
Geography
Government and Politics
Health and Social Care
History
ICT
Latin
Mathematics
Modern Languages:

- French
- Spanish
- German

Music
Music Technology (AS only)
Performing Arts
Photography
Physical Education
Psychology
Religious Studies
Sciences

- Physics
- Chemistry
- Biology

Textiles



ART & DESIGN

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Syllabus:	AS, A2
Endorsement:	Fine Art

The full A Level is made up of 2 AS Units and 2 A2 Units. All 4 Units must be supported by sketchbooks/work journals.

AS

Unit 1: 6031 Art and Design Coursework

(Unit 1 is 30% of Advanced GCE, 60% of AS – internally set and marked, externally moderated). This unit currently follows the broad theme of *Webs, Knots and Ties* which is developed by the student, fully covering all four assessment objectives.

Unit 2: 6032 Externally Set Assignment (Examination)

(Unit 2 is 20% of Advanced GCE, 40% of AS – externally set, including eight hours' unaided work, internally marked and externally moderated).

Students receive the exam paper in January/February of the academic year. Students are expected to build on their knowledge, skills and understanding gained from the experiences in Unit 1.

A2

Unit 3: 6033 Art and Design Coursework

(Unit 3 is 30% of Advanced GCE – internally set and marked, externally moderated).

This unit incorporates two linked elements:

Practical work

Students should develop their practical, creative ideas in light of their chosen focus for the personal study of this unit.

Personal Study

The personal study should take the form of a written and illustrated dissertation. The written text should be between 1000 and 3000 words supported by a visual display of images collected and produced by the student.

Unit 4: 6034 Externally Set Assignment (Examination)

(Unit 4 is 20% of Advanced GCE – externally set, internally marked, externally moderated)

The Externally Set Assignment represents the culmination of the Advanced GCE in Art and Design. Students will receive the exam paper in January/February of the academic year. Students must respond to the theme from the Externally Set Assignment and produce their own creative outcome(s) during a timed 12 hour period.



The deadline for completing Unit 1 and Unit 3 will be half term of the Hilary Term to give as much time as possible to focus on the Externally Set Assignments.

All of the Assessment Objectives must be met in each Unit:

- AO1 Develop their ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.
- AO2 Experiment with and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining their ideas as their work develops.
- AO3 Record in visual and/or other forms ideas, observations and insights relevant to their intentions, demonstrating an ability to reflect on their work as it progresses.
- AO4 Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical understanding, realising intentions and where appropriate, making connections between visual, oral or other elements.

A good grade at GCSE level (A* - B) is required to study Art at AS and A2 but it is perhaps more important to be a creative thinker and totally committed to the subject. This is a demanding course and girls must be in no doubt that our expectations of both their time and dedication are extremely high. A willingness to experiment and to embrace new working methods is key to success as its these qualities that enable progression and development as an artist.

Beyond A Level

There are many careers in art, craft and design. Most require further study at an ArtSchool, Further Education College or University. Most students wishing to take art further will go on to a one-year Foundation Course before applying to degree courses in more specialised areas of art and design. We are proud that many of our girls gain places on Foundation Courses. We help in the preparation of portfolios and advise on interview techniques. In recent years girls have won places at Central St Martin's, Loughborough, Leeds, The London College of Fashion, Edinburgh College of Art, Chelsea, Oxford Brookes and Manchester.

Art A Level is an approved subject for university entrance and past pupils have won places at Durham, Nottingham, Exeter, Newcastle, Birmingham and Bristol.

Entry Questions

1. What would you like to achieve by studying A level Art?
2. How well do you work independently and why do you want to choose this subject?
3. When given a title or brief, describe your creative process from the beginning through to the Resolved piece(s).
4. Name 3 artists you have studied and describe in detail how they have influenced you.



Quotes from Y13 girls:

'I was very surprised by the jump from GCSE to A level. Rather than ideas being given to me, I was expected to come up with my own to then discuss with the teachers.'

'Each teacher has their own way of helping and offering guidance and I often found this difficult to get used to at first.'

'I was expected to think more ambitiously and to avoid obvious solutions to problems I encountered.'

'I learned about many different working methods and became more confident in my abilities.'

'The workload is a big commitment and if you do not keep on top of it, then it is easy to fall behind.'

'You are expected to keep on producing work throughout the holidays.'

'Once you get into the subject it is really enjoyable, because you can see how much you have learned and developed simply by looking at your work and re-evaluating it.'

'Art is a subject that is constantly evolving, so its really interesting to find new artists to research and incorporate into your own work.'



ADVANCED SCIENCES AT RMS

General Advice

We offer the three main Sciences at AS and A2 Levels. All examinations involve a significant element of coursework or assessed practical work, in addition to the usual written examinations. Candidates are expected to complete the AS course at the end of year 12. Those who continue to A2 Level will start the course immediately after the AS examinations in June, completing at the end of year 13. Exceptionally it may be possible for a student to take up the AS course in year 13 subject to space being available in the class and the restrictions of the timetable.

Students studying Advanced Level Sciences often go on to take science-based courses at university including Engineering, Veterinary Science, Medicine and many others. We have a very good record of sending students to Russell Group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. Science courses are the route into traditional Science based research jobs but are very well thought of by a wide range of employers in such diverse fields as Law, Accountancy, Scientific Journalism, Radio/T.V. Science Correspondent, Business Management and Banking and Finance.

For entry onto an AS course the normal minimum requirement is a pass at grade B in Additional Science, although other qualifications will be considered on an individual basis. Those with higher grades are clearly in a stronger position to tackle advanced courses with confidence and have a far greater chance of gaining a high grade. Candidates who have taken a Single Science GCSE or Foundation level GCSEs (or were advised to do so) are insufficiently prepared for advanced courses. It is also expected that candidates will have a good pass in English and Mathematics (at least a B grade if wanting to study Physics and or Chemistry).

We make no formal requirement that students should opt for a particular combination of subjects, but we do offer the following recommendations:

- Those with specific university courses in mind, such as Medicine, Veterinary Science and Engineering should check the requirements of the specific universities before starting their Sixth Form programme. Science teachers can offer appropriate advice.
- Biology candidates are advised to take Chemistry at least to AS level.
- Chemistry candidates interested in Biochemistry ought to take Biology.
- Physics and Chemistry candidates are advised to take Maths.



BIOLOGY

Entry requirements: Minimum grade B in Additional Science or Biology. Minimum grade B in Maths.

AQA Specification 1411 and 2411.

- 3 AS Units: Unit 1 Biology and disease
 Unit 2 The variety of living organisms
 Unit 3 Investigative and practical skills (the externally marked EMPA)
- 3 A2 Units: Unit 4 Populations and environment.
 Unit 5 Control in cells and organisms (includes a synoptic essay)
 Unit 6 Investigative and practical skills.

This is a rapidly developing subject which covers an enormous scale, from biological molecules through to ecosystems. The syllabus covers a wide range of basic concepts but there is some focus on health and disease and on human physiology, so there is much that is immediately relevant to daily life. Experimental work, usually done individually, allows the development of skills and an appreciation of how real scientists work. An understanding of the biological concepts develops the capability to make informed decisions in the context of a wider society and an appreciation of the many ethical concerns which are being raised by current research. As this is a Biology course there is some, but not a lot of, work on plants but a deeper understanding of how plants function should lead to a better appreciation!

The course is fascinating but challenging. You will need to be willing to review your work and study independently for at least 5 hours a week. If you are thinking of taking Biology as a contrasting AS subject then dropping it at the end of year 12, be aware that this is a rigorous academic subject with a heavy workload. You should have a good memory for detail and will acquire an extensive specialist vocabulary. You will constantly work with data and will learn how to present, process and interpret a wide variety of different types of data, including statistics. Modern Biologists are expected to be mathematically competent! Your analytical skills will be developed. You will learn how to write a factually based essay. Whether or not you continue your Biology studies in the future you will have become a scientifically literate and informed citizen. Many of the skills you develop are transferable to other disciplines.

Key questions to think about:

- Am I really interested in this wide ranging subject, which is not just about the way the human body works?
- Do I have a good memory for detail?
- Can I cope with calculations?
- Can I write clear answers using good English and relevant terminology?

If the answers are YES then this subject might be for you.

The Biology department staff look forward to sharing their expertise and enthusiasm with you.



Comments from current year 12 and 13 girls:

“It’s quite a step up from GCSE but is definitely do-able. It links very well with certain other subjects e.g. PE and Chemistry. I would recommend taking it as the content is interesting, although don’t take it if you’re not prepared to work hard, or as a fourth AS because you can’t think of anything else. It is important to have an interest in the subject, otherwise you will get bored and not do the work.”

“Biology” becomes “Applied Biology”. It’s not necessarily what you know, it’s what you can figure out. Be prepared for that.”

“The questions for Biology require good analytical skills, and you have to be very specific when answering them.”



CHEMISTRY

Examination Board: AQA externally marked practical assessment (EMPA).

AS Modules

CHEM1: Foundation Chemistry (weighting AS 33.3%, A2 16.5%)

The basic concepts of atomic structure, chemical bonding, recognising organic chemicals and pollution.

CHEM2: Chemistry in Action (weighting AS 46.6%, A2 23.5%)

A focus of the revised A levels is to make the theory more relevant to every day applications. This larger section focuses on experimental work to illustrate the theoretical principals from unit 1 and further theory introduced in this unit.

CHEM3 X: Experimental Skills (weighting AS 20%, A2 10%)

Assessed practical work, conducted at a date in March.

Students will be given investigative skills tasks based on the work covered in AS chemistry. There will then be an externally examined written paper.

A2 Modules

CHEM4: Equilibria & Organic Chemistry (weighting 20%)

This builds on the concepts of chemistry introduced at AS. Equilibria and kinetics are treated numerically and this unit builds on the organic material taught at AS.

CHEM5: Energetics & Inorganic Chemistry (weighting 20%)

The thermodynamics of chemical reactions are investigated and this unit builds on the concepts of inorganic chemistry studied at AS including transition elements.

CHEM6 X: Experimental Skills (weighting 10%)

Assessed practical work, conducted at a date in March.

Students will be given investigative tasks based on the work covered over the entire A level. There will then be an externally examined written paper.

Examination

Practical work will be an integral part of all modules and will be assessed during March of the AS and A2 courses. The exact date will be set, deadlines must be adhered to. They will not be changed.

All units are assessed by external written examinations.

Course Requirements

Due to this being a science course and the need for high mathematical skills those starting this course need to have at least a B grade in GCSE Science, a B grade in GCSE Additional Science and a B in Mathematics on the Higher Tier paper in each case. In addition the Chemistry section of the GCSE must also have been at grade B or higher, with a grade A recommended.



PHYSICS

Physics is a subject which asks some of the most fundamental questions about the nature of the world and the Universe in which we live. We will learn about the very smallest things (fundamental particles with strange sounding names like quarks and leptons) and the very largest (The Universe with exotic objects like Black Holes and Quasars) and a variety of things in between, even the possibility of time travel!

AS students go to UCL for a course of lectures in the Michaelmas Term, while our A2 group visits Mill Hill Observatory.

Both AS level and A2 level courses will consist of theory papers and a practical coursework component.

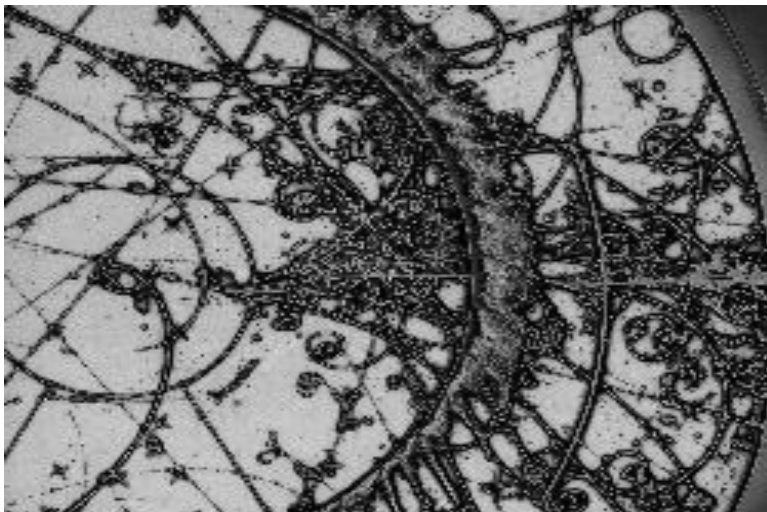
Entry Requirements

Students taking this subject are expected to have gained at least a grade B in GCSE Science and a grade B in Additional Science, with an average of a grade B in all of the Physics papers. We will also expect that you have gained at least a grade B in Mathematics as there is a significant amount of algebra, graph work, vectors, indices, fractions, trigonometry and Pythagoras.

Students must have the capacity to work hard and have a mind that is willing to ask awkward questions and sometimes to accept surprising answers. There are also many questions that Physicists have not yet been able to answer and you must be prepared to accept this too.

(Bubble chamber tracings of electrically charged particles)

http://www.firstscience.com/home/articles/big-theories/the-theory-of-everything-page-3-1_1224.html



Particle tracks from a
Bubble chamber image.



APPLIED BUSINESS

Introduction

This is a broad-based qualification that provides the opportunity for students to explore the world of business in a highly practical way. By adopting an investigative approach, students develop a range of skills while discovering the problems and opportunities faced by business.

Why chose Applied Business?

The vocational focus of this AQA qualification encourages students to develop an understanding of how business works in the real world. They discover the problems and opportunities faced by local, national and international businesses and have the opportunity to organise an enterprise activity.

Students develop an understanding of how various business functions such as marketing, finance, human and physical resources work together, as part of a cohesive business.

Students are encouraged to take part in practical activities such as planning and running a business, organising an event or setting up a website

The aim of the AS units is to encourage investigation whereas the A2 units require decision-making skills.

What skills are acquired through the study of this course?

- Practical organisation and time management skills
- ICT skills
- Presentation skills especially the layout of business reports
- Interpersonal skills – working in a team, discussing problems, solving problems
- Cognitive skills – research skills decision making, investigating issues

AS Subjects studied

Unit 1 Investigating Business

Students will explore the aims and objectives of businesses, the needs of their customers and how these are met through the marketing mix. They will investigate how businesses deal with competition from other businesses and how external factors influence them.

Unit 2 People in Business

Students will study the roles and responsibilities of people in business and the qualities an employer looks for in its employees. They will investigate training and development opportunities available to individuals and why motivation is vital in retaining staff.

Unit 3 Financial Planning and Monitoring

Students will be assessed on their ability to calculate business costs, revenues and profits and they will be required to know how managers use this information in decision making.



A2 Subjects studied

Unit 8 Business Planning

Students will be given the opportunity to produce a structured business plan for a new product or service. The plan will be suitable to present to a lender such as a bank who might provide finance for the business.

Unit 10 Promotional Activities

Students will investigate how businesses combine promotional activities into a promotional mix and how the choice of the promotional mix is vital to the success of the promotional campaign. This will follow on from Unit 8 above.

Unit 12 Managing People

This Unit is externally assessed. Students will be required to demonstrate that they understand how different types of management style impact upon the way in which a business operates and upon the staff who work in it. They should be able to recognise that different management styles are appropriate in different situations.

Assessment

One third of the units are externally assessed and two thirds are assessed via coursework.

Students views on the course

Coursework

‘Make sure you enjoy coursework and that you keep up to date with your work. Hand in all work on time – if you fall behind it is hard to catch up. Make sure you take good notes in lessons and read them as soon as possible afterwards. If you don’t understand something ask the teacher straight away.’

Examined units

‘Make sure you complete as many past papers as possible. Treat the mini tests in class seriously and revise for them as if it were a real exam. Learn the theory off by heart.’

4 key questions to ask yourself before you decide to do this subject

Are you good at coursework as this is the main component of the course?

What do you want to do at University – will this subject help you?

Have you got an active interest in the world of business?

Will this subject complement other subjects you are studying?



BUSINESS STUDIES

This course gives a broad overview into many areas of the business world. It is assessed purely by external examinations. The first exam for Unit 1 will take place in January of Year 12.

There are two units in AS Business Studies:

Unit 1 Planning and Financing a Business – this covers the issues involved in a business start-up, such as research and planning, as well as the factors that determine success. Topics covered will include business plans, market research, legal structure of the business and raising finance.

Unit 2. Managing a Business – this unit focuses on how established business might improve their effectiveness by making tactical decisions. Topics covered will include breakeven analysis, budgeting, marketing, people in business.

In A2 there are a further two units:

Unit 3 Strategies for Success which focuses on larger business trading in international markets and how managers might measure the performance of the business. This unit considers functional strategies that larger businesses may adopt to achieve their objectives.

Unit 4 The Business Environment and Managing Change which assesses the external factors which act as a catalyst for change and how business can manage change effectively.

All units are externally assessed using a variety of short answers, data response and case study style questions. There is no coursework in this A Level. Unit 1 is worth 40% of the AS examination and Unit 2 worth 60%.

Entry requirements – Grade B in English Language and Mathematics

What skills will you acquire in studying this subject?

- Data skills – students will be expected to manipulate data in a variety of forms and to interpret their results
- Presenting arguments and making judgements and justified recommendations on the basis of evidence available
- Recognising and solving problems
- Planning work – taking into account the demands of the task and the time available to complete it
- Conducting research into a specific theme in preparation for tasks



Student views on this course

'First Unit is easier to learn, the second Unit becomes more difficult with more complex finance data to learn. The ability to write long answers and apply knowledge learned in lessons to case studies becomes more difficult as time goes on but you do get lots of opportunities to do past papers.'

Four questions to ask yourself before deciding if this subject is right for you

This subject is all exam based – do you perform well in examinations?

What do you want to do at University – will this subject help you?

Have you got an active interest in the world of business?

Will this subject complement other subjects you are studying?



CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Examination Board: AQA

This is a wide ranging course, involving the study of Greek and Roman culture, history, literature and politics. All texts used are in TRANSLATION.

In effect, candidates may sit two papers at the end of the Lower Sixth, drawn from a range of topics: eg epic, or the Life and Times of Cicero.

At the end of the Upper Sixth, further two papers will be sat. These may be extensions of AS papers, or on quite different subjects, such as Greek Tragedy.

Each paper is likely to consist of a passage or passages for comment drawn from the works we have studied in English translation. There will also be a range of essay questions on that topic.

Each of the four papers leading to A2 is worth one quarter of the total marks. If one opts to take only an AS qualification, this is decided on the sum of the two AS papers, each being one half of the total.

Prospective candidates for Classical Civilisation would normally have achieved a B grade or better at GCSE in at least one of the following: English, History, RS or Latin.

Classics:

Some extra points and questions to consider:

- i) Did you enjoy the historical background element at GCSE Latin? Do you like History?
- ii) Do you like literature and learning about other societies?
- iii) Are you interested in ideas?
- iv) Do you like to have a good (reasoned) argument? Are you ready to see both sides of a question? Are you prepared to be flexible in your thinking and to change your mind if the evidence dictates?
- v) Are you prepared to come up with your own ideas and also to try some research for yourself?

If you are able to write essays/longer answers in English or History or RS, or think you have the potential to become better at doing so, this could be the subject for you!



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Examination Board: Edexcel

The specification followed in the Design and Technology Department is **Product Design – Resistant Materials**. Girls need to have gained a B grade at GCSE in Resistant Materials for this course.

Product Design

AS

There are two units of assessment; one unit is assessed by internal marking and external moderation and one unit is externally assessed by examination.

Assessment of Unit 1: Portfolio of Creative skills

- Unit 1 is a portfolio of creative skills showing 3 distinct sections
Investigating, Designing and Making

Assessment for Unit 2: Design and Technology in Practice

Knowledge and understanding of a wide range of materials and processes used in the field of design and technology

- Unit 2 will be assessed through an examination set and marked by Edexcel.
- There will be a 2 hour examination paper

A2

There are two units of assessment, one unit is externally assessed by examination and one unit is assessed by internal marking and external moderation.

Assessment for Unit 3: Designing for the future

- Unit 3 will be assessed through an examination set and marked by Edexcel
- There will be a 2 hour examination paper

Assessment for Unit 4: Commercial Design

- Unit 4 is the “design and make” activity. Students identify a client/user group for whom they must design and make a product that meets the original need. They should liaise with their client/user group in order to develop a commercial design approach to their work.
- Students should be familiar with a range of industrial applications and commercial working practices in order to fulfil the requirements of this unit.

The unit results in the development of an appropriate product supported by a design folder. The folder, which should include ICT generated images where appropriate, must be submitted on A3 paper only and is likely to be between 26 and 30 pages long.



These six questions should help you decide whether Product Design – Resistant Materials at A level, is the right choice for you:

1. Did you enjoy studying Design and Technology Resistant Materials at GCSE level?
2. Did you achieve a B grade or higher at GCSE Resistant Materials Technology?
3. Are you considering a career via a degree/diploma or apprenticeship where you would be involved resistant materials in a practical way? For example Product Design, Furniture Design, Interior Design, Design, Architecture, Jewellery Design, Mechanical Engineering, Prop Making and Special effects.
4. Are you hardworking and able to work to deadlines on a weekly basis?
5. Are you creative and capable of working independently?
6. Do you think you would be committed to the subject?

A student's view

Changing from D&T GCSE to D&T A Level

Changing from GCSE to A level in any subject is a huge step; it almost feels as if you have missed an amount of detail out. However, changing from Design and Technology GCSE to A Level feels different from the other subjects. You will already know a wide range of design disciplines, learnt skills in resistant materials, and know how to design and produce high quality products from doing the required Resistant Materials Technology GCSE.

At A level, there is the coursework and a terminal summer examination. During the course you will design to a greater depth, analyse whether products are fit for purpose and satisfy wants and needs of the consumer. Also you will demonstrate your design and technology ability. You will get to learn and use a wider range of machinery and software for coursework which is always fun and interesting. In summary it is a creative and academic course which will make you think, analyse and understand designing as well as providing an outlet for your creativity in resistant materials.

Analysing, problem solving, creating and designing for sustainability...repeat this to yourself and you could be building up a passion for a designing future.

By Gabriella Scanio



DRAMA AND THEATRE STUDIES

Examination Board: Edexcel

- The emphasis in this course is on Drama and Theatre Studies as a practical, intellectual and artistic subject.
- Students will take part in a practical exploration of plays and be assessed on their ability to devise, direct, perform and write about the texts they have studied.
- Students will have the opportunity to attend a wide variety of theatre productions to help with their studies.
- Anyone wishing to take this course should come along to the practical workshop during Induction Week to meet the teachers and gain an insight into what the course entails. From this, an assessment will be made of your suitability for the course. Minimum numbers are required for Drama and Theatre Studies A2 and therefore students must view the course as a two-year commitment.
- You should have achieved at least a C grade in Drama or Expressive Arts GCSE and English Language.

AS Units

Unit 1: Exploration of drama and theatre

This unit introduces students to the content of plays written for the theatre. They will learn how to analyse plays in a variety of ways so that they can become familiar with the way written plays can be interpreted for realisation in performance. This analysis is both practical and written and leads to a set of Exploration Notes. Students also experience a live theatre performance and submit an evaluation. *There is a practical and written internal assessment.*

Unit 2: Theatre Text in performance

Each student will perform, to a visiting examiner, either a monologue or a duologue. They will also take part in the performance of a professionally published play. Students must provide a concept for the interpretation of their chosen roles. *This is an externally assessed practical unit.*

A2 Units

Unit 3: Exploration of Dramatic Performance

Students will work in groups on a devised piece of theatre. This will culminate in a performance to an invited audience. The research and development of their work will be assessed alongside their final performance. Students submit an evaluation on the process and performance of their work. *There is a practical and written internal examination*

Unit 4: Theatre Text in Context

This is a 2h 30min exam based on three parts

Parts A and B concern set work which will have been studied with the student taking the viewpoint of the director. Both academically and practically, they will need to explain their directorial ideas and concepts.

Part C concerns the performance of play written in a historical theatrical period. Students will compare the live performance they have seen with the original performance conditions within the historical period



Questions to consider:

1. Am I just as comfortable performing as an individual as I am as part of a group?
2. Am I willing to take hold of every opportunity to visit live theatre as I am able?
3. Do I have a thoughtful, creative and imaginative contribution to make to group work?
4. Am I prepared to invest time and energy researching, exploring, rehearsing and devising projects outside of timetabled lessons?

Quote from a student:

"Drama and Theatre Studies has pushed me to work in groups in creating work and performing, and I now understand so much more about the technique of performing in different styles and the history of the theatre."



ECONOMICS

Examination Board: Edexcel

Economics is taught at AS and A2 Level in the Sixth Form. The course provides a broad overview of the main constituents of economic activity.

Two units are offered at **AS Level:**

Unit 1 - Markets – How they work and why they fail

This unit covers the basics. It provides a foundation for the exploration of topics in later study. It deals with the concept of scarce resources and how the price mechanism allocates these. Supply and demand, therefore, is a major component of this unit.

Unit 2 - Managing the Economy

This unit introduces the concept of the economy as a whole and the integration with world trade. It covers the main indicators of economic performance and policies that may be used to influence these.

Both units are assessed by written examinations and each constitute 50% of the AS level marks.

Two units are also offered at **A2 Level:**

Unit 3 – Business Economics and Economic Efficiency

This unit develops the themes of Unit 1 and examines how pricing and competition between firms is affected by the number and size of participants in a market. It covers the behaviour of firms and the influence of Government policy.

Unit 4 - The Global Economy

This unit develops the knowledge gained in Unit 2 in a global context. It explores how countries trade with each other and how Government policy can be used to solve economic problems. It also deals with trends and developments in world affairs in recent times.

These units are also assessed by written examination and the final unit has a synoptic element. As such, Unit 3 constitutes 40% of the A2 level marks and Unit 4 60%. The Unit 3 examination will take place in the January of the A2 year.

Skills and requirements

Girls are expected to take an interest in current affairs and therefore need to read a quality newspaper to extend their knowledge of the subject. This is important because at both AS and A Level they must be able to apply their theoretical knowledge of the subject to what is happening in the national and international economy.

In the Sixth Form, teaching groups tend to be small and girls can express themselves in an informal way. Economics is a subject which arouses controversy and girls are expected to be able to discuss current economic issues.



The subject requires skills such as literacy and numeracy. You will need to be able to analyse statistical data and form reasoned judgements accordingly. Evaluation and essay-based explanations/solutions for a given scenario are key aspects of the A2 part of the course.

Entry Requirements

Grade B in Mathematics and Grade B in English at GCSE.

Four questions to ask yourself before deciding if this subject is right for you

1. This subject is exam based and requires essay writing skills – do I perform well in each case?
2. Will this subject contribute to what I would like to do at University?
3. Am I really interested in how the world works and current affairs?
4. Does this subject fit with others I am choosing?



ENGLISH LANGUAGE

If you are intrigued by language and you also enjoy writing, English Language at A-level may be the subject for you. It is a demanding subject to study: you will have to learn a lot of new terminology and get to grips with difficult concepts. You will also probably have to throw out a lot of your assumptions about the ways in which people communicate and challenge your prejudices about things such as people's accents – but that is part of what makes the subject fascinating.

Skills you will need to develop:

- Reading and listening to language with a critical awareness of the producer's purposes and the reader's receptions.
- An ability to make subtle distinctions between different forms of texts and audiences.
- An ability to analyse and evaluate linguistic techniques and how they shape the meanings of the text.
- An ability to write different texts and to comment on your own writing.

Competencies you should have:

- A willingness to read extensively around the subject – in the textbook, in the Resource Centre, in your revision book, on the internet.
- A curiosity about how language works.
- A receptiveness to language in all its different forms, spoken and written.
- Clear and accurate written expression.

Work ethic. We expect you to:

1. Go over the work you have done in class following every lesson.
2. Keep and maintain a glossary of technical terms, learning new terms and revising old ones.
3. Plan all written tasks before commencing the final piece. Proofread and correct all written tasks before submission.
4. Hand in or complete work within the allocated time scale.
5. Read and act upon your teachers' written and verbal advice.
6. Accumulate material for a data scrapbook ie a collection of a range of different texts.

The view from Year 13

If you want to discover and investigate the English Language, then this is the A Level for you. This subject not only allows you to explore how language has changed but it also widens your knowledge about how we use language in the 'real world'. The skills you learn can be applied to your other subjects. Although the work is a challenge requiring a lot of time and practice, once you get to grips with it all, it's not as hard as it seems! GCSE to A Level is a big jump: it is a lot more demanding.

Make sure you prepare yourself and that you are ready to put in plenty of effort, including working independently on challenging yet rewarding coursework. Also, if essays are not your cup of tea, then we guess this subject is not for you. Don't panic if you achieve a low grade on your first piece of work; persevere and it will get easier. Overall, this is an interesting and exciting choice which will be very beneficial to you in the future.



A-Level English Language – course details

AQA Specification B

AS

Unit 1 Categorising Texts ENGB1

The aim of this unit is to introduce candidates to methods of exploring spoken and written language in use. Candidates will be examined on their understanding of the ways in which purposes, audiences and contexts impact the production and reception of language. This unit will use a variety of texts for the basis of this study. In addition students will focus on three specific social contexts: Language and Power; Language and Gender; and Language and Technology.

External Examination, 2 hours

60% of the total AS marks

30% of the total A2 marks

Unit 2 Creating Texts ENGB2

The aim of this coursework unit is to allow candidates the opportunity to develop and reflect upon their own writing expertise. Candidates will be required to produce a folder comprising **two** pieces of original writing, differentiated by primary audience, purpose and genre, and **two** commentaries which explore the writing process and assess the success of the individual pieces.

Internally Assessed Coursework, 2500-3500 words

40% of the total AS marks

20% of the total A2 marks

A2 Examination

Unit 3 Developing Language ENGB3

The aim of this unit is to develop candidates' understanding of the key concepts and theories surrounding language study. Candidates will be expected to develop their skills and knowledge from their AS studies, with an additional focus on two new specific areas of language study: Child Language Acquisition and Language Change.

External Examination 2 ½ hours

30% of the total A-level marks

Unit 4 Investigating Language ENGB4

In this unit candidates will apply their knowledge of linguistic methods and concepts acquired over the course to two separate pieces of writing: a language investigation and an informative media text.

Internally Assessed Coursework, 2500-3500 words

20% of the total A-level marks



ENGLISH LITERATURE

If you love reading you may well enjoy studying English Literature at A-level. You will, however, find that the way you read will change forever. You might still enjoy the story but you will develop a habit of asking questions - of the plot (eg what's going to happen next?), the writer (eg why has she suddenly changed the point of view?) and even yourself (eg why do I feel this way about a location or character or situation?).

Skills you will need to develop:

- Reading not only for following and understanding a text but for an awareness of the writer's purposes and the readers' receptions.
- An ability to analyse and evaluate a writer's techniques and how they shape the meanings of the text.
- An ability to engage in debate in class – listening to and contributing to discussions and a willingness to change your opinion.
- An ability to construct a coherent written argument.

Competencies you should have:

- A willingness to read extensively around the texts in addition to maintaining your own independent reading.
- A curiosity to explore the ways in which prose, poetry and dramatic texts are constructed.
- An openness to different responses to and interpretations of texts.
- An awareness that texts connect with each other and with the worlds in and around them.

Work ethic. We expect you to:

1. Go over the work you have done in class following every lesson.
2. Keep and maintain a glossary of technical terms, learning new terms and revising old ones.
3. Plan all written tasks before commencing the final piece. Proofread and correct all written tasks before submission.
4. Hand in or complete work within the allocated time scale.
5. Read and act upon your teachers' written and verbal advice.

If you are passionate about reading all types of literature then this is for you.

But be warned – it's not the same thing as just reading for relaxation. It's hard to acclimatise to AS from GCSE as the approach is different. You can't just take texts at face value – you have to think about them critically and analyse them, looking at a whole lot of different things such as form, structure, language, contexts, different interpretations. On the other hand, you don't have the teacher destroying the text for you – lessons are more discussion-based and your ideas and opinions become more important.

English Literature also helps with other subjects – from Art to History and even Biology and PE because of the essays you have to write for these subjects. You will find that generally you can write so much better – really useful for university.



Some hints:

Read the texts!

Understand and know them thoroughly.

Start early on your coursework – be prepared to work independently on it, exploring the texts by yourself and doing extra reading around it.

Don't be afraid to criticise the writers but also be prepared to listen to and weigh up other people's opinions.

Read around the texts as well as other novels, poetry, plays when you have the opportunity.

Don't panic if you get a D or even an E on your first essay – persevere and it'll get easier; keep working and exams can be a breeze.

If you can get through this, then there's something to look forward to - A2 level is fun!

We follow the AQA Specification B course, as outlined below:

AS

Unit 1: Poetry and Prose 1800–1945 (closed text)

This is an **examination** lasting 2 hours. There are two sections to this unit:

Section A: Poetry 1800–1945

You will study selected poems by **one** poet and answer **one** question on **one** of his or her poems. You will learn to

- analyse the effects of language, imagery and verse form structure
- demonstrate understanding of the significance of the poem's context

Poets set for examination include: Robert Browning, Emily Dickinson, Edward Thomas, William Butler Yeats

Section B: Prose 1800–1945

Students will study a prose set text from the period 1800–1945. There will be a choice of **two** questions on each set text and they will answer **one** question on the text they have studied.

They will learn to:

- respond to arguments and critical viewpoints
- explore how themes and issues are presented, taking into account the effects of language, form and structure.

Novels set for examination include:

Charlotte Bronte – *Jane Eyre*; Oscar Wilde – *The Picture of Dorian Gray*; Henry James – *The Turn of the Screw*; Mary Shelley – *Frankenstein*; Joseph Conrad – *The Secret Agent*; Virginia Woolf – *Mrs Dalloway*



Unit 2: Literature post-1900

This is a **coursework** folder of up to 3000 words in length. Students can choose which texts they wish to write about.

Candidates will write two tasks:

1. an analysis of part of a text **or** a piece which re-creates the style of another writer.
2. a comparative essay on two linked texts, discussing aspects such as theme, character, tone or imagery.

Unit 3: Drama and Poetry pre-1800 (closed text)

This is an **examination**. It lasts 2 hours. There are two sections to this unit:

Section A: Shakespeare

The focus of this section is the study of a Shakespeare play. **Two** essay questions are offered on each text – students will answer **one** of them.

Texts for examination may include:

A Midsummer Night's Dream; Antony and Cleopatra; King Lear; The Tempest.

Section B: Drama and Poetry pre-1800

This section asks candidates to explore contrasts, connections and comparisons between different literary texts. In their answers they must refer to **one drama text** and **one poetry text**.

Texts for examination may include:

Drama

John Ford – *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*; Ben Jonson – *Volpone*; John Webster – *The White Devil*; Richard Brinsley Sheridan – *The Rivals*.

Poetry

Geoffrey Chaucer – *The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale*; John Milton – *Paradise Lost Book One or Book Nine*; Andrew Marvell – *Selected Poems*; William Blake – *Songs of Innocence and Experience*.

Unit 4: Texts in Time

This is a **coursework unit** of up to 3000 words.

Students will write about three texts of their choice. They must include one prose and one poetry text. The third text can be from any genre. Texts can be selected from any period and also across periods, depending on candidates' interests.



GEOGRAPHY

Entry Requirements: Grade B at GCSE

Syllabus: AQA

Background information:

The aim of the course is to enable students to gain a greater understanding of certain topics, raising the level and detail of knowledge from GCSE standard. Alongside this, pupils will develop an awareness of two totally new topics. In all of the topics there is a focus on processes and how human and physical processes are interlinked and how this effects or is affected by the world in which we live.

Who should take Geography?

Geography suits students taking any number of subjects due to its diverse nature; one lesson you may be learning about periglacial environments with one teacher and then with your other teacher you may be describing the prevalence of HIV on a global scale. If you are to do well at A-Level Geography you need to be someone who...

... is not afraid to use your common sense

... can analyse data

... has a good core ability in statistical Maths (mean, mode, median..)

... knows the difference between describe and explain?

... can evaluate a geographical issue?

... competent with geographical skills (linking concepts across themes/map interpretation)?

Topics:

Core: Rivers and Population

Options: Health and Cold Environments/ Deserts

Teaching:

Student will have 2 teachers, each covering 2 aspects of the course through 2 double periods a week.

Homework:

Students are expected to spend 4 hours a week completing tasks set by the teacher and participating in extra reading around the subject, using resources in the Resource Centre (books, relevant magazines...).

What current A-Level students say:

‘Population was more difficult than Ice as I had to apply my GCSE knowledge in a different way than before. A-Level involves more thought as you have to apply your knowledge, not just learning and writing’

‘The jump from GCSE to A-Level was hard if you didn’t work hard from the beginning’

‘...we are expected to read further around topics in order to gain a broader more fluent knowledge. Answers are no longer constricted and depend upon what is said in the textbook, but are contextual and free.’



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Examination Board: Edexcel

Assessment 100% examination . There is no coursework.

Entry requirement: Grade B at English language GCSE highly recommended.

Examination structure: 4 Units, the first two AS Units are taken at the end of Year 12, the second two A2 Units are taken at the end of year 13.

The course covers UK politics from 1945 to the present day but the main emphasis will be on 1979 to the present day.

Some of the AS topics are:

- **Democracy and participation**
- **Party politics and ideas**
- **Elections and the voting systems currently used in UK elections**
- **Pressure Groups**

Some of the A2 topics are

- **Ideologies- Liberalism, Socialism, Conservatism, Anarchism**
- **European issues since 1945, including EU institutions, EU policies and enlargement**

The main value of studying politics is that it will help you to argue a case clearly and force you to question your own beliefs. Beginners in the subject tend to allow their opinions to dominate their reasoning and what the course aims to do is to replace unsupported opinion with the ability to argue convincingly.

What is Politics?

Politics exists because people disagree. They disagree about how they should live, about who should get what and about who should make decisions. Politics is about conflict resolution and the distribution of power.

Why study Politics?

Everyone should study politics! All members of society should have a better understanding of the general rules under which they live. However, certain students will undoubtedly find the subject more exciting than others. It would be a good subject to choose if

- **You have an interest in the world around you and want to know more about the society in which you live.**
- **Enjoy debate and discussion – and are comfortable with the fact that there are no simple “rights” or “wrongs”- only different opinions.**
- **Like to think for yourself and want to develop your own views.**

A great deal of your understanding of political issues develops over the course by following closely the unfolding of events. You have to get used to reading a quality newspaper, if you don't already. Those who keep up to date with events and are interested in them too invariably do particularly well.



It is an academic subject which is well regarded. This is because it is recognised that students will need to demonstrate that they can analyse and evaluate a topic and sustain a written argument in a well developed way.

Key questions to ask yourself if this is the right subject for you.

- 1. Will I be able to cope with the demands of a 100% examined subject?**
- 2. Can I express myself well on paper, as well as verbally?**
- 3. Will I want to follow political current events closely throughout the course?**
- 4. Will I feel comfortable with a subject which is not a classic textbook one and needs constantly updating?**

If you have liked subjects such as History, Geography, English and RS this might be an AS to consider.

It would go well with these subjects at AS and also with Economics or languages and would also be a good contrasting subject with Maths or the sciences.

You can find out further details on the Edexcel web-site www.edexcel.org.uk

Or ask Mrs Booth or Mr Grogan or current 6th form Politics students for more details

It is a well respected A Level for university entrance to such courses as Law. PPE, International Studies, Journalism as well as Politics itself.



HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Advanced subsidiary GCE (1 year)

Advanced GCE (2 years)

Examination Board: OCR

If you enjoy an active approach to learning and if you are interested in the many aspects of health, care and working with people, this course could be for you.

A grade C or above in English GCSE is essential.

The courses also link well to many other areas of advanced study, eg Psychology, Physical Education, Biology.

We offer an Advanced Subsidiary GCE (1 year) and an Advanced GCE (2 years).

How are the courses structured and assessed?

Both courses are unit-based.

Advanced Subsidiary AS

You would be required to study three units, all of which are mandatory and one of which is externally assessed by examination.

Unit 1: Quality Care

Externally examined in January

Unit 2: Communication in Care Settings Portfolio

Deadline: Week 4 Hilary Term

Unit 3: Health Promotion Portfolio

Deadline: Week 1 Trinity Term

Advanced A2

You would complete the AS course in Year 12 and then would be required to study one more mandatory unit.

Unit 10: Care Practice and Provision Portfolio

Deadline: Week 1 Trinity Term

The 2 optional units we will offer are:

Unit 13: Child Development Portfolio

Deadline: Week 4 Hilary term

Unit 11: Understanding Human Behaviour

Externally examined in January

You will study both of these units.

How would you learn?

You will learn through a combination of visits, external speakers, tutorials, discussion groups and coursework assignments.

Community Service or a Work Placement in a related area will be essential.



What could a course in Health and Social Care lead to?

Higher Education courses in this area are many and varied, eg:

- Childhood Studies with Psychology or Education
- Play and/or Music Therapy
- Social Work and Care Management
- Nursing
- Health Education

and many more.

The Health and Social Care courses are challenging, rewarding and relevant to life in the 21st century.

- There are no specific examination requirements for AS
- A GCSE grade C in English is desirable, however, if consultation with the English dept provides a suitable response of the students ability to present information coherently, then this will be acceptable
- Entry to A2 is conditional on the student achieving at least a D at AS level
- All students are required to :-

Be organised as there are 6 pieces of coursework at each level and this represents 2/3rds of the overall grade therefore all interim and final deadlines must be met
Be committed and reliable as the course has additional requirements i.e. all students must complete a community service placement either in the prep dept or preschool
Be motivated as higher marks will be gained for work completed independently
Have sound ICT skills as much of the research requires use of the internet so that current facts are obtained. In addition to this all coursework needs to be presented using ICT
Be interested in current affairs, reading the newspapers and watching documentaries are excellent ways of ensuring research is up to date
Prepare well for the examination by ensuring their revision is thorough also they must complete all past paper tasks set and act upon the advice given on assessed examination answers
Take responsibility for their progress by asking questions if they are uncertain how to proceed

Therefore students need to ask themselves

- Am I interested in the content of this subject and will I want to keep up to date with relevant current affairs?
- Will I be able to maintain an organised and focused approach in order to complete the extensive coursework component?
- Will I be able to revise thoroughly and compose the essay type answers required in the examination?
- Will I be responsible and reliable when completing a community service placement?



Student comments

- *The examination is difficult because the majority of the answers are in essay form*
- *There is a lot of factual information to learn for the examination but the revision guides we worked through were very helpful*
- *There is a lot of coursework and you need to keep up to date because it can be really confusing if you are improving one piece while trying to finish off another*
- *You need to make sure you go to your community service because this gives you the background information which will help you to gain higher marks in your coursework*
- *If you are able to find relevant up to date unbiased information in the media and apply it to a piece of coursework you will gain higher marks*



HISTORY

History is the study of the past. It offers many opportunities to reflect on the motivation, character and attitudes of people of all kinds. It also provides insights into the developments that have shaped modern society and helps us to understand the complex nature of the world around us. It also teaches us lessons and hopefully ensures that we do not repeat the mistakes of the past. In the words of George Santaya; ‘Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.’ History is a very well regarded subject by employers and universities, who recognise the academic rigour of the subject and also the intrinsic skills which are developed in studying it and which are easily transferable to the workplace and to higher education.

Skills required:

You will enjoy reading around the subject and constructing written arguments in a logical manner, selecting and deploying relevant evidence in order to develop your points fully. You will need to be able to communicate your understanding of history in a clear, coherent and effective manner. You should be able to analyse and evaluate source material in relation to its historical context. You should also be able to work independently, enjoy research and be well organised.

Key Questions for students:

History is a very rigorous and challenging subject at A Level. To help in your selection of subjects, read carefully the following questions and if your answer to all these questions is ‘yes’, then history might be the subject for you.

- Do you enjoy researching a topic and working independently?
- Can you write coherent, detailed, and fluent essays?
- Are you effective in analysing primary and secondary source material?
- Are you well organised and hit deadlines on time?

How did students find the jump between GCSE and A Level?

History at A level is a challenging but stimulating course which expands on the skills learnt at GCSE. There is quite a jump between GCSE and A Level but it is very manageable for able and keen students. The course covers a wide range of history including the Unification of Italy, 19th century British history and over a hundred years of Russian history. Girls must be committed and determined to ensure they reap rewards from their hard work. Responsible learning is a key element of the course and girls are expected to engage in private study outside the classroom and you must enjoy reading around the subject. Essay writing skills will be developed as will the evaluation of source material, both secondary and primary. Girls are tested by exam and coursework which is beneficial, as it creates an opportunity for independent study in an area of particular interest to the individual, as well as providing valuable preparation for university. It is an extremely fun and rewarding course and the lessons are taught in a rigorous but highly enjoyable manner, in which all are engaged. I would recommend it to any girl who has the desire to expand their knowledge of some of the most influential periods which shape our society today.

Ziyana - Year 13 history student.



The OCR AS and A2 course.

The OCR AS/A2 history syllabus provides a stimulating and exciting progression for those who studied the twentieth century for GCSE and who want to know what happened before World War I, while also acting as a self-contained course for those who do not have a historical background. The entry requirement is either a grade B in history at GCSE OR a grade B in English Language at GCSE.

AS History

The **AS course** involves a detailed examination of Italian Unification 1815-1870 using primary and secondary sources, and a study of Britain from 1780 to 1846.

Italian Unification

This option considers the process by which Italy became a unified state by 1870. Students will consider the different attitudes to unification (within and outside Italy, for and against) and the extent to which the new Italy reflected the relative strength of the different factors involved in the struggle for Italian Unification.

Key issues:

How far did the experiences of 1815 to 1847 create support for Italian unity?

Why did the revolutions of 1848–49 in Italy fail to unite Italy?

How important to the unification of Italy were the contributions of the Italian states (especially Piedmont) and of individuals (Cavour, Garibaldi, Mazzini and Victor Emmanuel)?

How important in the process of unification were foreign help and foreign circumstances?

British history 1783-1846

Key issues

Why did Pitt the Younger dominate politics 1783–93 and how successfully did he face the challenge of the French Revolution 1789–1801?

How and why was Lord Liverpool able to survive the radical challenges of 1812–22?

How liberal were the Tory governments of 1822–30?

Why was the Great Reform Act passed in 1832?

How effective was Peel as a party political leader to 1841?

How successful was Peel's ministry of 1841-1846?

There will be two short examinations:

A document paper on Italian Unification (1 ½ hours)

A British paper (1 ½ hours)



A2 History

The A2 course consists of a synoptic paper on Russia 1855-1964 and two coursework essays on Gladstone and Disraeli.

Russia and its rulers 1855-1964

Key issues

To what extent was war the main locomotive for change in Russia during this period?

Why was opposition more effective under the Tsars than under the Bolsheviks?

How far would you agree with the view that Russian rulers preferred repression to reform?

‘Stalin was the most successful ruler of Russia during this period.’ How far would you agree with this view?

How far would you agree that the working class in Russia suffered more under the Communists than under the Tsars?

Assess the view that no Russian ruler in the period 1855-1964 succeeded in improving the lives of the peasants.

Lenin described the Tsarist Empire as ‘a prison of the peoples’. To what extent could that verdict be applied to Russia throughout the period 1855-1964?

Coursework.

Girls will start researching this after the AS exams and will work under staff guidance. They will complete two essays on Gladstone and Disraeli, of 2000 words or less. It is essential that the extended essays represent the outcome of candidates’ own work, so staff must not comment on or mark either drafts or the completed essays. The deadline for completion of this work is the end of Hilary Term in the Upper Sixth.

There will be one examination

Russia and its rulers (2 hours)

What to do over the summer.

You will be expected to write an essay on a topic of your choice and enter it for the Dennis Machin History Essay Prize. You will be encouraged to write about a subject that you are personally interested in, regardless of whether or not you have studied it in school. It is a task which we hope you will find intellectually rewarding, providing challenging extension work. The length of the essay should not exceed 3,000 words and can be much less. It should be problem centred i.e. it must pose a valid historical question. It will be handed in at the beginning of the Michaelmas Term.



INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Examination Board: WJEC

In today's world, individuals will increasingly need technological and information literacy skills that include the ability to gather, process and manipulate data. These skills are now as essential as the more traditional skills of numeracy and literacy.

The impact of ICT on society is enormous and as the percentage of businesses and households connected to communication networks such as the internet grows, so does the need for individuals who can master and manipulate these new technologies. As well as the rapid development of new technologies that gather, organise and share information, familiar technologies like television, telephone and computers are evolving and being expanded by digitised information, causing a convergence of technologies .

The specification provides opportunities for candidates to develop an understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues as they relate to the designer or user of ICT systems, for example in the AS, health and safety issues, acceptable use of ICT and legislation. In the A2 content, consideration is given to security strategies and auditing, censorship, privacy and effects upon communities and Codes of Conduct, viruses and software piracy.

The 'presenting information' task and relational database project may serve to extend understanding of these issues in order that a balanced appreciation of the conflicts and dilemmas involved in the design and implementation of ICT systems may be encouraged.

This specification also supports sustainable development, health and safety considerations and European development, consistent with international agreements. The approach used in constructing the specification lends itself to the establishment of links with other areas of study, particularly those involving problem solving and the practical use of ICT.

There is no specific requirement for prior learning, although many candidates will have already gained a knowledge and understanding of Information and Communication Technology through their study of a GCSE or GCSE (Short Course) specification in ICT.

The four part structure of this specification (2 units for AS, and an additional 2 for the full Advanced) allows for both staged and end-of-course assessment and thus allows candidates to defer decisions about progression from AS to the full A level qualification.

This specification provides a suitable foundation for the study of ICT or a related area through a range of higher education courses vocational courses (e.g. Information Technology, Information Systems, Business Computing) or direct entry into employment. In addition, the specification provides a coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study for candidates who do not progress to further study in this subject.

AS comprises of units which look at:

ICT 1 – Information Systems

30%, 2 hours 15 minutes Written Paper, 80 marks (120 UMS)

This is a written paper of two sections, A and B, presented in a question and answer booklet. There are no optional questions. Quality of Written Communication is assessed in two



questions. Candidates will be required to prepare a spreadsheet on a specific topic, defined by WJEC, in advance of the written paper. Hard copies of the spreadsheet are taken into the examination and used to answer questions in Section B. This spreadsheet is submitted with the completed examination paper.

ICT 2 – Presenting Information

20%, Internal Assessment, 80 marks (80 UMS)

Candidates undertake DTP and multimedia tasks, presenting the outcome for internal assessment and moderation by WJEC.

A2 comprises of units which look at:

ICT3 – Use and Impact of ICT

30%, 2 hours 30 minutes Written Paper, 90 marks (120 UMS)

This is a written paper of two sections, A and B, presented as a question paper requiring a separate answer booklet. Candidates answer all questions in Section A and one from two in Section B. Quality of Written Communication is assessed in two questions.

ICT4 – Relational Databases

20 %, Internal Assessment, 100 marks (80 UMS)

Candidates analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate a solution to a problem of their choice requiring the use of a relational database. This is a substantial piece of work, undertaken over an extended period of time. It is internally assessed and moderated by WJEC.

Who should do A Level ICT?

This course is suitable for anyone, whether or not they have done GCSE ICT. Although some prior knowledge is useful when undertaking the course, none is required.

The course will suit anyone who has an interest in this important and ubiquitous element of our daily lives.

Students need a certain amount of self-discipline in this course as coursework requires background work to be done in the students' own time, so students have to be prepared to be committed to the course if they want to gain the highest marks for their coursework.



Previous student's thoughts

“I learned so much about the use of ICT as a tool during my A Level course. Although much of the technical knowledge was new to me, I found that my prior knowledge helped me to make sense of the work that was covered. It allowed me to take more of an interest in things I take for granted, such as the way that the school's network operates. I have no doubt that the methodical format of the two pieces of coursework ensured that I obtained a great sense of achievement when they were completed.”

“If you take this course you need to realise just how hard you need to work for the coursework. The amount of support you get is immense, but you need to make sure you ask for help if you need it and not try to plod along on your own. Although the tasks may seem hard and time consuming when you are doing them, you get a buzz from knowing that you have done as well as you can to produce a piece of work of which you can be proud. You need to be prepared to work hard – but if you do you will reap the rewards of your efforts.”

A few questions you should ask yourself if you want to do this course

1. Can you work independently?
2. Can you ask for help when you require it?
3. Can you listen to advice and act upon it?
4. Can you be methodical when approaching a task?
5. Can you learn new skills quickly?
6. Are you able to show commitment to this subject when coursework is due in?
7. Are you prepared to read news stories about current developments in this subject?



LATIN

Examination Board: OCR

The A Level Latin course aims to build on what has been learned for GCSE and to broaden reading of Latin authors and background knowledge of Roman culture.

The **AS Examination** consists of two papers

Unit 1- Latin Language – relatively easy unseen (50%)

Unit 2 - Latin Verse and Prose Literature - Questions on authors read in class

If you go on to do A2, your marks at AS will total 50% of your A2 marks

The **A2 examination** also consists of two papers:

- Latin Verse: Prescribed texts and unseen verse – comprehension and translation
- Latin prose: Prescribed texts and unseen prose comprehension, translation and optional composition.

(The remaining 50% comes from the AS papers above. If need be, they may be re-sat at the time of the A2 papers).

Prospective candidates for AS/A2 Latin would normally have gained at least a B grade in GCSE Latin.

Some extra points and questions to consider

i) The subject essentially involves literary criticism (supported by cultural references) and translation.

ii) You need to have some sort of feel for literature as well as to be good at Latin. You should consider what you gained for the poetry paper at GCSE.

iii) Can you write extended answers against the clock? How did you feel with the longer background questions at GCSE?

iv) As ever, you will enjoy the subject more if you are prepared to work for yourself. This means not only learning up our notes but also researching material – under guidance – by yourself.

v) Have you a reasonably wide English vocabulary? Are you good at thinking up synonyms – different words meaning the same thing? A degree of fluency rather than just mechanical rendering will be required for A Level.



Classics:

Some extra points and questions to consider:

i) Did you enjoy the historical background element at GCSE Latin? Do you like History?

ii) Do you like literature and learning about other societies?

iii) Are you interested in ideas?

iv) Do you like to have a good (reasoned) argument? Are you ready to see both sides of a question? Are you prepared to be flexible in your thinking and to change your mind if the evidence dictates?

v) Are you prepared to come up with your own ideas and also to try some research for yourself?

If you are able to write essays/longer answers in English or History or RS, or think you have the potential to become better at doing so, this could be the subject for you!



MATHEMATICS

Examining Board: OCR

Mathematics is an extremely rewarding and satisfying subject for those who enjoy the challenge of problem solving and appreciate the beauty of its structures and its logic. It is also, of course, a vital tool in many fields, especially the physical and social sciences, and can be combined very successfully with a wide range of subjects.

The OCR course builds on the knowledge acquired for GCSE, extending the range of skills and techniques so students can solve more advanced and complex problems with confidence. It also aims to develop the ability to reason logically and to understand the connections between the different areas of mathematics.

In the Year 12 students study AS Level Mathematics. This course provides the opportunity to meet a wide range of mathematical ideas, including topics from calculus, co-ordinate geometry, trigonometry and series. Students study two compulsory pure maths modules and a statistics module.

In the Year 13, the course continues again with two compulsory pure mathematics modules and one applied unit. We offer discrete mathematics, which is related to the fields of computing and operational research.

Assessment

Assessment is entirely by examination. For AS Level students sit one pure mathematics module in January and the other pure and the applied module at the end of the Year 12. The same pattern is followed for A2 Level. All papers last for 90 minutes and are equally weighted. Candidates are expected to use a calculator in all but the first paper and we recommend that pupils taking this course should have a graphical calculator as well as a simple scientific one.

Entry Requirements

Students entering this course must have at least a grade B at Higher Level in GCSE Mathematics. It is essential that they have a secure understanding of algebra and can manipulate expressions readily and accurately which we expect to be demonstrated by a grade A in Module 5 or equivalent.

2011 Results

A Level A & B Grade 90%



FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Examining Board: OCR

This course can only be taken with A Level Mathematics. It gives a much wider mathematical basis and is recommended, at least to AS Level, for the able mathematician or for a girl who is considering studying mathematics or related subjects at university. We have become increasingly aware over recent years of the importance placed on Further Mathematics by leading universities for students applying to read mathematics, physics or mechanical engineering.

The AS course gives the opportunity to study some of the more recent developments in mathematics, including group theory and matrix algebra and to study two mechanics modules.

The A2 course provides a much greater development of the techniques of pure mathematics, with an emphasis on calculus. Students also study additional statistics or mechanics units furthering the normal mathematics course.

Assessment

Assessment is entirely by examination. At AS level this course forms an extension of A Level Mathematics consisting of three additional papers, one of which is specifically for additional mathematics.

For A2 Level Further Mathematics a further three papers are taken at the end of the Upper Sixth.

All papers last for 90 minutes and are equally weighted. Since Further Mathematics is always taken with Mathematics the marks obtained over all the mathematics papers taken (9 in the case of AS Further Mathematics and 12 in the case of A2 Further Mathematics) are combined to give candidates the best possible grades overall.

Entry Requirements

A student taking this course would be expected to have achieved a grade A in GCSE Mathematics.

2011 Results

100% Grade A/A*

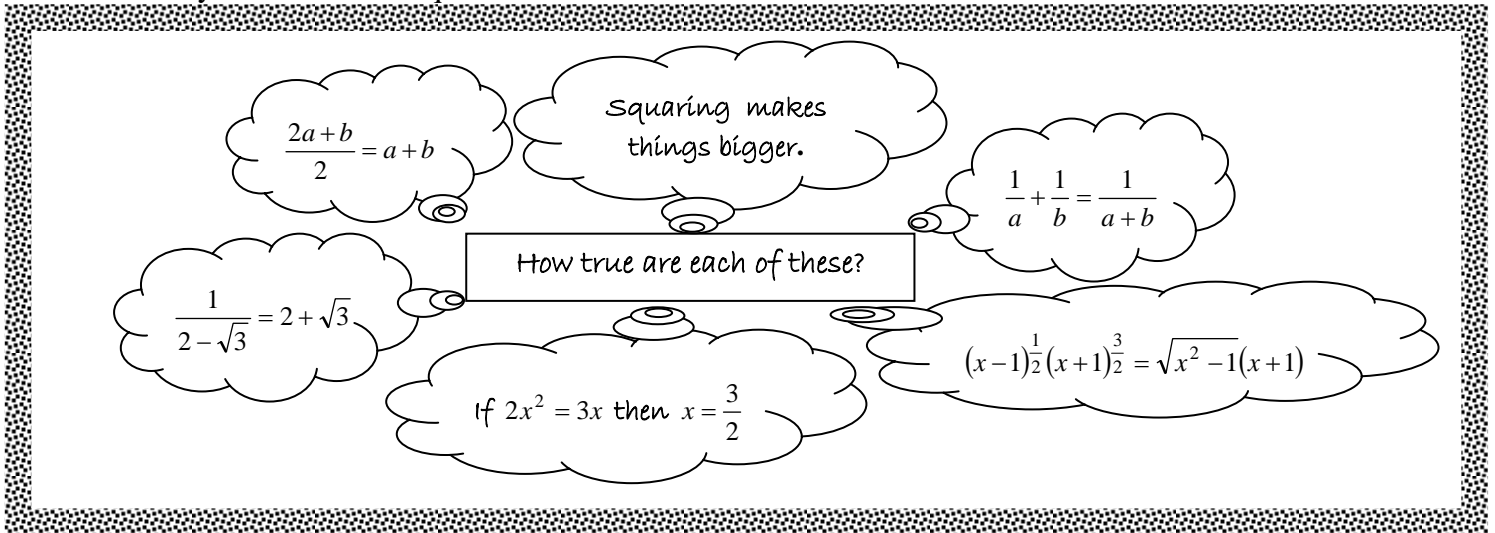
Do you enjoy algebra? Will you get an A in Module 5?

Do you enjoy spending time thinking about puzzles and then trying different ideas?

Are you more interested in how you get to a solution and why it is true rather than it is the answer?



Can you answer these questions?



Why did our present students study Maths?

Maths is exciting. Mathematicians can get really worked up and obsessed by their subject.

Maths earns you more money. One possible explanation for this is that the maths skills learned at A level, such as logical thinking, problem solving and statistical analysis, may be closer to those actually used in the workplace than skills learned in other subjects.

Maths makes you desirable. It is difficult to think of any course/career where it would not be welcomed in combination with other subjects.

Maths makes everything else look easy. It is undoubtedly a hard subject to understand. But this makes other subjects seem relatively easy.

and the most important reason of all because we enjoy it.

Year 12 questions you should ask yourself:

Do you need to A-Level Maths for your university course?

Will A-Level Maths help you with your other subjects?

Do you enjoy Maths?

You must enjoy Maths to study it at A Level. It is hard work but it is worth it in the end.



MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

AS

Syllabus (AQA Board)

- Media (TV advertising and communication technology)
- Popular culture (cinema, music and fashion trends)
- Healthy living / life style (sport / exercise, health and well-being, holidays)
- Family / relationships (relationships within the family, friendships and marriage / partnerships)

Assessment - The AS specification has 2 units

Unit 1 – Listening, Reading and Writing

Externally examined, 2 hours.

Weighting - 70% of total AS - 35% of total A-Level marks

Candidates will answer a range of questions based on approximately 5 mins of heard material and on a selection of written stimulus texts. They will also respond in writing to a question based on one of the AS topics

Unit 2 – Speaking Test

Exam which will last 35min including 20mins preparation time

Weighting - 30 % of total AS - 15% of total A-Level marks

Candidates will discuss a target language stimulus card based on one of the AS topics and take part in a conversation covering 3 further AS topics.

A2

Syllabus

- Environment (pollution, energy and protecting the planet)
- Multi-cultural society (immigration, integration and racism)
- Contemporary social issues (wealth and poverty, law and order and the impact of scientific and technological progress).
- Cultural topic from a choice of five by board

Assessment - The A2 specification has 2 units

Unit 3 - Listening, Reading and writing

Externally examined – 2hours 30mins - Written paper

Weighting - 35% of the total A-Level marks

Candidates will answer a range of questions based on approximately 6mins of heard material and on a selection of written texts. They will also respond in writing to a question based on one of the four A2 cultural topic areas.



Unit 4 – Speaking Test

Exam will last 35mins including 20mins preparation time weighting – 15% of the total A-Level marks

Candidates will present a point of view based on a target-language stimulus card from one of the A2 topic areas and take part in a conversation covering two cultural topics of your choice.

Requirement

A grade A at GCSE is the minimum requirement for all modern languages and a thorough understanding of higher GCSE grammar is essential to be able to be successful in MFL AS and A2 courses.

Girls in the 6th form are encouraged to spend part of their summer holidays attending a language course at a foreign university in order to develop their linguistic skills and we also have links with Lyon families for exchanges.

A cultural study trip to Paris is organised in Y12 at the moment.

Skills

AS topics focus on modern issues such as Healthy Living and Popular Culture and their impact on modern society. Problems, dangers, addictions arising from these topics are analysed, discussed and understood in the context of youth culture, which is interesting but challenging.

At A2, students discuss in depth more global issues like the environment, immigration and racism, ethical issues such as stem cells for example and require good analytical skills as well as an extensive knowledge of the topics studied.

Furthermore, the additional study of two cultural topics requires a high level of independent research, analysis and justification of facts. These are tested in the written exam and in the oral.

Grammar is embedded within the course with candidates expected to use actively and accurately a wide range of grammatical structures, appropriate to the task set and drawn from a list established by the Board.

An interest in, and enthusiasm for, language learning is essential as well as a strong desire to understand language in a variety of contexts and genres. Communication between teacher and students is expected during lessons, and this is further enhanced with intensive lessons with the foreign assistant.

Additionally, it is recommended that students will develop an awareness and understanding of contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of the countries of the language studied, hence a need to read widely material on departmental online resources or foreign magazines in the Resource centre.

Finally, independent study and research play an important role at A2 in the Cultural Topics where students research on writers, artists of their choice.....and present their knowledge in the oral and the written exam.

Commitment and regular learning are essential to MFL learning at AS and A2 and for this reason, summer work is set and failure to complete this work may count against you.



QUESTIONS

1. Do you have a sound knowledge and understanding of your own language ?
2. Do you feel that you have a good understanding of the grammar of the language you wish to study? (tenses, gender, word order, declensions...)
3. Are you prepared to take an interest in current affairs and keep abreast with what is happening all around you ?
4. Are you at ease with participating actively in speaking debates and discussions ?

6th FORM COMMENTS

“French, Spanish and German A Level are exciting courses in which we expand on all skills learnt at GCSE level. We have the opportunity to engage in a wide range of stimulating topics e.g Law and Order and Immigration and gain a better awareness of society today. We are also expected to be committed and persevere throughout and engage in independent study outside the classroom to ensure better understanding of class material”.

“Adequate grammar and essay writing skills are an essential component of the course and assistance is available throughout the course. Quantity of work and level of language are a shock to the system at the beginning but due to support from the MFL Department and extra lessons with the foreign assistants, you do eventually come “out of the tunnel”. Language classes often form a close-knit community, rooting for one another, which has proved to provide a fun and exciting atmosphere!”



MUSIC

Examination Board: WJEC

AS Units

Unit 1 Performing – 15% (of full A-level) External Assessment

Students will perform a recital lasting 8 to 10 minutes to a visiting examiner

Unit 2 Composing – 15% Internal Assessment with external moderation

Students will compose two pieces of music, lasting 4-8 minutes in total. One piece will demonstrate techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition.

Unit 3 Appraising – 20% External Assessment

One listening examination in two parts

- Part 1: (12%) 1 ½ hours appraising test based on extracts of music (set works) taken from the two areas of study selected for study by the centre
- Part 2: (8%) 1 hour aural perception (melodic dictation, keys, chords, cadences) based on unprepared musical extracts.

A2 Units

Students study three more units – Performing, Composing and Appraising, and will choose which unit is to be weighted 20% rather than 15%. For example, a student may perform a longer performance recital to gain 20% of the marks, leaving 15% for Composing and 15% for Appraising. The pathway a student takes will define the exact nature of the course she completes.

Performing:

Either: a recital to last between 10 and 12 minutes (15%)

Or: a recital to last between 16 and 18 minutes (20%)

Composing

Either: 2 contrasting compositions lasting between 6 and 10 minutes (15%)

Or: 3 contrasting compositions lasting between 12 and 18 minutes (20%)

Appraising

Either: one written examination lasting 2 hours 15mins

Or: one written examination lasting 3 hours

Both exams are based on aural appreciation of 20th Century music, and the analytical study of one set of work.

Questions to consider:

1. Do you play a musical instrument or sing to at least Grade 5 standard?
2. Do you enjoy analysing and listening to all types of music?
3. How creative are you and do you enjoy composing?
4. Are you considering studying music or a related subject at university or conservatoire?

Quote from a student:

"Music really challenged me throughout the course, but all the time I could be creative. It stretched my analysis, history and performance skills - I'd recommend it to anyone who sings or plays an instrument confidently." Year 12 student.



MUSIC TECHNOLOGY (AS only)

Examination Board: Edexcel

Unit 1: Music Technology Portfolio 1

Students will produce an audio CD entitled “Music Technology Portfolio 1”, containing three tracks of work as specified in the three tasks below. They will also present a logbook. The work is due to be done under coursework conditions between the issue of stimulus material in November and the submission date.

Task 1A: Sequenced Realised Performance (40 marks)

The sequenced realised performance will be based on a recording of a piece of music specified by Edexcel. A skeleton score, but not the recording, will be provided by Edexcel.

Task 1B: Multi-track Recording (40 marks)

Students will record a piece of their own choice from Area of Study 2: Popular Music Styles since 1910, lasting between two and four minutes. Recordings must have between eight and twelve live tracks (no MIDI). Close-mic and direct-inject (DI) capture will be required.

Task 1C: Creative Sequenced Arrangement (40 marks)

The creative sequenced arrangement will be based on one of two prescribed stimuli supplied by Edexcel. The chosen stimulus will be worked in one of two prescribed styles. The work must not be a cover version, remix or transcription, but an arrangement showing creative development and/or manipulation of the chosen stimulus, and extending to between two or three minutes.

Logbook (20 marks)

Students will use this document to detail equipment used and to answer two questions on their creative sequenced arrangement.

Unit 2: Listening and Analysing

1 hour 45 minute listening examination, externally assessed, in the summer of the year of entry. The style of questions will range from multiple choice questions to short answer questions, to questions requiring a few sentences of continuous prose.

The examination paper has two sections, A & B, and will be structured as follows

Section A (40 marks)

Questions 1-4 will test students’ aural perception of musical characteristics and features of the given extracts, including relevant technological aspects. The extracts will be drawn from; Area of study 2: Popular musical styles since 1910. These questions will be equally weighted.

Section B (40 marks)

Questions 5-6 will be drawn from the two Special Focus styles, testing both students’ aural perception and also their wider understanding and knowledge of the style/genre. The two questions will be equally weighted.



Questions to consider:

1. Are you interested in the production of pop music, not just listening to the final product?
2. Can you read music notation, and if not are you willing to learn it?
3. Can you play one hand of the piano, and if not are you willing to learn?
4. Do you strive for perfection in detail when creating work?

Quote from a student:

"Music Technology has been really fun and I've used the skills I learnt to create my own personal recordings outside of lessons. I understand the process of pop music production now and the detail that goes into creating every sound you hear on a CD."



PERFORMING ARTS AS and A-Level

Board: OCR

AS and A-Level Performing Arts helps you develop broad skills, knowledge and understanding of the performing arts industry. You will be studying not only the skills themselves but how they are used in the performing professions. You can use a range of art forms in your work: primarily drama; dance and technical theatre, but you may also bring music and music technology into your work if you wish. The course can be moulded around your skills and interests though it is expected you will have an open-mind to learning new skills.

Should you take Performing Arts A-Level?

- Do you enjoy and have an interest in Music, Drama and/or Dance, as a performer or designer and audience member?
- Do you wish to go on to a career in the Performing Arts either as a designer, performer or technician and wish to develop portfolios, show reels and audition pieces through your A-Level work?
- Do you want to complement their other A-Level studies with a course that builds confidence and creative skills.
- Are you willing to document your progress constantly to create your portfolios and work independently?

Brief Outline:

Throughout the course you will have the opportunity to take part in a variety of workshops from visiting experts from the Performing Arts industry. There is no written exam in this course.

Lower Sixth:

- You investigate a chosen role in the industry and write coursework of between 2000-3000 words
- You improve your skills in an art form (dance, drama, music etc), or as a technician (costumer, make-up, lighting etc) and create a portfolio or showreel of your skills
- You perform to an audience and visiting examiner, showing your skills or you work as a designer/technician on one of the performances.

Upper Sixth:

- You create a self-promotion pack designed to get you work in the industry
- You produce and perform two pieces in a group
- You perform in a 15 minute solo showcase to an audience and visiting examiner, showing your skills or you work as a designer/technician on one of the performances.



Detailed Outline

AS Units

Unit 1 (G380): *Investigating performing arts organisations*

This unit will help you understand how ‘the business’ works and the range of roles within a Performing Arts organisation. You will research the industry and produce a case study of **two** contrasting organisations (between **2000** and **3000** words) and an individual presentation that investigates **one** particular role within **one** of the organisations. These organizations might include: theatres, arts centres, design services, dance schools, set construction, stage schools, touring companies, lighting equipment companies.

Unit 2 (G381): *Professional practice: skills development*

For this unit, you can either be a performer or follow a *production* route.

If you are following the *performance* pathway, e.g. dancer, actor, music technologist, choreographer, you evaluate the level and range of your skills and identify how you will develop and extend your abilities. This may involve LAMDA or ABRSM exams, but you will devise a plan that suits you.

If you are following the *production* pathway, e.g. lighting engineer, make-up artist, sound technician, stage manager, theatre designer, you identify your skills and experience in operations that support and enrich performances and find opportunities to develop your knowledge and expertise.

You will produce a skills-development plan (to include a record of repertoire, roles and techniques attempted and skills achieved), appropriate evidence of **three** pieces of work, e.g. DVD, artifact, documentation, show reel; (**two** of these pieces will consist of work in progress but largely complete, **one** piece will be complete) and a commentary on how these examples show your skills developing.

Unit 3 (Unit G382/3): *Professional practice: Performance or Production*

This unit is externally assessed by a visiting examiner

You will now apply the skills you have developed through the year in a group performance based on existing repertoire. This will be a ‘live’ piece of performance work where you will aspire to professional standards as you perform in front of an audience.

If you are following the Production pathway, you work as a designer/technician etc. on one of the groups’ examined performance. Your work is then assessed by the visiting examiner and you will create a portfolio to show the process behind your work.



A2 Units

Unit 4 (G384): *Getting work*

Here, you learn more about working in the business. You will have the opportunity to discuss professional practice with people who currently make their living in performing arts and the opportunity to evaluate and learn from their experience. You will produce a self-promotion pack, an outline of the range of work you consider possible during your first year as a professional and a written analysis and evaluation of your plan and self-promotion pack (**1000** words), including a strategy for future professional development and work.

Unit 5 (G385): *Extending Repertoire*

You will work as a company to produce or perform **two contrasting pieces of practical work**. This practical work will be based on **two** contrasting pieces from the huge repertoire of material available, **one** contemporary and **one** historical. This will allow creative opportunities whether you are on the *performance* pathway or the *production* pathway. You will produce a short written commentary and recorded evidence of the performances.

Unit 6 (G386/7): *Producing a Showcase or Production Demonstration*

If you are studying as a performer, your two years' study culminates in a Showcase (maximum **15** mins in total) containing **two** contrasting solo pieces chosen by you (from existing repertoire) and a duologue, duet, duo or *pas de deux* in which you perform with **one** other person.

If you are following the production pathway, you will produce work in response to a set brief. You will use their production skills to work with candidates on the *performance* pathway to provide the technical aspects of a production.



PHOTOGRAPHY

Examination Board: OCR

Photography at A Level is an exciting and stimulating subject, which encourages and develops the creative and artistic capabilities of you, the student, in the world of imaging. As well as learning about the key historical steps which have allowed photography to become what it is today, you will learn a variety of techniques, both traditional and digital, to enable you to express your own creative ideas in images effectively.

You will find out more about other established photographers and artists and learn to appreciate and express what makes their work distinctive and worthwhile in your eyes. You will then choose which particular techniques or styles will work best as you produce your own images on your selected theme. Your final presentation of these pieces allows you to demonstrate how well you absorbed the whole experience of understanding and creating your own photographic images.

Given the open-minded, creative nature of the course, much of the teaching is based on a more practical approach, rather than formal classroom lessons. We do recognise that you may not feel constantly creative in lesson times and that some sessions will be more productive than others. As with most college or university courses, there is plenty of scope for working in your own time outside the Photography Department and much of the pace you work at will be of your own choice.

This does place certain obligations on you if you are to learn Photography effectively and to get your best grade at A Level. Whilst certain students really thrive on this more open, less structured approach to learning, there is always the danger that other students may not put in the work they need to do and start to fall behind. We will work with you to ensure that you are keeping up with the work and staying in control, so that we can all avoid unpleasant surprises at exam time and you can get results you are proud of.

Photography is a great subject and should be a lot of fun to do, but as with anything worthwhile, it requires a lot of work from you to achieve your best. We will help you do that.



Photography OCR course structure at A Level

The Photography OCR course at AS level is structured into: two coursework modules (total 60%) and one practical examination module (total 40%), usually taken before Easter, with all written work finished beforehand.

The A2 Photography OCR course has three coursework modules (total 60%) and one practical examination module (total 40%) taken after the Easter holiday with all written work finished beforehand.

The contents of the Photography course will include:

- Film Technology with practical Darkroom applications and experimental techniques.
- Digital imaging, film scanning and image manipulation using 'Photoshop' and other professional computer applications
- Studio Photography and Lighting techniques
- Location photography
- Fashion, advertising and product photography using a range of specialist equipment
- Design workshops teaching layout methods and dry mounting and laminating techniques for exhibition display and portfolio development (portfolios are used as part of the interview process by universities and colleges).

These four questions should help you decide whether Photography at A level is the right choice for you:

1. Do you enjoy and appreciate pictures in both stills photography and the moving image?
2. Would you like to work in an environment that allows you to develop your picture making skills at your own pace with professional help and advice available?
3. Are you interested in developing your creative capabilities through learning practical skills and techniques with layout and design ideas that will extend your ability to make images that have impact?
4. Are you considering a career in media (e.g. advertising, film, television, fashion, graphics etc), where understanding photography and the use of pictures in the rapidly expanding world of digital imaging will be a real advantage?



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Examination Board: OCR

Course content: 60% theory, 40% practical

AS/A2 Level Physical Education is the study of human movement, performance and behaviour in relation to Sport and P.E. It takes a multi-disciplinary approach encouraging the development of a range of methods. The course aims to provide greater knowledge, insight and understanding of human performances.

AS Level

Unit G451: An Introduction to Physical Education

Anatomy & Physiology

- Skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular & respiratory systems; motion and movement in relation to performance of physical activity

Acquiring Movement Skills

- Classification and development of motor skills; information processing; motor control and learning skills in physical activity

Socio-Cultural Studies relating to physical activity

- Sport, culture and contemporary sporting issues

Examination AS 60%, A2 30%

Unit G452: Acquiring, developing and evaluating practical skills in Physical Education

Evaluating and planning for the improvement of performance

Examination AS 40%, A2 20%

A2 Level

Unit G453: Principles and concepts across different areas of Physical Education

Historical Studies

- Popular & rational recreation in Britain; 19th Century public schools and the development of athleticism; physical education development in state elementary schools

Sports Psychology

- Individual aspects of performance; group dynamics of performance and audience effects; mental preparation for physical activity

Exercise and Sport Physiology

- Energy; health components of physical fitness; application of the principles of training; performance enhancement.

Examination A2 35%

Unit G454: The improvement of effective performance and the critical evaluation of practical activities in Physical Education

Practical skills

- Performance; evaluation, appreciation and the improvement of performance

Examination 15%



Practical Component (G452/4)

Pupils are assessed in two activities and can opt for one of the following:

1. Perform in two chosen activities from two activity profiles
2. Perform in one chosen activity and coach/lead one chosen activity from two activity profiles
3. Perform one chosen activity and officiate one chosen activity from two different activity profiles.

Assessment is ongoing throughout each year of the course and standardisation of assessment will take place after Easter where students are chosen by OCR to perform some of their activities.

Course Entry Requirements

In order to be accepted on this course, students must show strong commitment to sport and willingness to play in, or coach, school teams. Students will need to be enthusiastic about both practical and theoretical aspects of the course and **MUST** (exceptional circumstances may be considered) have studied GCSE P.E., obtaining a Grade B or above.

Career Opportunities

A Level Physical Education can be used for entry into non-P.E. universities so the course can obviously be used to help students gain access into university for a range of degree courses.

It is however, particularly useful and appropriate for those students who intend to go on to study Physical Education, Sports Science, Exercise Science or Leisure Management in some way at university or colleges of higher education.

The A Level P.E. course might also be particularly beneficial for those students intending to pursue a career in physiotherapy especially if they combine P.E. with Biology at A Level. Other career paths may include P.E. teaching, health promotion, sports nutrition, personal training, sports therapy, coaching and sports psychology.

Conclusion

What other subject gives you the chance to integrate areas of psychology, science, philosophy, maths and history? An enjoyable, yet challenging subject for anyone who has an interest in sport/physical activity and everything that goes with it!

“It was a real jump from GCSE, but A Level PE opened my eyes to so much more than sport and its practical attributes. I was amazed to discover just how much more the human body is capable of and how simple adjustments in the training we do and our state of mind can affect performance. It’s also fascinating to learn how society has influenced the sports and pastimes we do today, and thanks to my biomechanics lessons, I have become a more effective hockey player.” Ex – RMS PE Student.



PSYCHOLOGY

Examination Board: AQA

Syllabus: Specification A

Psychology is the scientific study of the behaviour of humans and other animals and the aim of both the

AS and A2 Level courses is to give students a broad understanding of the major disciplines within the subject. It is a useful A Level for most fields of employment or further study, as it provides students with the opportunity to view human behaviour from different perspectives and to apply their knowledge and understanding to real life situations. The outcome is that students are equipped with many tools to enhance their interaction with people in all areas of life.

Assessment: AS Psychology

The specification is divided into 5 core areas, which together with the study of research methods, forms two modules. Each core area will look at relevant theories and supporting research and then consider their application to real issues and situations. Research methods are taught through practical application lessons, during which the students learn how to collect data to investigate an area of study, and analyse the findings. Assessment for these modules takes the form of short structured questions and each unit has equal weighting.

Unit 1 (Examined in January of Year 12)

Cognitive Psychology: Memory and how to improve it, eye witness testimony

Developmental Psychology: Attachment in babies and the effects of day care on their development

Research Methods, including the ethics of psychological research

Unit 2 (Examined in May of Year 12)

Physiological Psychology: Stress and Stress Management

Individual Differences: Abnormality – definitions, explanations and treatments for abnormal behaviour Social Psychology: Conformity and obedience to authority

Preparatory summer holiday work for AS will be set during Induction week in the Trinity term, for completion and submission by the first day of the Michaelmas term. Failure to complete this holiday work may count against you.

Assessment: A2 Psychology

This course will allow students to develop their knowledge and understanding of some of the core areas. Again, each unit has equal weighting.

Unit 3 (Examined in May of Year 13)

Students are expected to be able to demonstrate their understanding of the major approaches in psychology (Biological, Behavioural, Cognitive and Psychodynamic) through their study of individual topics such as Sleep and sleep disorders, Gender and Aggression. They also develop an appreciation of issues and debates relevant to each topic, such as nature/nurture, the role of animals in research, free will and determinism and ethical issues. The assessment of this unit is by an essay-based written examination taken at the end of Year 13.

Unit 4 (Examined in January of Year 13)

This has three strands - The psychology of mental disorders including their treatment; the psychology of

Addiction; and extending the knowledge of research methods learned at AS, to include the application of inferential statistics. The assessment of this unit is by written examination taken in January, involving essays as well as incorporating the practical application of research method and data analysis through shorter questions including designing a brief investigation.



How do I know if Psychology is the right choice for me?

Girls entering Year 12 usually have no prior experience of Psychology and it can often be difficult to decide whether they have the right skills and aptitude for success. This is made more difficult because while many people have heard of it, fewer have any real experience and so a great many myths and misunderstandings circulate. If you think you might be interested, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I have a scientific mind that will enable me to **think critically and reflectively** about psychological theories and research?
- Am I able to **apply** material I've learned to real life situations?
- Am I prepared to **work independently**, with guidance, to find appropriate research material?
- Am I able to take in **large amounts of information** in short periods of time?
- Am I good at accepting and **acting on advice** in order to continuously improve my work?
- Does the description of this **subject interest** me enough, such that I'm willing to put in the hard work necessary to achieve my full potential?

In order to do well in Psychology you will need to be able to:

- Read scientific research studies and interpret them, drawing appropriate conclusions.
- Work independently to find appropriate resource material.
- Select relevant material from the vast amount available to illustrate your points.
- Think critically to evaluate the usefulness and application of research and theories proposed.
- Apply your psychological knowledge to unfamiliar situations
- Demonstrate your understanding of How Science Works, including discussing ethics, methodology and the validity and scientific credibility of the information.
- Understand and learn a significant volume of information within a short period of time.
- Plan and conduct independent research investigations to apply the methods and techniques.

This is highly demanding and so requires considerable self-motivation as well as organisational skills to keep up with the volume and pace of work required.

Psychology is a science, and therefore one of the criteria for success is an aptitude for science. For this reason, students are expected to have gained at least a B grade in Additional Science at GCSE, along with a minimum of C grades in English and Maths. The course requires a high level of motivation and independence from the students due to its large subject content and the examinations in January of Year 12. Although a lower grade in Science is not in itself a reason for failure, some students find that they struggle with the scientific concepts involved, and this combined with a lack of motivation would be likely to limit a student's success to a C/D grade at AS. Therefore admission to the course for students who do not achieve the stated academic requirements will be at the discretion of the Head of Department.



A Year 13 student nearing the end of her course, writes:

“Having found GCSE Science one of my more challenging subjects I was unsure whether or not I would be able to cope with the demands of Psychology at A Level. However, 2 years later, I’ve found that by putting in extra effort outside my lessons, it’s perfectly possible. In my opinion, Psychology is perfect for anyone willing to take the time and effort, especially at A2, to work independently in order to broaden their knowledge and gather more information on specific topics; this is essential in order to do well. I have found that Psychology was one of my most challenging courses, particularly because of the amount there is to learn; but it’s not

simply about learning everything – you need to be able to understand it sufficiently to be able to apply it to a variety of possible questions in the exams. Nevertheless, I’ve found it an enjoyable and fascinating subject, partly because many topics can easily be applied to real life situations that you may already have experienced yourself, and therefore are able to relate to.”

Most students are fascinated by Psychology and thoroughly enjoy their studies, despite the effort involved – for a great many, it is the fact that it is so demanding that makes it so rewarding, but without the effort, it can be a hard slog!



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Studying Religious Studies at A Level encourages you to think about religion, the behaviour of people and to look beyond our own experiences in answer to ultimate questions.

We follow the OCR Religious Studies A-Level syllabus (unit 1 Philosophy of Religion and unit 2 Religious Ethics at AS level, followed by unit 1 Philosophy of Religion and unit 2 Religious Ethics at A2 level). You will sit two exams at the end of year 12 and two exams at the end of year 13 (one exam for each unit).

There is no coursework component.

What is Philosophy of Religion?

This is concerned with religious ideas and important questions. Areas that we will study include:

- Ancient Greek and Judaeo-Christian influences on Philosophy of Religion
- Traditional arguments for the existence of God
- Challenges to religious belief
- Religious language
- Religious experience
- Nature of God
- Life and death
- Miracles

What is Religious Ethics?

This is concerned with how people work out what is right and wrong. Areas that we will study include:

- Ethical theories and then applying the theories studied to ethical issues which are part of the modern world.
- Meta-ethics
- Free will and determinism
- Conscience
- Virtue ethics

You do not need to have studied Religious Studies at GCSE level, but you need to be prepared for the greater thought and analysis required. You can expect to be presented with arguments concerning specific beliefs, particularly relating to concepts of reality, God, the problem of evil and the perceived challenge brought to religion by science. You will spend time assessing the strengths and weaknesses of such arguments and be encouraged to voice your own evaluation as well as study the opinions of other thinkers to construct balanced, convincing responses to the ideas you encounter.

Girls who succeed in this subject are committed to knowing and understanding the ideas, theories and beliefs central to the course from the outset. They are prepared to spend time thinking about the impact the ideas may have on other aspects of religious belief and how they might contribute to their own study of philosophy and ethics. They are prepared to consider several viewpoints and spend time analysing the responses of key thinkers, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of contributions to the debate in each topic studied. They are also thorough in putting this knowledge, understanding and evaluation into writing, selecting the pertinent information and writing effectively within the examination setting.



Girls are expected to make independent notes throughout lessons, alongside reading set for homework and during private study. It is beneficial to the group and the individual girl to join in with class discussions and debates and be prepared enough to ask relevant questions during lessons.

An ability to apply knowledge is essential, particularly for the Religious Ethics aspect of the course. Here, girls study various ethical theories which are then applied to ethical issues, such as war and peace, abortion and genetic engineering. There are constant links to be made between topics and girls gain a lot of satisfaction can be gained from seeing study within this area develop as confidence is gained in applying the ethical theories.

You should consider your answers to the questions below in trying to decide whether or not this is the course for you.

- If you are currently taking Religious Studies for GCSE, are you aware that there is very little overlap or similarity in the GCSE courses and this A-Level course? Are you aware of the significantly greater written standard required at A Level?
- Are you interested in concepts beyond those shown to us through our senses and what other people have offered up as responses to the ultimate questions in life?
- Are you interested in learning about different opinions and analysing them constructively and critically?
- Are you prepared to read and write essays? (Remember the course is fully assessed through examinations which require essay answers).

Part of the induction week lesson is the holiday work set to be handed in prior to the start of term in September (this date will be given when the work is set). Failure to complete summer work may count against you.

Atheists, theists and agnostics alike will find plenty to think about and explore through the academic approach to this subject. You will learn how to think with reason and to justify your own point of view, not simply learn 'right' answers.

A year 13 Religious Studies student wrote:

"I studied RS for GCSE and later went on to study it for A Level. Although both courses were interesting they were very different. In the GCSE topics, we looked more at religious views towards different issues; however in A Level we focus a lot more on different philosophical and ethical ideas and theories. At A Level there is further opportunity to develop our own responses as we are evaluating the approaches of other thinkers. The course is divided equally between philosophy and ethics in both year 12 and year 13.

Although at GCSE we looked at religious beliefs as well as philosophical and ethical ideas, this was in much less depth than at A Level. I have found A Level RS very interesting, but there is definitely a big jump between GCSE and AS Level. The volume of ideas we study is greater and there is a lot more work involved. You need to be prepared to do a lot of work.

Religious Studies fits well with my other subjects; I study Psychology and I have found there are many links between the topics we study. In the A2 course I have noticed links with subjects such as Business, in ethics and Geography when we studied environmental ethics.



The topics we study are relevant to the world around us and the course has helped me have a greater understanding of ideas and concepts we encounter in many areas of our lives. It helps individuals to develop their own world view and engage debate or conversation on topical issues with a wider knowledge and informed opinion. When I spotted someone on the train reading Dawkins' 'The God Delusion' I couldn't resist starting a conversation about the ideas we had studied in class!



TEXTILES

At RMS Textiles can be studied as an AS, A2 and as an EPQ (Extended Project Qualification-The information regarding this qualification can be viewed separately).

Textiles AS and A2 Examination Board: Edexcel -Art and Design Endorsed Textiles Specification details can be viewed at <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gce/gce-leg/art/art/Pages/default.aspx>

Introduction: This course is a progression from the GCSE course. Many of the Textile techniques have been introduced at GCSE. The A' level course is designed to develop your personal ideas and enable you to work with increasing independence and creativity. An A' Level in Textiles aims to develop your practical, technical and expressive skills together with your intellectual, imaginative, creative and intuitive powers. You will also improve your aesthetic understanding, critical judgement and contextual knowledge.

List of requirements:

- Minimum Grade B at GCSE Art and Design- Textiles or Fine Art
- You will be set a research and drawing project over the summer holidays prior to commencing the AS. This will be assessed to check you are achieving the expected standard for entry into the AS Textiles course.

Skills required:

- Creativity and original design ideas are paramount.
- Ability to research a given theme.
- Ability to record and draw from observation.
- Understanding of textile techniques
- Experimental skills
- Analytical skills
- Practical skills
- Documenting skills
- Presentational skills

What will you study?

You will develop a working knowledge of materials, practices and design within textiles. You will be required to work in one or more of the following areas depending on your own interests: constructed textiles (weaving, knitting, felt making), dyed textiles (batik, tie dye, silk painting) printed textiles (screen, block, lino), fine art textiles (appliqué, machine embroidery, paper making, experimental use of techniques and materials) and fashion textiles (fashion and garment construction). Many of these areas work together. You will constantly research the work of artist, designers, textile artist, photographers, architects, historical periods and cultures to inform your studies and ideas. Observational drawing and methods of recording will also assist your design development. Sketchbooks will be used to document ideas and development.

What does the course consist of?

AS:

This is the first part of the course, usually in Year 12. You can take this on its' own or you can continue with the full A2 (4 units). (AS =50% of the A2).

The AS is made up of 2 units:



Unit 1 – Coursework = 60% of AS (30% of A2)

The course begins with an introduction into textile techniques and garment construction through a series of mini projects. The sketchbooks are continually reviewed by staff but the official submission for progress marking occurs at the end of the Michaelmas term and is finally submitted at the end of the Hilary term. This allows for modifications/ corrections before final marking and moderation.

Unit 2 – Externally Set Assignment: 40% of AS (20% of A2)

You will receive the examination paper in advance and will prepare for an 8 hour exam. This is thematic and set by the examination board.

A2:

This is the final part of the course, usually in Year 13. This is more self directed than the AS, preparing you for higher education.

Remember you go into the A2 with 50 % of the A2 completed.

The A2 is made up of a further 2 units:

Unit 3 Coursework and Personal Study (30% of A2)

This is an individual response to a set project. An accompanying personal study is an in-depth illustrated dissertation (1,500-3,000 words) which considers the work of others and relates to your own study.

Sketchbooks are continually reviewed by staff but the official submission for progress marking occurs at the end of the Michaelmas term and is finally submitted at the end of the Hilary term. This allows for modifications/ corrections before final marking and moderation.

Unit 4 Externally Set Assignment (20% of A2)

You will be given the exam paper in advance of the 12 hour exam. It will be thematic and set by the examination board.

The Exams (Externally set assignments) occur in May prior to the main examination period.

To complement the course the following are available:

- A Life drawing course is available during the Michaelmas term. (We advise this course for Foundation course entry).
- Excursions take place for each year group and a visiting practitioner (Textiles/ fashion/ costume/ artist/ designer) will lead a day workshop.
- Current excursions - *New Designers* exhibition in July (This showcases the best of students work from Textiles/ Fashion Degree courses). London museums and galleries as relevant.
- End of year summer exhibition to showcase your work. Parents and friends are invited to celebrate this in a private view evening.
- Bi annual fashion show
- Assistance with foundation portfolio presentation and interview techniques.

Expectations of Textile A Level students: It is expected that students will be able to visit exhibitions and use the textile facilities in the open sessions/ study periods. Homework will be set twice a week and deadlines must be met.

What can a Textiles A Level course lead to?

There are many careers which use textiles and fashion. They require you to continue your studies in further education on an Art Foundation course and/ or Degree course.



Further Education

Foundation courses: Many Art and Design based Degrees require you to study a year's Foundation course. Your Textiles' A Level work will form part of a portfolio presentation which is required for entry onto a foundation course. Recent past students have studied Foundation courses at Kingston, Wimbledon, Loughborough, London College of Fashion, Central St Martin's, Bucks, Birmingham and Nottingham. This has led students to enter Degree courses specifically related to the subject in costume design, textiles design and fashion design. (These Degree courses may be at a different institution to where the foundation course was studied).

Direct entry onto Degree courses: Other students use the Textiles A Level to enter directly onto Degree course in fashion design, textiles design, photography, fashion merchandising, media, advertising, architecture at universities such as Leeds, Birmingham, Nottingham Trent and Leicester.

3rd/4th A 'Level: Some students study Textiles A Level as they enjoy it and have an interest in it. They use it as their 3rd A Level or 4th AS, but they do not pursue a subject related Degree.

Is this the course for you? Answer the following questions.

1. Are you able to work to deadlines on a weekly basis?
2. Are you able to come up with original and creative ideas and work independently?
3. Are you able to take guidance on the direction of your work?
4. Are you inspired by the world around you, do you see links between things?
5. Do you like to work with colour, pattern, texture and handle materials?

If you have answered YES to these 5 questions Textiles A Level could be an option for you.

Finally some feedback/ advice from current sixth formers studying the Textiles A Level.

Girls were asked 3 questions:

1. What is the jump between GCSE and AS like in Textiles?

The thoughts were that it was not too big a leap as the same steps were followed to come up with ideas and many textile techniques had been introduced at GCSE. However, "it is more independent work and there is a greater choice in the direction of one's work" and "the expectations of dedication and the quality of the work increases".

2. What has been challenging in this A Level?

"One of the most challenging aspects is the exam paper as there is less time to prepare for this than for the coursework". Also "The dissertation is a lot of work alongside the practical work at A2". Advice was, "To complete the sections for set deadlines, so it doesn't get on top of you".

3. What benefits has the Textiles course offered you?

"The course allowed me to become more independent and focussed. I have been able to choose techniques which are appropriate for my designs rather than using specified ones". "It allowed me to develop my knowledge of textiles, encouraged me to come up with my own ideas and become more creative"

It was suggested that if you enjoyed the GCSE you will enjoy the A' level even more!

Sixth form enrichment for Textiles A' level

Visits to exhibitions at Museums and Galleries are highly recommended to give an insight into the work of others: Keep a sketchbook for these visits to note ideas, artists and keep postcards in.



Museums and Galleries in London:

1. Victoria and Albert Museum

At South Kensington Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL

V&A Museum of Childhood Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 9PA

2. Tate Britain

- British Art 1500 -1900 (Historic Art)
- British Art 1900 - 2008 (Modern and Contemporary Art)
- Turner Collection

3. Tate Modern

Modern art is considered to be from 1900 onwards.

- Level 3 (East): Material Gestures (New Painting and Sculpture 1945-1960)
- Level 3 (West): Poetry and Dream (Surrealism and Beyond)
- Level 5 (East): Idea and Object (Minimalism)
- Level 5 (West): States of Flux (Cubism, Futurism and Vorticism)
- Level 5: Conceptual Models

4. National Portrait Gallery

At: 2 Saint Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE

5. Design Museum

www.designmuseum.org Address: Shad Thames, London SE1

6. The Wallace Collection

The Wallace Collection is a national museum which displays the artworks collected in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the first four Marquesses of Hertford and Sir Richard Wallace, the son of the 4th Marquess. It was bequeathed to the nation by Sir Richard's widow, Lady Wallace, in 1897. The paintings include Hals *The Laughing Cavalier* and artworks by Titian, Rembrandt, and Velázquez, as well as medieval and Renaissance objects, including glass and bronzes, as well as an array of princely arms and armour in Britain, featuring both European and Oriental objects.

Address: Hertford House, Manchester Square, London, W1U 3BN

Nearest Tube Stations: Bond Street, Baker Street, Oxford Circus

Magazines:

Vogue

Elle Decoration

Selvedge

Other magazines are kept in the Resource Centre and are a good way to keep informed about developments in the subject.

Books:

Many are updated and current in the Resource Centre. Look at a range of visual imagery to stimulate your ideas, presentation etc.