



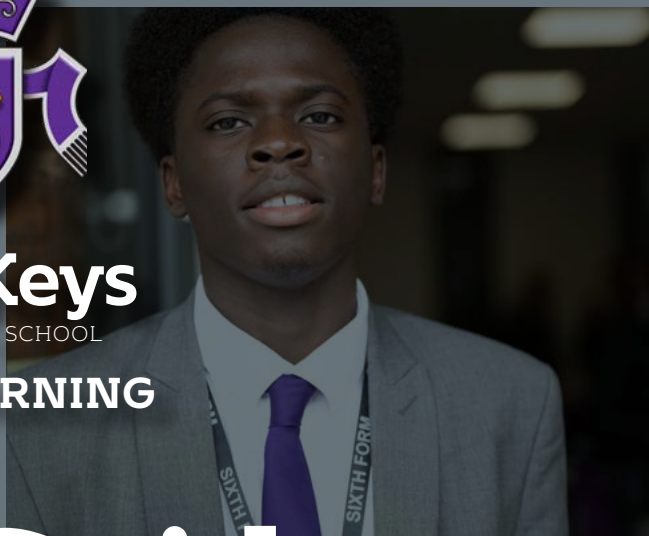
The Sixth Form@



Becket Keys

CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

FAITH IN LEARNING



Course Guide

2025 ADMISSIONS

R E T

RUSSELL EDUCATION TRUST



Make history by being part of the Sixth Form at Becket Keys as you start your personal voyage to higher education or the world of work. You will help to shape our Sixth Form and set the standards by which others will be measured, leading the school by your example.

Life in Becket Keys Sixth Form is built around some key principles:

- Academic success founded from a strong work ethic and supported by specialist teaching, structured small group learning and individual hard work.
- 'Faith in Learning' - our view that a great education includes spiritual development.
- Opportunities for extra-curricular and super-curricular activities and volunteering in the community.
- Students being equipped with the metacognitive tools to succeed in their studies whilst enjoying their time in the Sixth Form community.

We will provide you with the perfect environment in the Sixth Form area. There is a room for group study and one for individual silent study, as well as a Deli bar and a garden, with decking, where you can relax and enjoy the company of your peers. Sixth Formers also have their own computer room, plus have access to WiFi all over the school.

Your time with Becket Keys starts by looking at our course information to select the best courses for your talents. We then have specialist Sixth Form advisers to help you make sure your choices will take you where you want to go. We also organise bridging experiences before and after GCSE exams; we strongly encourage you to attend these.

More information can be found at www.becketkeys.org/sixth-form, including the online application form, or you can call 01277 286600 to speak to one of the Sixth Form team.

Course Guide

The courses we are offering next year are:

Subject	Level	Awarding Body	Specification Code
Art and Design: Fine Art	A Level	AQA	7202
Art and Design: Textile Design	A Level	AQA	7204
Biology	A Level	OCR	H420 A
Business	A Level	Edexcel	9BS0
Chemistry	A Level	OCR	H432 A
Computer Science	A Level	OCR	H446
Design and Technology	A Level	AQA	7552
Drama and Theatre	A Level	Edexcel	9DR0
Economics	A Level	Edexcel	9ECO
English Literature	A Level	Edexcel	9ET0
Further Maths	A Level	Edexcel	9FM0 H0
Geography	A Level	AQA	7037
History	A Level	AQA	7042 CN
Mandarin	A Level	Edexcel	9CN0 M
Maths	A Level	Edexcel	9MA0
Media Studies	A Level	WJEC Eduqas	A680 QS
Music	A Level	OCR	H543 B
PE	A Level	AQA	7582
Physics	A Level	OCR	H556 A
Politics	A Level	Edexcel	9PL0 A
Psychology	A Level	AQA	7182
Religion and Philosophy	A Level	AQA	7062 B
Sociology	A Level	OCR	H580
Spanish	A Level	Edexcel	9SP0 A

Additional Courses:

Core Maths	Level 3	AQA	1350
Extended Project (EPQ)	Level 3	AQA	7993
Food Science and Nutrition	Level 3	WJEC	Certificate - 4563 QC Diploma - 4563 QD

General Entry

Requirements

All students applying for a place at Becket Keys Church of England School should have a strong work ethic, high levels of academic interest and high expectations.

The Sixth Form is academic in nature and hence has high entry requirements.

Students must be in sympathy with the Christian ethos of the school and be prepared to give time to serve the school community.

Admission into the Sixth Form is open to students gaining a minimum entry qualification of at least eight 9-4 grades at GCSE (including English and mathematics at Grade 5).

All students, internal and external, will be admitted onto three A Level programmes of study if they meet the entry requirements including the subject specific entry requirements for each subject. If a student studies a fourth subject, this is usually because it is further mathematics (although this can also be a student's third subject out of three).

We will consider students studying four subjects on a case by case basis.

Art and Design: Fine Art

"Practising an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow." Kurt Vonnegut

Why should I study fine art?

Part of the joy of a school art course is that you don't just study art: you make it. Those who are skillful, driven and passionate – and produce high quality, emotive work – are in a position to achieve recognition. The rapid increase of multi-media forms has changed and enriched the creative process and made it more accessible, dynamic and challenging. A Level fine art will provide you with the opportunity to develop personal responses to ideas, observations, experiences, environments and cultures in practical, critical and contextual forms. Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving skills, lateral thinking, complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing will always have an advantage.

What does the course look like?

Component 1: Portfolio worth 60% of the qualification [96 marks].

Students produce a portfolio of independent work. There is no time limit.

Component 2: Externally set assignment worth 40% of the qualification [96 marks]. Students respond to an externally set assignment. There is a preparatory period followed by a fifteen hour supervised practical exam across three days..

How will I learn?

Through an interactive workshop and studio environment, there will be the opportunity to build upon existing techniques and experiment with a wide range of traditional and new media. Outside of the classroom there will be excursions to experience first hand; through drawing and photography, participation in life-drawing classes and visits to amazing exhibitions.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Please note that applications for art colleges and universities in this field are different to the standard application. Students will need to keep an up to date portfolio of their work in to present at interview. The art department will support this through extra-curricular portfolio development sessions. Art continues to be a desirable option for those wishing to pursue 'traditional' creative careers, such as architecture, interior design or painting/fine art related professions. In addition, the internet has seen an explosion of exciting new roles emerge, with a surge in demand for multimedia artists, animators, and illustrators who know how to use technology to create things of beauty. London is a city with a keenly developed artistic sensibility, from Aardman to Elly Smallwood and tapping into this rich cultural heritage is a key part of the A Level course. A qualification in fine art is vital for all facets of the fashion, art and design industry.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 5 in art. If GCSE art has not been taken, students will be expected to provide a sketchbook and final outcome which addresses the assessment objectives. This would include showing an ability to apply theory, reflect on their development and use different approaches/materials. Due to the nature of this alternative method of entry, it is recommended that enquiries are made early.

Art and Design: Textiles

"Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful." William Morris

Why should I study textiles?

You love textiles. From clothes to curtains and from upholstery to bedding, there's something about the look and feel of textiles that appeals to you. Now you are thinking about possible careers in fashion or textiles. Perhaps you'd love to see your unique designs woven into the fabric of life. Or maybe you'd like to influence society or contribute to the world around you as an interior designer or clothes designer. Whatever your relationship with textiles, this exciting and challenging course will help you understand more about textiles than you ever thought possible. The textiles and fashion industry is huge in the UK and as the rest of the world looks to us for inspiration, there has never been a more exciting time to get involved. So, if you enjoy coming up with fantastic designs and enjoy experimenting with different decorative and construction techniques and would love to bring your designs to life by creating fashion garments, textile products or textile art, then this course is for you.

What does the course look like?

Component 1: Portfolio worth 60% of the qualification [96 marks]

Students produce a portfolio of independent work. There is no time limit.

Component 2: Externally set assignment worth 40% of the qualification [96 marks] Students respond to an externally set assignment. There is a preparatory period followed by a 15 hour supervised practical exam.

How will I learn?

Students can choose from a wide range of areas to specialise in including fashion design and textiles; costume design; printed and/or dyed textiles; domestic textiles and wallpaper and interior design. Students will be able to attend workshops where the teacher will use their expertise to guide them through a particular technique or process and they can learn about printing, embroidery, appliqué, dyeing, silk screen, batik, stencilling, needle felting, weaving, distressed textiles as well as many more. Students will then have the opportunity to experiment with these for themselves during independent study lessons. Students will also benefit from being offered the chance to attend a trip to the Victoria & Albert Museum in London (V&A) or the Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture (MODA) at Middlesex University. The V&A offers a huge wealth of inspiration to students and MODA shows students how their designs could be used in everyday life from wallpaper to furnishing fabrics.

What kind of things might it lead to?

An A Level course in textile design would equip you with the skills you need to apply to university as well as allow you the time and space to build up a portfolio of work which you would need to show at university interviews. London is a world leader in design and being so close to London allows you to be at the very heart of the textiles and fashion industry.

You could explore a career as:

- a trend forecaster, deciding on the styles we will follow in the future.
- a buyer who travels to exotic places around the world collecting textiles from different cultures.
- a designer who loves the limelight of having models show off your designs on the catwalk.
- a costume or set designer, having your name up on the screen at the end of movies

Clearly, with these examples, you can be sure of that there are hundreds of creative opportunities in the exciting and vibrant world of fashion and textiles!

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 5 in textiles. If GCSE textiles has not been taken, students will be expected to provide a sketchbook and final outcome which addresses the assessment objectives. This would include showing an ability to apply theory, reflect on their development and use different approaches/materials. Due to the nature of this alternative method of entry, it is recommended that enquiries are made early.

A Level Courses

Biology

"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." Charles Darwin

Why should I study biology?

Biologists are scientists who study the natural world and all the living things in it, from the largest mammals down to our very own microscopic DNA. They try to understand how animals and organisms work, how we evolved and the things that can make us sick or improve our health. Biologists use this knowledge to do things like try to stop the spread of disease, track down natural resources, improve public health, animal care and conservation and work out the true impacts of things like pollution. Biology helps you to build up research, problem solving, organisation and analytical skills.

What does the course look like?

Content is split into six teaching modules:

Module 1 Development of practical skills in biology

Module 2 Foundations in biology

Module 3 Exchange and transport

Module 4 Biodiversity, evolution and disease

Module 5 Communication, homeostasis and energy

Module 6 Genetics, evolution and ecosystems.

Assessment Overview:

- Biological processes (01) - 2 hour 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level)
- Biological diversity (02) - 2 hour 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level)
- Unified biology (03) - 1 hour 30 minutes written paper (26% of total A Level)
- Practical endorsement in biology (04) - Non-exam assessment - (reported separately).

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, including practical work, interactive classroom study, group tasks, private study and lab based practical activities. Outside of lessons there are opportunities to visit university labs and undertake fieldwork.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Biology is a key subject for lots of STEM careers, particularly in healthcare, medicine and jobs involving plants or animals. The list is long and includes nursing, dentistry, forensic science, psychology, physiotherapy, botany, environmental science, zoology, geology, oceanography, pharmaceuticals, energy, teaching, science writing, genetics and research. A number of sports related courses such as physiotherapy and sports therapy may also require biology.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in biology or Grade 7-7 in double science and Grade 6 in mathematics.

Business

"There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down, simply by spending his money somewhere else."

Sam Walton

Why should I study business?

Business is a subject that is relevant to all of us as we spend much of our lives dealing with businesses, either as employees or potential customers. Gaining an understanding of how businesses operate will also help equip you for a wide range of careers and for some, will develop your ability to run your own business. Learning about the environment in which businesses operate helps all of us understand and deal with the social, legal, economic, political and technological factors that affect our lives.

What does the course look like?

You will study four themes and will sit three exams at the end of your course:

- Paper 1 is focused on marketing and people (Theme 1) and global business (Theme 4)
- Paper 2 is focused on managing business activities (Theme 2) and business decisions and strategy (Theme 3)
- Paper 3 is a synoptic paper where students will be expected to make connections across all four themes, as well as study a pre-released text.

How will I learn?

Students will be taught through a range of techniques from flipped-learning and case studies to group work, and presentations. You will be encouraged to keep up to date with current business headlines as it will help you to put your learning in context.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Career Paths:

- Finance and accounts
- Marketing
- Retail management
- Human resource management
- Financial services such as banking and insurance
- Event management
- Business consultancy.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in mathematics and Grade 5 in English language.

You cannot take business and economics.

Chemistry

"Every aspect of the world today – even politics and international relations – is affected by chemistry."

Linus Pauling

Why should I study chemistry?

Chemists use their experiments and knowledge to develop medicines, foods, fabrics and other materials, from neon lights to shatterproof glass. They also use it to understand the world around us, from why leaves change colour to discovering invisible pollutants in the air. Chemistry is sometimes known as the 'central science' because it helps to connect physical sciences, like mathematics and physics, with applied sciences, like biology, medicine and engineering. Chemistry helps you to develop research, problem solving and analytical skills. It helps you to challenge ideas and show how you worked things out through logic and step-by-step reasoning. Chemistry often requires teamwork and communication skills too, which is great for project management.

What does the course look like?

Content is split into six teaching modules:

- Module 1** Development of practical skills in chemistry
- Module 2** Foundations in chemistry
- Module 3** Periodic table and energy
- Module 4** Core organic chemistry
- Module 5** Physical chemistry and transition elements
- Module 6** Organic chemistry and analysis.

Assessment overview:

- Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry (01) - 2 hours 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level)
- Synthesis and analytical techniques (02) - 2 hours 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level)
- Unified chemistry (03) - 1 hour 30 minutes written paper (26% of total A Level)
- Practical endorsement in chemistry (04) - Non-exam assessment - (reported separately).

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, including practical work, interactive classroom study, group tasks, private study and lab based practical activities.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Doing an A Level in chemistry can open many doors for you in the future. It is seen as a challenging, academic and rigorous A Level that will impress a lot of universities and employers. It can lead to many careers in healthcare such as medicine, pharmacy and dentistry, the biological sciences, physics, mathematics, pharmacology and analytical chemistry. Many law applicants also take chemistry as it shows potential employers that you can cope with difficult concepts. You need chemistry to study veterinary medicine or medicine - universities usually ask for an A.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in chemistry or Grade 7-7 in double science and Grade 6 in mathematics.

Computer Science

"What a computer is to me is the most remarkable tool that we have ever come up with. It's the equivalent of a bicycle for our minds." *Steve Jobs*

Why should I study computer science?

According to MIT, 'we are heading towards a period of exponential change and unprecedented technological development'. Oxford University research suggests that high-earning jobs in the white-collar sector are five times more likely to be automated in the next twenty years. Indeed, it is estimated that two thirds of the current generation of students will be employed in careers that do not exist yet.

A high-quality computer science education equips students to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computational thinking is the essential skill for solving problems, designing systems and learning about human behaviour in the modern world. Computer science will appeal to students who already spend hours of time on coding and/or who have undertaken a great deal of independent study to develop their programming skills. It is also highly desirable for anyone aiming towards further studies or careers in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), artificial intelligence, cyber-security and networking.

What does the course look like?

80% examination:

- Computer Systems: characteristics of contemporary systems architecture; software and software development; exchanging data; data types, representation and structures; legal, moral, ethical and cultural issues.
- Algorithms & Problem Solving: elements of computational thinking; problem solving and programming; algorithms.

20% non-examined assessment:

- Programming Project: set your own brief; analysis of the problem; design of the solution; implementation of the solution; evaluation.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches, including interactive classroom study, individual tutorials and group tasks. There will be a focus on programming, which emphasises the importance of computational thinking as a discipline that will require significant independent and/or private study and research. By putting computational thinking at the core of your study, you will develop the skills to solve problems, design systems and understand human and machine intelligence. There will be exciting opportunities to apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems with a variety of programming challenges.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Computer science is a core subject, welcomed by universities and employers. Whether you choose computer science, engineering or a traditional science, you will find that computational thinking is a vital skill. It shows that you are capable of intense analytical thought that allows you to deconstruct problems before writing algorithmic solutions and finally evaluating your solution. It provides access to a wide and disparate range of degree courses.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in computer science and a Grade 6 in mathematics. Students who have not taken GCSE computer science must pass our aptitude test instead; this will take place during the Sixth Form Bridging Event in June (details communicated nearer the time).

A Level Courses

Design and Technology Drama and Theatre

"Manufacturing is more than just putting parts together. It's coming up with ideas, testing principles and perfecting the engineering, as well as final assembly." James Dyson

"Act well your part; there all the honour lies."
Alexander Pope

Why should I study design and technology?

Design and technology involves the creation of new objects and items that shape our environment. From simple aesthetic forms to complex architectural shapes, design and technology involves both form and function - what the object looks like and what it does. It is an increasingly digital and multi-skilled subject, requiring a degree of proficiency in a range of multi-media, as well as traditional skills of making. As such, design and technology is perfect for those who want to combine theory and practical activities. It is for students who enjoy exploring new and innovative techniques in design and creating objects that have a positive effect on people's lives. Design and technology offers an opportunity to develop the key skills required within the design industry. It allows you to focus on a range of specialisms, mixing contemporary and traditional approaches to manufacture, whilst learning about the complex relationships between designs, materials, manufacturing and marketing. There are various specialisms involved, including textiles, graphics and resistant materials. Studying design and technology is an ideal course for anyone with flair and creativity and a passion for the way things are made, from initial concept to final product. It enables you to explore new technologies while understanding design movements of the past, from arts and crafts to Bauhaus and post-modernism.

What does the course look like?

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

Subject content:

Paper 1 - core technical principles and core designing and making principles

Paper 2 - specialist knowledge, technical and designing and making principles.

Non-exam assessment - practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles and specialist knowledge.

Assessment overview:

- Paper 1 - written exam: 2½ hours, 30% of A Level
- Paper 2 - Written exam: 1½ hours, 20% of A Level
- Non-exam assessment -substantial design and make task: suggested 45 hours 50% of A Level.

How will I learn?

You will build upon knowledge from GCSE in an interactive workshop and studio environment where there will be the opportunity to build upon existing techniques and experiment with a wide range of traditional and new material.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The world of product design is an ever-changing environment with exciting and innovative possibilities. By studying this course you will be developing your problem solving skills, logical judgment and awareness of the world we live in. It offers a pathway into a broad range of creative and diverse degree courses, including product design, architecture, engineering, graphic design, jewellery design, set design, product designer, architect, engineer, games designer, graphic designer and robotics engineer.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 5 in product design and a Grade 5 in mathematics. If GCSE product design has not been taken, students will be expected to successfully complete a design task involving research, design development, final design proposal and an evaluation. These students will also need to give a presentation to the Head of Design and Technology outlining their practical skills, passion and experience. Due to the nature of these alternative entry requirements, it is recommended that enquiries are made at an early stage.

Why should I study drama and theatre?

Shakespeare once wrote 'All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players' This course allows you to both examine the stage from behind the scenes and take a prominent role as a performer. If you have a passion for performing, watching, reading and directing plays then this is the course for you. Students have the opportunity to take a leading role in the school's annual musical and support younger students in their clubs and societies. This course combines the activities of exploring plays, creating theatre, the performing of plays, the analysis of theatre and the critical evaluation of all of these elements. Students completing the course successfully will have a thorough understanding of drama and theatre, highly-toned analytical and creative skills and an ability to communicate effectively with others.

What does the course look like?

Component 1: Devising 40%

Component 2: Text in Performance 20%

Component 3: Theatre makers in practice 40%.

How will I learn?

Component 1: Students will work in groups to devise an original performance piece. They will use one key extract from a performance text and a theatre practitioner as a stimulus to build their piece around. Students will provide a written portfolio or verbal evidence detailing the process they have undertaken to create their piece.

Component 2: Students will participate in two performances: a group performance of one key extract from a performance text and a monologue or duologue performance from one key extract from a text.

Component 3: For the written exam, students are required to write a live theatre evaluation on a production they have seen. They are also required to demonstrate how they would perform and direct an extract from a text they have studied.

Additionally, students will have to write about their practical exploration and interpretation of another complete performance text, in light of a chosen practitioner: focusing on how this text could be re-imagined for a contemporary audience.

What kind of things might it lead to?

A Level drama and theatre is useful for students considering higher education in any arts or humanities subject including English language and literature, journalism, dance, music, art and design and media studies. Career opportunities for students who study A Level drama and theatre include arts/theatre administration, arts journalism, director, actor, designer, playwright, stage management, theatre management, theatrical agent, technician, broadcasting, media presenting, education, drama therapy and scriptwriting.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in drama and a Grade 5 in either English literature or English language. If drama has not been taken at GCSE, students will need to provide evidence of being involved in a theatre group in or out of school, give a presentation showing their knowledge of various theatrical elements and successfully complete an audition. Due to the nature of these alternative entry requirements, it is recommended that enquiries are made at an early stage.

Economics

"No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable." Adam Smith

Why should I study economics?

Economics is about choice and the impact of our choices on each other. It relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals or families to the structures created by governments and firms. A Level economics helps students develop an interest and enthusiasm for economics and its contribution to the wider political and social environment. It requires the careful application of knowledge in a range of contexts and the development of an enquiring, critical and thoughtful 'economist's mind'. The course provides opportunities to practise skills, qualities and attitudes which will equip students for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult and working life. This includes developing an understanding of current economic issues, problems and institutions that affect and shape our environment. In subject specific terms, students will apply economic concepts and theories in a range of contexts and appreciate their value and limitations in explaining real world events. This includes analysing, explaining and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the market economy and the role of government within it.

What does the course look like?

You will study four themes and will sit three exams at the end of your course:

Paper 1 is focused on microeconomics and includes the study of markets (Theme 1) and business behaviour (Theme 3).

Paper 2 is focused on macroeconomics and includes the study of the national economy (Theme 2) and the global economy (Theme 4). (Theme 2) and competing in the global economy (Theme 3).

Paper 3 is a synoptic paper where students will be expected to make connections across all four themes.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, from interactive classroom study and group tasks to private study and research. Almost all daily news headlines, for example, have an economic theme if you look closely. You will be encouraged to research such topics using journals, newspapers, websites and other resources. Discussion and debate are an important element of lesson activity as they develop your evaluation and judgement skills.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Economics is well regarded as a rigorous A Level and fully prepares you for university and the world of work: You will have developed data-handling and writing skills which are transferable to both university and employment. You might want to study a degree in economics, business economics, international business, marketing and business management. You might progress to a wide range of sectors including finance, education, law, business, journalism and the public sector.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in mathematics, Grade 5 in English language and Grade 5 in geography, history or religion and philosophy. You cannot take economics and business.

English Literature

"It is what you read when you don't have to that determines what you will be when you can't help it."
Oscar Wilde

Why should I study English literature?

English literature is without doubt the premier written A Level subject and sits alongside further mathematics in terms of its credibility. No other subject compares to literature in terms of developing your skills of interpretation, analysis and evaluation. Literature teaches us about ourselves and our place in the universe, time and space and everything in between. Studying literature is perfect for anyone with a passion for reading literary texts from any era or movement. It allows you to develop your understanding of the intricacies of language and identify waves of meaning, both above and below the surface. You will develop a wider appreciation of the importance of context, exploring the factors that shape a text, whether that is when it was written or why, or how diverse eras have interpreted the same text differently. You will be able to engage in dynamic class discussions, learning to explore through debate and critical questioning.

What does the course look like?

Shakespeare, drama and poetry pre-1900

Drama, poetry and prose post-1900

Comparative and contextual study

Literature post-1900 coursework

A selection of texts in preparation for coursework

Critical reading to support analysis of main texts.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, including interactive classroom study, lectures, group tasks, private study and research. Outside of lessons there are opportunities to visit the theatre and make use of the huge variety of other enrichment activities offered within London.

What kind of things might it lead to?

As a facilitating subject, English literature is welcomed by universities and employers. It shows that you are reflective, considerate and capable of intense analytical thought. It provides access to a wide range of degree courses. It is also useful in applying to enter the world of media and journalism, or other interpretative or creative fields.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in both English language and English literature.

A Level Courses

Further Mathematics

Geography

"Pure Mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical ideas." Albert Einstein

"Geography students hold the key to the world's problems." Michael Palin

Why should I study further mathematics?

Further mathematics is taken in addition to A Level mathematics and together they provide the prestigious combination that the best universities will be looking for. This really is the gold plated course for ambitious and talented mathematicians on which to thrive. It enables enthusiastic mathematicians to broaden and deepen their subject knowledge through studying additional, more challenging topics in pure mathematics as well as a wider range of topics in applied mathematics. Further mathematics is suitable for students who are thinking of studying for a mathematics, engineering, physics or similar degree. It is also for those students who love mathematics and want to devote more time to the studying wider aspects of the subject.

What does the course look like?

Year 12: Decision mathematics and further pure mathematics 1.

Year 13: Further pure mathematics 2 • Further mechanics.

Assessment is entirely through terminal examinations, with four 1½ hour exams at the end of Year 13.

NB. Students will require specific graphic calculators which cost around £100 each.

How will I learn?

You will develop your understanding through a range of methods, including modelling, application, discussion and presentation. Independent study is a vital part of this development where you apply new techniques and ensure a deep understanding. A number of web based platforms will be available to support your mathematical development.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Mathematics underpins most of science, technology and engineering and is also important in areas as diverse as business, law, nutrition, sports science and psychology. There are many opportunities to use mathematics to make a difference in society, for example through the analysis involved in medical research, developing new technology, modelling epidemics or in the study of patterns of criminal activity to identify trends. Examples include finance and banking, operational research, computer game design, engineering, health, education, teaching, accounting, aerospace and defence, environmental industry, pharmaceutical industry, healthcare, food and drink industry, bio science and medicine.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 8 in mathematics. You must be taking A Level mathematics.

Why should I study geography?

Geography has the advantage of having wide appeal to universities and this allows it to be combined successfully with most other A Level subjects. Students can enjoy the extremely varied content of the course and develop a wide range of skills and knowledge that will serve them well at university and in the world of work. Your A Level geography course gives you a strong foundation for understanding the two main themes of the subject: human geography and physical geography. Between them, they're what makes our planet tick. It's not all theory either - you'll get the opportunity to visit places of geographic interest and roll up your sleeves with some fieldwork.

What does the course look like?

Section A: Physical geography exam (40%) including topics such as water and carbon cycles, hot desert environments, coastal systems and landscapes.

Section B: Human geography exam (40%) including topics such as global systems and governance, changing places, population and the environment.

Section C: Geographical investigation of 3,000–4,000 words (20%).

Students complete an individual investigation which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question or issue defined and developed by the student relating to any part of the specification content - the student largely has freedom to choose. Provided a suitable fieldwork location is available, it is likely that a residential trip will be organised in Year 13 to facilitate this. NB. There will be an additional cost for the trip. This will be communicated to parents during Year 12 so plans for payment can be made.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, from interactive classroom study to lectures and from group tasks to private study and research. Being outside the classroom is an integral part to the study of geography, and there will be a number of trips and visits to important geographical sites, such as the Jurassic coast.

What kind of things might it lead to?

If you specialise in geography at university (or use your geography A Level as a stepping stone to study geology or archaeology at university) you could find yourself doing things like charting oil wells or exploring rock formations throughout the world. Geography is about the interaction between people and our planet, making this fascinating subject valid for a number of different career paths, like advertising, oceanography, international relations, environmental management, law or social services. Ultimately, geography can lead you anywhere on earth.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in geography or Grade 7 in history or religion and philosophy and Grade 5 in English language.

History

"The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future." Theodore Roosevelt

Why should I study history?

Everyone remembers where they were when key events occurred in history, such as Kennedy's assassination, the moon landings, Diana's death and 9/11.

The human race is continually making history and trying to avoid the errors of the past. History is relevant today as it helps you make sense of the world in which we live. In addition to content, you will learn essential transferable skills such as analysis, evaluation, interpretation, discussion, debating and presenting. History is widely regarded as a strong qualification for a broad range of higher education and career choices.

History is ideal for students who:

- Have an interest in the way the world has developed through the ages.
- Enjoy investigation and discovery.
- Enjoy debate and putting forward a well-argued case.
- Wish to improve their analytical skills.
- Want to study a subject which encourages them to consider evidence and make up their own minds.
- Want to keep their options open.

What does the course look like?

Unit 1C: The Tudors: England, 1485-1603

Unit 2N: Revolution and Dictatorship: Russia 1917-1953

Non-examined assessment: Ireland 1768-1916..

How will I learn?

History will be taught in a variety of ways. Students are expected to have completed reading on topics prior to the lesson. In addition to this, students will learn through DVDs, ICT, debates, essay writing, independent research and guided reading. There will be opportunities to deepen learning outside of the lesson. There will be visits to local universities and London to develop understanding of international relations.

What kind of things might it lead to?

History combines well with a number of other subjects and is well regarded both by universities and employers as a qualification for a wide range of courses in politics, economics, English, languages, art history, law, archaeology, philosophy, sociology and theology. It is ideal preparation for a career in any of those areas and a plethora of others, including journalism.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in history or Grade 7 in religion and philosophy and Grade 6 in English language or English literature.

Mandarin

"Learning without thought is labour lost." Confucius

Why should I study Mandarin?

In the wake of China's rise, the significance of this country and Chinese-speaking people in the wider world are inarguably greater than ever before. The study of Mandarin is, therefore, an excellent complement for pupils who can see themselves one day working in a global context as the language can be useful in such areas as business, politics, finance, the law and education. Students of Mandarin will develop an understanding of the language in a variety of contexts, and learn to communicate confidently, clearly and effectively. They'll also develop an awareness and understanding of the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of the countries or communities where Mandarin is spoken.

What does the course look like?

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese has been developed to inspire all students who have an appreciation of the language, literature, film and culture of the Chinese-speaking world. This A level course covers four inspiring and engaging themes:

Theme 1 – Changes in contemporary Chinese society,

Theme 2 – Chinese culture,

Theme 3 – Evolving Chinese society,

Theme 4 – post-1978 China on the world stage.

There is no formal assessment in Year 12.

The qualification comprises the following three papers all taken in the summer of Year 13:

Paper 1 – Listening, reading and translation (40%),

Paper 2 – Written response to works and translation (30%)

Paper 3 – Speaking (30%).

The assessment will be available in traditional and simplified characters, but we will use simplified characters in the lessons. Paper 3 has options of spoken Mandarin and spoken Cantonese, but we will focus on Mandarin on the course.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, interactive classroom study, group tasks, private study and research. Pupils also study popular literary texts and films, about which they are required to write a response..

What kind of things might it lead to?

Mandarin can lead to many different career opportunities – it is not just about teaching and translating. Given the continued growth of China's economy, Mandarin is also an excellent choice for pupils interested in fields such as business finance and law. Additionally, the language is playing an increasingly important role in education, academia and politics. It also shows universities and employers that you are prepared to work hard and motivated to learn a language and culture in depth. You would be showcasing a lot of other skills, such as independent thinking, the ability to verbalise ideas and form arguments.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 7 in Mandarin and Grade 6 in English language.

A Level Courses

Mathematics

"It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems for longer." Albert Einstein

Why should I study mathematics?

Mathematics is everywhere from the patterns on a butterfly's wings to the trajectory of a rugby conversion. Mathematics helps us make sense of these patterns and obtain greater structure and predictability in life. Mathematics helps us price things, build websites, create graphics and design skyscrapers. A Level mathematics develops key employability skills such as problem-solving, logical reasoning, communication and resilience; it is a vital qualification for numerous high paid jobs that play an important role in the British economy. In terms of future prospects and university entrance, this may well be the most valuable of all the A Levels you can study. Mathematics at A Level builds on work encountered at GCSE, but also involves many new ideas. If you enjoy mathematics, have a strong work ethic and relish the challenge of problem solving, then this is the course for you.

What does the course look like?

Pure Mathematics: Pure 1 and Pure 2 include familiar topics such as algebra and functions, and coordinate geometry. New topics include sequences and series, a wider view of trigonometry, numerical methods, logarithms and differentiation and integration, together known as calculus.

Applied Mathematics: Statistics involves statistical sampling, data presentation and probability, all of which follow on from topics met at GCSE, leading to the study of statistical distributions with special properties. Mechanics includes the mathematics used to study the physical world, modelling the motion of objects and the forces acting on them. Topics include kinematics, moments, forces and Newton's laws.

Each of the three units, Pure 1, Pure 2 and Applied, are assessed through a 2 hour examination taken at the end of the course. The three examinations are equally weighted.

NB. Students will require specific calculators which cost around £35 each.

How will I learn?

You will learn through a variety of techniques, including modelling of new ideas, exploring different ways to solve problems and presenting your solutions to your peers. Investing time in solving problems independently is critical to developing your mathematical ability. You will have the opportunity to participate in UKMT National Challenge competitions and attend universities with a STEM focus.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The skills developed through the study of mathematics are in high demand from employers. In addition to developing the ability to solve problems and think logically, the study of mathematics provides opportunities to develop team working skills, resilience, effective communication of complex ideas and the ability to use your own initiative. The vast range of degree courses and careers that require solid mathematical skills ensures that taking mathematics to A Level or beyond will open doors to a world of opportunities!

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 7 in mathematics.

Media Studies

"Whoever controls the media, controls the mind." Jim Morrison

Why should I study media?

Media studies will equip you with the communication and technology skills needed to succeed in the modern workplace, whether in the media industry or not. It is like history, because the media interpret the past to show us what has gone into making us the way we are; it is like literature, because studying it requires us to learn and use critical thinking skills; it is like business, because the media are major industries and are inextricably involved in commerce; it is like philosophy, because the media interpret our world, its values and ideas to us; it is like psychology, because the media helps us (mis)understand ourselves and others; it like politics, because the media bring us political and ideological messages all the time – yes, all the time!

What does the course look like?

Component 1: Media Products, Industries and Audiences Written examination: 2 hours 15 minutes 35% of qualification

Component 2: Media Forms and Products in Depth Written examination: 2½ hours 35% of qualification

Component 3: Cross-Media Production Non exam assessment: 30% of qualification

How will I learn?

Students of media studies will:

- demonstrate skills of enquiry, critical thinking, decision-making and analysis
- demonstrate a critical approach to media issues
- demonstrate appreciation and critical understanding of the media and their role both historically and currently in society, culture, politics and the economy
- develop an understanding of the dynamic and changing relationships between media forms, products, industries and audiences
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the global nature of the media
- apply theoretical knowledge and specialist subject specific terminology to analyse and compare media products and the contexts in which they are produced and consumed
- make informed arguments, reach substantiated judgements and draw conclusions about media issues
- engage in critical debate about academic theories used in Media studies
- appreciate how theoretical understanding supports practice and practice supports theoretical understanding
- demonstrate sophisticated practical skills by providing opportunities for creative media production.

What kind of things might it lead to?

A Level media studies will help you if you would like to further your education by studying different forms of media at university – whether it be undertaking a practical production course or pursuing a journalistic route. It will benefit you when applying for apprenticeships in the media, giving you invaluable experience of researching, planning and producing your own media products. The media industries employ large numbers of people worldwide and generate significant global profit. The globalised nature of the contemporary media, ongoing technological developments and more opportunities to interact with the media suggest their centrality in contemporary life can only increase.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 5 in both English language and English literature.

Music

"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything." Plato

Why should I study music?

Music is the only option that covers all subjects in one place. The history of music, the geography of different types of world music, the science of sound, the literary study of poetry and song, the mathematics of rhythm and metre. The cross-curricular learning is extensive. Ultimately, the study of Music creates a well-rounded foundation for later life and education. Students who are passionate about music gain the opportunity to extend their performance and composition skills whilst developing their all-round musicianship.

What does the course look like?

Performance (35%) 10-15 minute solo recital in Year 13.

Composition (25%) Compose two pieces, one from a brief and a free composition

Appraising and listening (40%) Learners will study at least four areas from a choice of six. Through the investigation and in-depth study of the large variety of music contained in the six areas of study set for A Level Music, learners will further develop their knowledge and understanding of:

- the musical elements and their interdependence
- musical contexts
- musical language.

All units are marked externally. Performance and composition are coursework elements and allow students to improve their grade throughout the course.

How will I learn?

Students will learn through numerous performance opportunities, listening and analysing musical works, and through creative composition tasks. During the course there will be numerous opportunities to take part in workshops with professional musicians, and they will be exposed to a wide range of musical genres.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Many students who complete the full A Level go on to further education to continue studying music. Research shows that music graduates are employed across a varied range of fields. As you might expect, a large proportion (50%) work in the creative industry, but the roles performed by graduates vary greatly. Music graduates work in publishing, editing, media production, broadcasting, and marketing. A number work with professional ensembles, but not all are performing as musicians – many work in management roles. For those who want to choose music as a second or third option, the course is designed to enhance skills that define employability: self-management, discipline, team work, problem solving, communication, numeracy and ICT skills. Music students develop all of these making them among the most employable of all. Many employers look for something different on a CV and an A Level in music definitely gives students an edge.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in music. If a student has not taken GCSE music, Grade 5 ABRSM or equivalent in performance and Grade 4 ABRSM in theory are required. Students who do not have high level performance skills will not be eligible for A Level music.

Physical Education

"It's a lack of faith that makes people afraid of meeting challenges, and I believed in myself." Muhammad Ali

Why should I study physical education?

Sport is no longer decided by the people with the most talent or the people who train the hardest. Sport is now about 'marginal gains' from the diet of athletes to their kit and equipment, altitude training and preparation; no detail is left unexamined in the pursuit of excellence. With this in mind this course provides the perfect stepping stone to the world of 'sport science'. A Level physical education builds on students' experience from Key Stage 4 and GCSE to enhance their knowledge and increase their understanding of the factors that affect performance and participation. The content addresses contemporary topics in sport, such as the impact in the use of ergogenic aids, technology and the increasing commercialisation of sport.

What does the course look like?

Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport

Content: Applied anatomy and physiology, skill acquisition and sport and society

Written exam: 2 hours 35% of A Level

Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport

Content: exercise physiology & biomechanics, sports psychology, sport & society and technology in sport

Written exam: 2 hours 35% of A Level

Practical performance in physical activity and sport

Content: students are assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity (20%) and a written/verbal analysis of performance (10%)

Internal assessment, external moderation: 30% of A Level.

How will I learn?

The course features a variety of teaching and learning approaches; including interactive classroom study, lectures, group research tasks, private study, and delivering theoretical content in a practical sporting environment. In addition students will be given the opportunity to develop their practical performance through one to one and small group coaching. It is hoped that there will be an opportunity to visit a sports testing laboratory.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Physical education is regarded highly by universities and employers due to the skills and qualities developed throughout the course. High quality communication, collaboration and leadership are required both as a sports performer and a student or employee. Sport and exercise science, sport management, sport and exercise psychology, sports coaching and performance analysis are all available degrees to study further at university. A Level physical education is also useful for physiotherapy if combined with a strong science.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in PE. If GCSE PE has not been studied, students might be considered if they have Grade 5 in each individual science or Grade 6 in double science and they are performing at a high level in a sport (such as at county level). Due to this last element, it is recommended that these enquires are made early because evidence will need to be provided.

A Level Courses

Physics

"If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants." Isaac Newton

Why should I study physics?

Physicists look for all the hidden laws that explain why all matter and energy in the known universe exists, where it comes from and how it behaves the way it does. Physicists use the laws they uncover to develop new materials, machinery, and technology to improve our lives and help us explore the universe further, from computers to telescopes and spacecraft. Physicists ask big questions, but they specialise in different areas and their work can be varied. For example, nuclear physicists study tiny particles of matter to discover what the universe is made of, whereas astrophysicists study some of the largest objects – stars, planets and celestial bodies. Many physicists also combine their work with the other sciences (chemistry and biology) to study things like meteorology (the atmosphere) and geophysics (the structure of the earth).

What does the course look like?

Content is split into six teaching modules:

Module 1 Development of practical skills in physics

Module 2 Foundations of physics

Module 3 Forces and motion

Module 4 Electrons, waves and photons

Module 5 Newtonian world and astrophysics

Module 6 Particles and medical physics.

Assessment Overview:

Modelling physics (01) - 2 hours 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level)

Exploring physics (02) - 2 hours 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level)

Unified physics (03) - 1 hour 30 minutes written paper (26% of total A Level)

Practical endorsement in physics (04) - Non-exam assessment - (reported separately).

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, including practical work, interactive classroom study, group tasks, private study and lab based practical activities. Outside of lessons there are opportunities to visit a London university laboratory and if feasible undertake a visit to CERN in Switzerland.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Physics is a useful subject for the majority of STEM (science, technology, engineering & maths) careers. You will find physicists everywhere, in industry, transport, government, universities, the armed forces, computer games companies, research labs and more. Physics is helpful for jobs that involve building and developing new technologies, including: engineering, astronomy, robotics, renewable energies, computer science, communications, space exploration, science writing, sports and games technology, research and nanotechnology.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in physics or Grade 7-7 in double science and a Grade 6 in mathematics.

Politics

"One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors." Plato

Why should I study politics?

Politics is about the conflict of ideas, the conflict of interests and the struggle for power. The study of politics will enable you to better understand the world around you, help you to craft your own worldview and then articulate this in oral and written format. The study of politics helps us to explain the past, navigate the present and explore the future.

The subject remains a respected subject at university, and it compliments other essay-based subjects such as history, economics and English literature.

What does the course look like?

The course is organised into three separate papers.

Paper 1 – UK Politics: democracy and participation; political parties; electoral systems; voting behaviour and the media; core ideologies.

Paper 2 – UK Government: The Constitution; Parliament; the prime minister and the executive; relationships between the branches; non-core ideology.

Paper 3 – Government and Politics of the USA: The Constitution and federalism; Congress; the presidency; the Supreme Court and civil rights; democracy and participation.

How will I learn?

Students learn in a variety of different ways, including through;

Presentations

Formal Debates

Essay Workshops

Data Analysis

Guest Speakers

It is hoped that students will have the opportunity to visit the Houses of Parliament.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The content encountered in the politics A level naturally facilitates degree courses in international relations, however the skills obtained from the study of A level politics, particularly the skills of analysis, oracy and critical thinking compliment a whole range of humanities-based degrees, including history, economics and sociology. The versatile nature of the subject is valued by all professions and many students undertake apprenticeships in the legal and financial sectors.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in English literature or language and Grade 6 in geography, history or religion and philosophy.

Psychology

"The brain is wider than the sky." Emily Dickinson

Why should I study psychology?

Ever wondered if prison really does change criminal behaviour? Or why some people conform? Or perhaps if the experiences you had before the age of five really do shape the person you are today? A Level psychology will give you an understanding of the way people think and why people behave in certain ways. You will learn a variety of skills including analytical thinking, improved communication, problem solving and many more that will prepare you for an exciting future with the possibility of a range of fantastic careers.

What does the course look like?

There are three exams, each accounting for one third of your A Level. The three exams last 2 hours each. The exams consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

- Social influence, memory, attachment, psychopathology (33%)
- Approaches in psychology, biopsychology, research methods, issues and debates (33%)
- 3 optional units such as relationships, schizophrenia and aggression (33%).

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from interactive classroom study to conducting social experiments, group tasks to private study and research. Outside of lessons there will be opportunities to attend revision conferences and psychology workshops. Varied trips will help you to enrich and extend your learning.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The top seven degree courses taken by students who have an A Level in psychology are:

- psychology
- English studies
- sociology
- business studies
- teaching
- sport and exercise science
- law.

Studying psychology at university can give you a whole host of exciting career options, including:

- marketing
- business development
- accountancy
- human resources
- forensic psychology
- occupational therapy
- clinical psychology
- nursing
- teaching.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 5 in any two single sciences or Grade 6 in double science, Grade 5 in mathematics and Grade 5 in either English language or literature.

Religion and Philosophy

"The mystical is not HOW the world is, but THAT it is."
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Why should I study religion and philosophy?

Religion and philosophy is a thought provoking subject that analyses the nature of reality. Philosophy literally means a love of wisdom and is a quest for truth and knowledge, an ability to distinguish between doxa (opinion) and episteme (knowledge). It examines the three Rs of what is real (metaphysics), what is right (ethics) and what is rational and reasonable belief. The subject is highly respected by universities and colleges and it develops key skills of analysis and enquiry which are transferable across many subjects. The addition of the 'science' element of the course makes it a really good option for those who are interested in the scientific subjects but need or want some variety - bear in mind universities and colleges look favourably on having some variety in A Level studies! It also goes well with other social sciences or humanities subjects such as psychology, history, sociology and geography.

What does the course look like?

Three written exam papers of equal weighting.

Philosophy of religion

- Ancient philosophical influences
- The nature of the soul, mind and body
- Arguments about the existence or non-existence of God
- The nature and impact of religious experience
- The challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil
- Ideas about the nature of God
- Issues in religious language.

Religion and ethics

- Ethical theories
- Issues of human life and death
- Issues of animal life and death
- Introduction to meta ethics
- Free will and moral responsibility
- Conscience
- Bentham and Kant.

Developments in Religious Thought

- Sources of wisdom and authority
- God
- Self, death and afterlife
- Good conduct and key moral principles
- Expressions of religious identity
- Christianity, gender and sexuality
- Christianity and science
- Christianity and the challenge of secularisation
- Christianity, migration and religious pluralism

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, from interactive classroom study, group tasks and debates to private study and research.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The skills developed within religion and philosophy are transferable as it encourages critical thinking, problem solving and the ability to form your own opinion founded in a strong, logical rationale. These skills will be valued by business, medicine and the legal professions alike - not to mention academia. Or, more directly, your course could lead you into degree areas like philosophy, politics and ethics (PPE), theology or any joint honours courses where these are a component.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in religion and philosophy (where RP is not offered, a Grade 7 in geography or history will be accepted) and Grade 6 in either English language or English literature.

A Level Courses

Sociology

"History is, strictly speaking, the study of questions; the study of answers belongs to sociology and anthropology."

WH Auden

Why should I study sociology?

Sociology is a relevant, exciting and current course that provides an insight into how our behaviour is shaped by the world around us. The topics covered on the A Level course help to explain why young working class males are over-represented in criminal statistics, why middle class students achieve better grades in education and how the digital world has changed the nature of our culture and relationships. If you are inquisitive and keen to understand these points, Sociology is the course for you.

What does the course look like?

The course consists of three components. Exams consist of short and extended writing questions.

Component 1: Socialisation, Culture and Identity

Component 2: Researching and Understanding Social Inequalities

Component 3: Debates in Contemporary Society

In Year 12, you will study: introduction to sociology; how we are socialised into our identity; youth subcultures; education.

In Year 13, you will study: globalisation and the digital world; research methods; social inequalities.

How will I learn?

In sociology we examine different sociological perspectives that provide a unique take on society, the variety of research methods employed by different groups of sociologists and the strengths and weaknesses of employing them to study aspects of society. You will need to be able to assess the quality of the sociological views and methods covered, be good at working on your own and as part of a group, take part in discussions and debates, construct balanced arguments and keep up to date with relevant news stories. Trips could include participating in the Karl Marx walking tour, visiting the V&A Museum of Childhood and attending a sociology conference.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Studying sociology provides an excellent foundation for a number of popular university courses. For example, criminology, education studies and social policy. Sociology provides knowledge and skills that are transferable to a number of careers such as those related to education, media or health.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in either English language or literature and a Grade 6 in a humanities subject.

Spanish

"Nunca se puede cruzar el océano hasta que se tenga el coraje de perder de vista la costa." Cristóbal Colón

Why should I study Spanish?

Around the world Spanish is spoken as a native language by 406 million people, which makes it second only to Mandarin. Spanish is the official language of 21 countries. Spanish is quickly becoming a key language in the modern business world. What this means is that anybody who is able to speak it at fluent business level will not only have a head start with university applications but also considerable advantage when applying for all types of careers later on in life and it will also give you more opportunity for international travel and working abroad. Learning Spanish will also give you a major advantage when trying to understand/ learn any other Latin-based language; such as Portuguese and Italian. Spanish is phonetic, which means you say what you see. This makes it easier to read in comparison to other languages. Hispanic literature is regarded as some of the best in the world. We will also be studying Spanish-speaking cinema, covering the works of legendary Spanish director, Pedro Almodovar and recent Oscar winning Mexican directors Guillermo Del Toro and Alejandro Iñárritu. Throughout the course you will compare and contrast your own life with that of young people living in Spanish speaking countries, and gain valuable insight as to what their history and culture is like. You will get the chance to experience the rich variety of their festivities, customs, art and music original to Hispanic culture!

What does the course look like?

The course follows four general topics but they are wide and open ended topics which give scope for debate. The topics give students the opportunity to discuss new ideas, discover attitudes from other parts of the world and open their eyes to the wider world:

- Evolution of the Spanish society
- Culture in the Spanish speaking world
- Immigration and multicultural Spanish society
- Franco's dictatorship and the democratic transition.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; interactive classroom study, group tasks, private study and research and one to one discussions with a native speaker.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Spanish can lead to many different and varied jobs – it is not all about teaching and translating. An A Level in Spanish shows universities and employers that you are prepared to work hard to learn grammar and vocabulary but that you also have lots of other skills like independent thinking, the ability to argue points and discuss ideas, that you can listen and that you can verbalise ideas.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

Grade 6 in Spanish and Grade 6 in English language.

Core Mathematics

"There is no such thing as boring mathematics."
Edsger W. Dijkstra

Why should I study core mathematics?

Core mathematics is a Level 3 qualification designed for post-16 students who wish to continue studying mathematics, but not at A Level. The qualification will help you retain, deepen and extend your knowledge of mathematics so that you are better prepared for higher education and employment. It is also particularly useful if your A Level courses have a high level of mathematical content (such as business, economics, design, geography, biology, chemistry, physics and computer science). The use of real-life scenarios in core mathematics will help you understand and apply clear, mathematical reasoning to problems, analyse and interpret data in a variety of contexts, and confidently deal with everyday financial mathematics. The qualification can be worth up to 20 UCAS points and can make you more likely to be offered a place on a university course.

What does the course look like?

Component 1 – Examination: Paper 1 (1 hour, 30 minutes – 50%)

- Analysis of data
- Maths for personal finance
- Estimation

Component 2 – Examination: Paper 2A Statistical Techniques (1 hour, 30 minutes – 50%)

- Students will be expected to develop and demonstrate confidence and competence in the understanding and application of mathematical modelling in the solution of problems related to the use of statistical techniques.
- Topics covered include: critical analysis of given data and models, the normal distribution, probabilities and estimation, correlation and regression.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The core mathematics qualification is highly valued by employers and universities as more subjects, such as geography and psychology, recognise the importance of statistics and problem-solving skills.

Why should you complete core mathematics?

Many roles in today's workplace require high levels of budget management and problem solving abilities, and this course will equip you with these skills. Core mathematics will help you to better understand the quantitative aspects of the other A Levels that you may be taking. This is important for tasks such as interpreting and exploring data and graphs, using diagrams and calculations, and selecting appropriate statistical techniques. Core mathematics is useful for those who are interested in university courses or apprenticeships that involve a lot of quantitative data analysis but do not require A Level mathematics, such as psychology, sports science, social sciences, natural sciences and courses related to business.

What is the entry requirement?

Three subjects excluding A Level mathematics.

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

"By seeking and blundering we learn." Goethe

Why should I do the EPQ?

The EPQ allows each student to embark on a largely self-directed and self-motivated project. It is an opportunity to look deeply at a topic you are passionate about and explore it fully in a range of different ways. Students must choose a topic, plan, research and develop their idea and decide on their finished product. The course encourages creativity and curiosity. A project topic may be directly related to a student's main study programme, but should look beyond the specification. A finished product may take the form of:

- a research based written report
- a production (charity event, fashion show or sports event, for example)
- an artefact (piece of art, a computer game or realised design).

A written report must accompany these options.

Previous student projects have included:

- 'Will antibiotics become useless?'
- 'The history of drumming in rock music'
- 'The impact of the portrayal of women in the media'
- 'Drugs and the Tour de France'

Students must also record their project process in their production Log. The process of recording and completing a project is as important as the finished product. Both the Production Log and Product will be assessed.

What does the course look like?

It is divided into a neat process and structure, allowing you the best opportunity to develop your project.

- Choose an area of interest and draft a project title and aim(s).
- Plan, research and carry out their project.
- Keep a production log of all stages of the project production, reviewing and evaluating their progress.
- Complete the project product.
- Prepare and deliver a presentation.
- Review the outcome of their project and presentation.

How will I learn?

During the EPQ, students will learn to identify, design, plan, and complete a project, applying organisational skills and strategies to meet the stated objectives. Students will also need to obtain and select information from a range of sources, analyse data, apply it relevantly, and demonstrate understanding of any appropriate connections and complexities of their topic. All of these elements require a range of skills, including using new technologies to solve problems, taking decisions critically, creatively and flexibly, and to achieve their aims. Lastly, students will need to evaluate the outcome, including their learning and performance.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The EPQ can be the deciding factor for top universities who have lots of students applying with the top grades. Extended projects can help students to develop and demonstrate a range of valuable skills through pursuing their interests and investigating topics in more depth. It has also been praised by universities for guiding students into higher education and is an excellent component of any outstanding UCAS application.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

By negotiation with the school, but a high average points score will be expected with several Grades 7-9, including Grade 7 in English language and mathematics. Entry onto this course will be considered once you have started your other subjects; we do not discuss whether you will be able to take it before you begin your studies in the Sixth Form.

Food Science and Nutrition (WJEC)

"Our food industry employs 3.7 million people, contributing almost £90 billion to the economy."

Jim Paice Former Minister of State for Agriculture and Food

Why should I study food science and nutrition?

Have you ever wondered why obesity is such a problem in the UK? If the answer is yes, then food science and nutrition could be the course for you! This is an exciting new course which will allow you to gain a wealth of knowledge about food science and nutrition. You will have the opportunity to learn about the relationship between the human body and food, as well as developing practical skills linked to experimental work and the cooking and preparation of food. Food science and nutrition is a fast moving and diverse subject, which includes many current issues that are focused on in the media, e.g. health concerns, school lunches and the influence of the major retailers.

What does the course look like?

This is an Applied General qualification. This means it is designed primarily to support students progressing to university.

Year 12: Unit 1 – Meeting the nutritional needs of specific groups (core unit). Assessed via controlled assessment and a written examination (90 mins exam plus 15 mins reading time, including short answers, extended answers, and a case study.) Students can choose to 'cash in' at the end of Year 12 to receive a Level 3 Certificate in food science and nutrition, equivalent to an AS level.

Year 13: Unit 2 – Ensuring food is safe to eat (core unit). Assessed via an 8 hour timed supervised assessment.

Unit 3 – Experimenting to solve food production problems (optional unit). Assessed via a practical and written based assignment.

Unit 4 – Current issues in food science and nutrition (optional unit). Assessed via a timed and supervised 14 hour assessment.

The Level 3 Diploma in food science and nutrition is equivalent to an A Level.

How will I learn?

Much of the theory will be taught via practical activities and investigations, with many opportunities to cook throughout the course. This is a course which combines theory with a strong emphasis on practical work, making this an ideal choice for students who prefer to learn by doing.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Food is Europe's largest and most buoyant industry, and nutritionists with food science training work at the forefront of product development and package design. There are many very good opportunities in this field and at present there is a national shortage of food graduates. Food science and nutrition does not just lead to jobs in catering; there are many challenging and rewarding careers in the food industry. These include jobs within research, new product development, purchasing, production, manufacturing, dietetics, hotel management and teaching. Food scientists are currently in great demand, owing to the growing awareness of consumer habits and changing dietary habits.

What is the subject specific entry requirement?

You must meet the overall entry requirements to join the Sixth Form and have achieved a good grade in either food preparation and nutrition or hospitality and catering. If an appropriate course has not been taken during Year 11, students will be considered if they have Grade 5 in biology and one other science subject or Grade 6 in double science. There would also need to be substantial evidence that they regularly make high quality dishes at home, such as filleting fish or making their own fresh pasta. Due to the nature of the latter alternative requirement, it is recommended that enquires are made at an early stage.



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A number of Sixth Form open events will be held.

Please look at our website for more details:

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Course Guide