



A Level

Prospectus



“

We want to instil in you a love for learning and start you on a trajectory of academic exploration that will allow you to be successful personally and professionally”

Matt Williams

Welcome

Welcome to GES. We are known as an academically successful, warm and inclusive school that ensures its students are stretched, challenged and supported. For the past 60 years, we have ensured that students and their families have had access to a British education in the Geneva area.

If you join us to study A Levels you will have access to world class teaching, small class sizes and bespoke guidance for your next steps – be that university in the UK, Switzerland or across the world. An A Level programme means that you are in charge of what you study and we are here to help craft a tailor-made programme that works for you and your plans for the future.

I have run two different A Level programmes across some of the best schools in London – all have been oversubscribed, successful and lead our students to the university pathways of their choice. Whilst the GES A Level programme may be relatively new, the experience that my staff and I bring, mean that you will be successful and academically challenged in your two years with us.

I look forward to meeting you either face to face or at a virtual event soon. Please feel free to email our admissions team with any questions, we would be happy to help and answer any questions you may have.

Matt Williams
Head

A Levels are the pinnacle of the British education system, academic qualifications which act as the gateway to university education, a currency of learning and achievement retained across continents and throughout careers.

The attraction of the A Level qualification to students, universities and employers alike is to be able to tailor study programmes so that students can gain a greater depth of knowledge in their chosen subjects making them ready to excel at university and in competitive professions.

A Levels have a long history of being globally recognised, the preferred qualification for entry to UK universities while highly regarded by Swiss, European and US institutions alike.

Our experience at GES of working with internationally minded students and their families means we invest heavily in ensuring our A Level programme provides much more than just qualifications. Running through our 2-year programme is 1:1 mentoring to advise and prepare students to progress to ambitious futures, including internships, university visits, application workshops and mock interview clinics.

The A Level programme at GES provides each of our students with the teaching, qualifications, support, encouragement and enriching diversity of experience to act as the springboard to fulfilling their ambitions at university and adult life beyond!

Daniel Crabtree
Head of Sixth Form



Introduction

At GES our expert teaching staff who have graduated from the best universities, will guide and enthuse you across the subjects that you choose to study. To succeed in A Levels you need to work hard, read around the topics you are taught and have a love for the subject matter you are studying. In our experience, if you choose subjects you love, you will be successful. As we are deliberately a small school our class sizes are smaller than you may be used to and so allow you to really be supported, challenged and developed whilst you study the subjects you enjoy.

We encourage our staff to teach beyond the syllabus, to take you on trips and ensure that you get to understand the subject in depth. In Geography, this could be by visiting a glacier or doing field work in a river. In English, this could be by taking you to the Globe in London to see and feel the atmosphere that Shakespeare intended. In Science, a trip to CERN is easy to do and allows you to understand the science of physics in a real world context.

On top of your academic studies, we also expect you to gain a language qualification in either French or German which could be achieved by choosing the language as an A Level course or by studying the relevant B2/C1 qualification. Completing such a qualification means that you will be able to apply for university courses in Switzerland as well as neighbouring countries if you get the correct grades for entry to your chosen subject.

The final two components that form our A Level programme are the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and the Duke of Edinburgh International Award (DofE). For the EPQ you choose an area you are interested in and then research this and present your findings through a different range of presentational media from an essay to a video to a composition or portfolio. The EPQ is highly thought of by top universities and thus a very desirable qualification.

The DofE award pulls together a range of different skills and experiences into a globally recognised award. You will have to complete an expedition, do voluntary work, learn a skill and keep a portfolio of evidence over the two years of the course. The DofE award allows you to explore the wonderful Swiss countryside and also give something back to our local community. We aim to educate the whole person as a responsible, compassionate citizen and recognise that a balanced education neither begins nor ends in the classroom. We believe that choosing three or four subjects you enjoy, plus teaching you a language, as well as the EPQ and DofE mean that you will be a strong candidate for any university.

But above all, we also want to instill in you a love for learning and start you on a trajectory of academic exploration that will allow you to be successful, both personally and professionally. We offer an academically rigorous programme, first class teachers and the freedom that allows you to study and socialise whilst being coached and encouraged to be the best you can be.



The A Level

In designing the best possible curriculum for post-16 study, GES has combined the advantages of the flexibility and depth of study offered by A Levels with a modern, international approach that includes interdisciplinary studies, independent research, and a programme of sport and exercise for all. Our A Level Programme provides a passport to leading universities in Europe, the UK and around the world and equips students with the confidence and skills that they will need in a rapidly changing workplace and interconnected global environment.

What are A Levels?

Short for 'Advanced Level Qualifications', A Levels are subject-based qualifications that lead to university study, further training or employment. They are usually taken by students aged 16 – 19 and are offered by schools and colleges both in the UK and internationally.

Where can A Levels take me?

A Levels are recognised and respected by universities around the globe. Students with A Levels gain places at leading universities worldwide, including in the UK, France, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

How many A Levels do students usually take?

Students normally study three, or sometimes four, A Levels over the course of two years. The A Levels are assessed via a series of examinations and are graded A* – E. University offers are usually based on three A Levels. Alongside their A Levels, students may study other subjects and take other courses (e.g. languages or the EPQ), some of which may be examined.

What is the GES A Level Programme?

Our A Level Programme is made up of the following elements:

- ① 3 or 4 A Level Subjects
- ② The extended project qualification (EPQ)
- ③ An assessed language qualification
- ④ Completion of the Gold Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

A Level studies

Most students choose three or four A Level subjects and study these for two years. At GES we offer a wide range of courses and are happy to advise on subject combinations when registering.

The EPQ (Extended Project Qualification)

It is an assessed and moderated project chosen by the student in an area that they enjoy and then they are mentored and guided by a member of staff. Top universities across the world value this project highly and all GES students will be expected to complete this qualification.

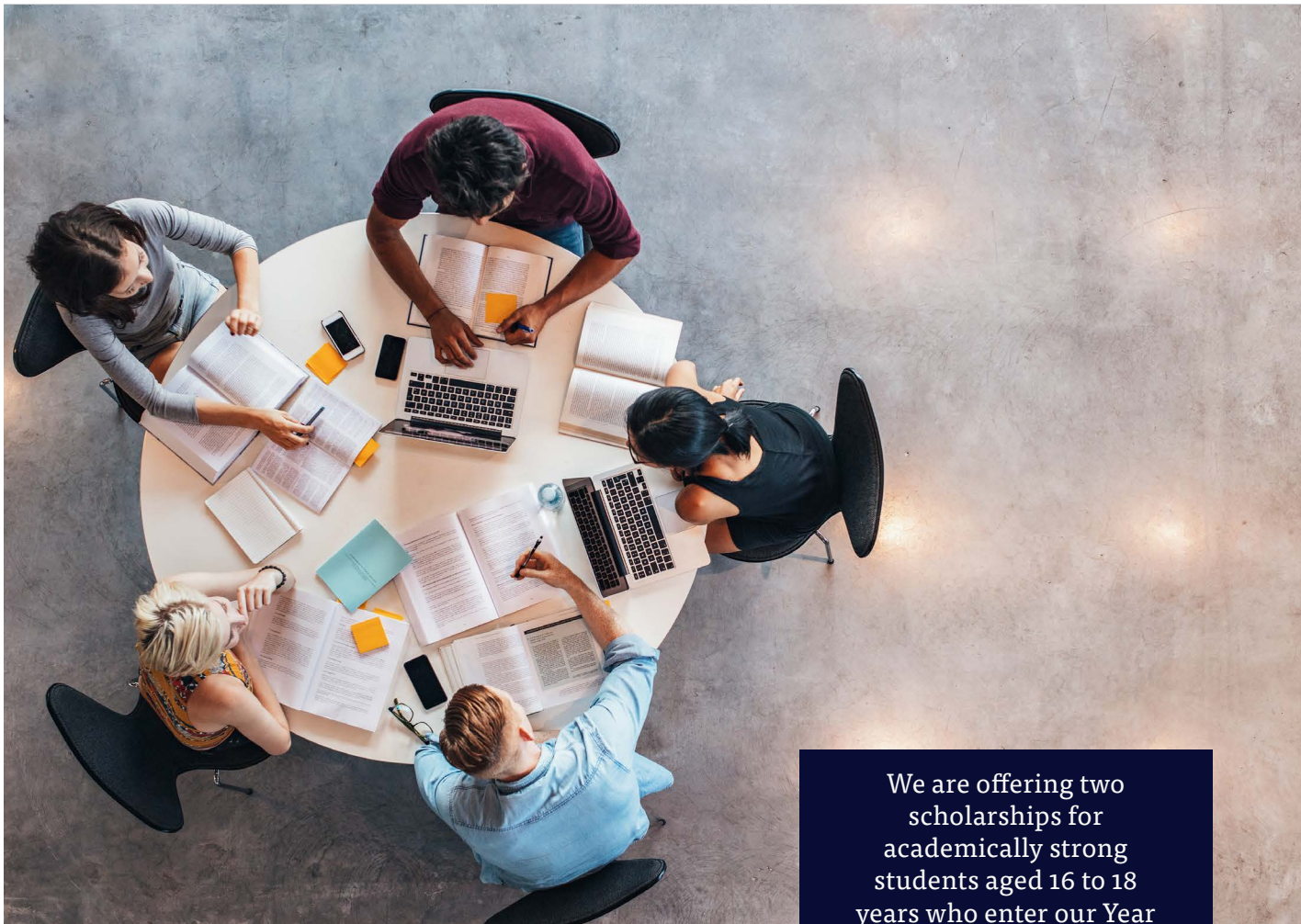
Language qualification

All students at GES are expected to achieve either a B2 or C1 language qualification in French or German. This is a necessary entrance requirement for local universities and is an important part of our international school.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

All Sixth form students are strongly encouraged to complete the Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award. This award includes outward bound expeditions, physical recreation, skills and voluntary service. It is an excellent qualification to encourage breadth of experience and is highly valued across the world.





We are offering two scholarships for academically strong students aged 16 to 18 years who enter our Year 12 from September 2021. The scholarships recognise and celebrate outstanding commitment and potential in Mathematics or Art.

Scholarships

Mathematics and Art

The scholarships will be for 2 years to enable successful students to complete A Level studies and acquire the gold standard qualifications for entry to top universities worldwide.

Gaining a GES Scholarship offers opportunities and can bring significant advantages, not least in future university applications. But they also come with the responsibility to set and maintain the highest standards at all times. In awarding these scholarships we are looking for individuals who will be a credit to themselves and to the School.

Offers will be made for reductions of 15% of school fees for the entire period of the A Level programme providing the scholar maintains a

high standard of academic progress throughout the studies.

Interested students should complete the appropriate section in the online application form together with their latest school report, personal statement and references from their current school. Existing GES students can be recommended for a scholarship.

Further information about the assessment procedures, which will be in the form of Academic Scholarship papers and/or practical assessment and the preparation of a portfolio for Art, can be obtained from the Admissions office (admissions@geschool.ch).

Extra-Curricular

Students at GES are encouraged not only to make the most of their talents and take intellectual risks, but also to pursue a healthy, rounded lifestyle. We believe that education and personal development should never be limited to the confines of a classroom.

We offer a wide variety of opportunities that sit alongside the academic curriculum and allow you to widen your interests, meet new people and gain new experiences. While some of these are open to students across the whole Secondary, providing an excellent way for students of

all ages and interests to learn and contribute together, others are specifically for our A Level students, allowing you to unearth your strengths, interests, talents and possibly take you outside your comfort zone.



Outdoor Education & Expeditions

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a core part of our A Level programme at GES and as such key to our Extra-curricular provision at GES.

For a long time, outdoor activities have been recognised as a source of enjoyment, a training ground for useful skills, a means of engaging with nature and the environment, and a way of providing both a physical and mental challenge. More recently, outdoor activities have also been recognised as a way of developing personal awareness and a knowledge of group dynamics and their effective management. Our pupils learn about their strengths and weaknesses, develop robust approaches to problem-solving, and gain resilience in overcoming setbacks, as well as a detailed understanding of the mechanisms operating within a team.

We offer the full gamut of the programme across the school, starting with the Junior Award Scheme for Schools (JASS) right through to the DofE International Award from Bronze to Gold Award.

At A Level, we strongly encourage you to complete the Gold Award. The confidence, determination and self-esteem which is built and demonstrated through the participation in the DofE Awards is valued greatly by employers and universities as they give students the soft skills that are needed for success in other areas, as well as specific areas of expertise that will stay with you for life.

Sport

GES has an enviable reputation for the high quality of its sporting teams and the dedication and expertise of the school's PE and coaching staff. There is a strong tradition of sporting excellence at the school, however all abilities are catered for and every pupil is encouraged to pursue sport, individual or team games and to develop a healthy attitude to fitness and exercise. Some of the core sports include Football, Rugby, Netball, Basketball, Racket sports, Athletics and Cross-country. There are many opportunities for students to try other sports such as Climbing, Crossfit, Golf and Skiing.

A Sports Leaders programme - unique to an international school in the region - is open to students with an interest for disciplines beyond the pure practice of a sport, eg. coaching, umpiring, sports marketing, journalism, etc. The activities of the programme build on the background of the highly experienced GES staff combined with the wealth of global sports institutions and associations present in the local area (International Olympic Committee (IOC), UEFA, dozens of global sports federations, etc.).

We are keen that all students will represent the school in sporting fixtures during their school career. Additionally, students who take their sporting expertise to a higher level will have the chance to join one of the usual UK Sports Trips and Tours.





Art

Art and Design beyond the classroom offers every student the opportunity to explore a broad range of materials and processes, and develop strong technical skills. The department is housed in a beautiful light area.

The Art Scholarship will further elevate the learning opportunities for all students, including the options for our oldest students to suggest and lead new extra-curricular activities beyond existing art clubs. Student artwork is also highly valued and displayed throughout the school.

Drama

Students perform in a variety of plays and musical shows throughout the year, but also develop their own pieces and contributions for our well-regarded end of year celebrations at the Secondary.

Our oldest students are able to take leadership roles in performances, but also in any behind the scenes or directing activities, which allow them to marry their love for drama and theatre with honing numerous skills around leadership and team management.

Theatre trips are a regular part of the wider activities across the school. In addition, leading practitioners visit GES for workshops and masterclasses.



Music

Music is an important part of the fabric that makes up life at GES right through the school. Besides offering an A Level course in Music, we have multiple opportunities for musicians of all types to be involved.

Students in music, instrumental as well as voice, are supported by our Head of Music and A Level subject lead, an expert Music instructions coordinator and Singing teacher as well as an extended team of visiting instrumental teachers.



Clubs and Societies

Students can get involved in a diverse range of clubs and societies at GES, where you can expand your knowledge and interest through activities with internal experts as well as external industry specialists.

Public speaking is popular at GES, with competitions and activities such as the Model United Nations and debating; students have the opportunity to visit numerous International Organisations which are located in Geneva and beyond. From climbing, via the literature society to watercolour, there is something for everyone and if it does not exist already, you are likely to be able to create it!



Higher Education and Careers

A Level students are offered a comprehensive programme to guide them through the process of university preparation and applications; internal experts as well as external university admissions specialists are available depending on the requirements and focus of specific pathways our students want to explore.

The wider school community, including current parents as well as alumni, can be consulted for rewarding careers in international or non-governmental organisations as well as interesting corporate institutions.

Work experiences are also available with a variety of locally based as well as global organisations and companies.



How to Apply

A Levels are challenging, thought provoking and inspiring. To achieve top marks, you will need to demonstrate a genuine interest in the subject and a commitment to study.

Whether you are coming to GES with GCSEs or other qualifications, we will want to meet with you to discuss your motivation for following this programme, what your longer-term goals are and how A Levels will help you get there.

We will need your reports from your current school and we will ask you to submit a personal statement about why you want to study the subjects you are applying for and your interests and achievements.

All applicants will be asked to complete a written entrance test so that we can confirm your level and your potential to succeed.

For students applying with GCSEs we would like to see your mock exam results or teacher predictions and would normally expect you to achieve a grade of 6 or above in the relevant subject to confirm your place.

In all cases, we will look at you as an individual, taking into account your education up to this point and your aims for the future, as we process your application.

If you are interested in applying to the GES A Level Programme, or would simply like to find out more, please contact admissions@geschool.ch



A Level Subjects



Art & Design

"If one looks at a thing with the intention of trying to discover what it means, one ends up no longer seeing the thing itself, but of thinking of the question that is raised."
René Magritte

Why study Art & Design?

Art tells a story and is a means of communication in an increasingly visual world. Where GCSE introduces you to new techniques and processes, at the centre of making art at A level, is the self. Developing your creativity is to open doors to other ways of thinking. Problem solving and establishing your critical awareness through observation and interpretation encourages you to form opinions and fosters innovation.

If you already know that you want to pursue Art & Design at university level, then A Level is essential for creating a mature, extensive portfolio which showcases your skills and presents a self-portrait through your self-expression.

However, if you are not intending a career in the creative industries, A Level can still be a complement to your studies. Art also gives us pleasure, relieves stress and can provide a sense of accomplishment. We make connections with other cultures and centuries as we explore our past and present through the work of artists. We find comfort in making and looking at the visual record of our world.

Course Content

Over the two years, students will develop a portfolio of work which expresses a personal response to a range of ideas, issues, concepts or themes developed with their tutor. This will culminate in a self-directed personal investigation selected by the student, supported by written material of approx. 1500 words. This is worth 60% of the exam grade. An externally set assignment that responds to stimulus provided by the exam board worth 40% will be completed at the end of the two

years, including preparatory work and a final piece produced in a 15-hour exam.

Inspirational starting point

Do It (home) Curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist, René Magritte's 1952 work 'Les valeurs personnelles'

Preparation for the course

- Scan Instagram and follow the work of any artist / craftsman / designer that interests you for 30 days. Undertake a 10-day drawing challenge.
- Visit a gallery, select one artwork and write an opinion piece.
- Choose one activity from 'Do it (home)' - it's free to download.
- Listen to any of the following Podcasts: Art for your Ear, Adventures in Art, Arts & Ideas, Art Curious.

Future Pathways

There are a wide range of specialisms such as fine art and illustration both print and digital.

Designers of fashion, products or buildings, working in corporate environments as trend analysts or creative directors, therapeutic health care as art therapist or in education as teacher, museum curator and gallery education.

Film, TV, photography, advertising, museums and galleries are all part of multi-billion-dollar global creative industries.

Indicative entrance criteria:
GCSE Art & Design or Design
Technology Grade 5 or accredited
portfolio from previous school

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7202



Coursework: 60%
Examination: 40%



Biology

Why study Biology?

Do you aspire to be a botanist, a zoologist or a microbiologist? Are you looking to integrate ecology or genetics into another subject for which you have a particular passion? Choosing biology at A Level is a statement that you care about life on earth. It means that you are willing to make a difference. You want to be part of a future society that both understands and cares for the delicate ecosystem that surrounds us. What better knowledge can there be than to understand how living organisms function and how they are adapted to thrive in their habitats. If being the next Darwin is not your thing then how about the next Jane Goodall or David Attenborough? Biology can take you into careers that inspire, intrigue and reward outside of many of the traditional science-based professions.

Course content

The A Level course is divided into eight topics which consider the fundamental principles of all the Life Sciences. Practical investigations and skills are a key part of the course and allow links to be made with the wider world of science. The topics areas are:

- ① Biological molecules
- ② Cells
- ③ Organisms exchange substances with their environment
- ④ Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms
- ⑤ Energy transfers in and between organisms
- ⑥ Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments
- ⑦ Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- ⑧ The control of gene expression

Inspirational starting Point

Hacking Darwin - Jamie Metz

Preparation for the course

We recommend you read and complete the activities in GCSE to A Level Progression Guide:

<https://bit.ly/2U16Ac8>

Future pathways

Studying Biology at A Level or degree opens up all sorts of career opportunities, such as:

- Doctor
- clinical molecular geneticist
- nature conservation officer
- pharmacologist
- research scientist
- vet
- secondary school teacher
- marine biologist
- dentist.

Indicative entrance criteria:

Science GCSE Grade 6 or equivalent

Exam board:

AQA
Syllabus:
7402



Coursework:

0%

(but 12 required practicals)

Examination:

100%



Chemistry

Why study Chemistry?

Chemistry underpins a wide range of professions from medicine and forensics, to engineering and psychology. Chemistry develops your analytical skills, your problem-solving skills and your understanding of the function and behaviour of organisms.

Whether it is getting in tune with your own body, your behaviour or your emotions it is chemistry that has all the answers.

In addition, the nature of chemical research nurtures teamwork, teaches you to reason and communicate and so develops the kind of interpersonal/management skills that are transferable across any subject or career.

Course content

In Year 12 you will study Physical chemistry including bonding, energetics and redox reactions; Inorganic chemistry including periodicity and the halogens; Organic chemistry including hydrocarbon series and organic analysis.

In Year 13 you will study Physical chemistry including thermodynamics and electrochemical cells; Inorganic chemistry including transition metals and the reactions of ions; Organic chemistry including optical isomerism, aromatic chemistry and polymers.

Inspirational starting point

The Disappearing Spoon: And Other True Tales of Madness, Love, and the History of the World from the Periodic Table of the Elements – Sam Kean

Preparation for the course

We recommend you read and complete the activities in GCSE to A Level Progression Chemistry: transition guide:

<https://bit.ly/3k2zfrG>

Future pathways

- Studying Chemistry at A Level or degree opens up plenty of career opportunities, such as:
- analytical chemist
- chemical engineer
- clinical biochemist
- pharmacologist
- doctor
- research scientist (physical sciences)
- toxicologist
- environmental consultant
- higher education lecturer or secondary school teacher
- patent attorney
- science writer.

Indicative entrance criteria:

Science GCSE Grade 6 or equivalent

Exam board:

AQA
Syllabus:
7405



Coursework:

0%

(but 12 required practicals)

Examination:

100%



Computer Science

Why study Computer Science?

At the heart of today's information processing revolution sits Computer Science. There are two halves to the subject – theory and programming. Programming the architecture of a computer have to be of interest to you as both are key parts of the A Level.

Programming is all about problem solving. Problems must be modelled and analysed, a solution designed and then finally implemented. The theory revolves around exactly how data can be represented, and the procedures that can transform this data into other forms of information. A key element of the course is object-oriented programming, the most common approach to programming in business and commercial situations.

Course content

In Year 12, we will study Programming in Python – Abstraction and automation – Coding text and graphics – Hardware and software – Logic gates and Boolean algebra – Network and the internet – Aspects of software development.

In Year 13, will look at Data structures – Algorithms – Programming paradigms/next steps – Classification of algorithms – Databases – Functional programming paradigms – Dedicated programming project.

Inspirational starting point

What most schools don't teach – video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKlu9yen5nc>

Preparation for the course

We suggest you work through the transition to A Level Computer Science Workbook

<https://bit.ly/3nWqDWG>

Future pathways

A Level Computer Science can naturally lead to study Computer Science at degree level. Universities usually require A Level Mathematics to study Computer Science at university.

Demand for technology-based careers is very strong and with many of them being truly global in nature, they will often allow you to work around the world. You find computer scientists in industries such as entertainment, movies, music, games, animation, fashion, security, working with people, helping people, solving problems and making fundamental changes.

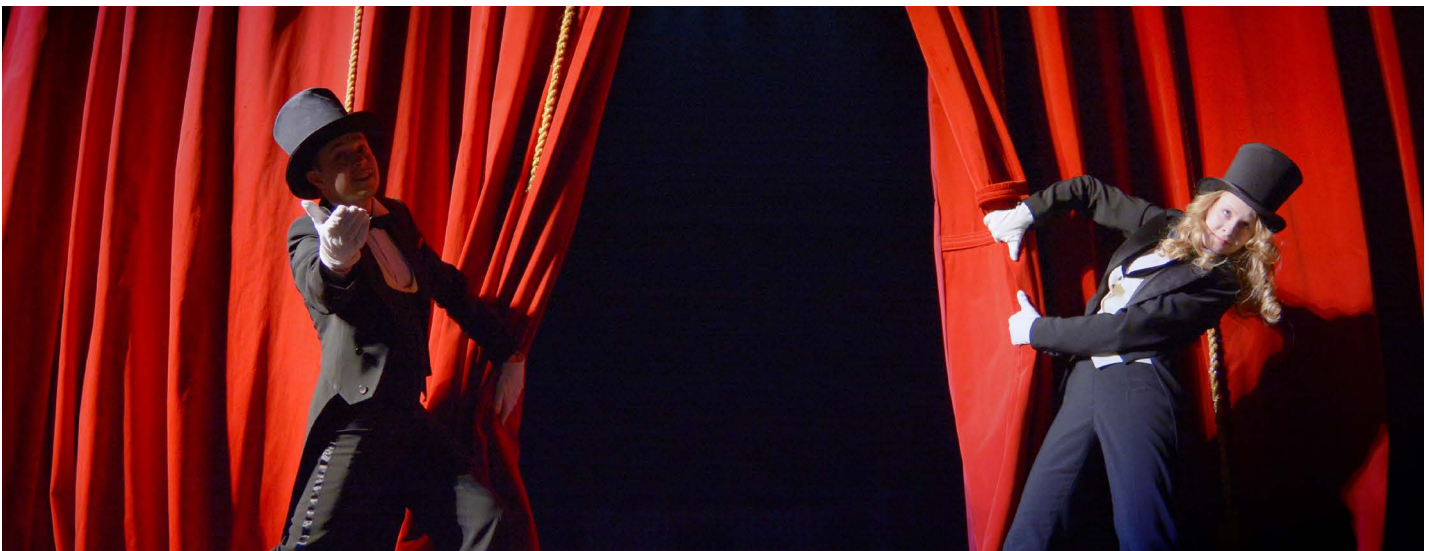
Information technology and Computing is truly a large part of our daily lives.

Indicative entrance criteria:
Mathematics GCSE Grade 6
(plus ideally computer science GCSE or equivalent)

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7517



Coursework: **20%**
Examination: **80%**



Drama and Theatre

"Great theatre is about challenging how we think and encouraging us to fantasise about a world we aspire to."
Willem Dafoe

Why study Drama and Theatre?

Drama and Theatre is a very popular and hugely rewarding course. Although a previous GCSE in Drama is a great springboard, you don't need a drama qualification to do this course. All you need is enthusiasm and a love of the theatre.

The course inspires students to become independent theatre-makers. It refines your collaborative skills, your analytical thinking and your approach to research. You will develop an appreciation of the influences that cultural and social contexts can have on theatre-making. You will learn to evaluate objectively as you grow in confidence and maturity. You will find that the ideas and skills you learn are applicable to a wide range of higher education subjects and in the workplace.

Course content

In Year 12, we look at the theatrical processes and practices involved in interpreting and performing theatre. We explore how conventions, forms and techniques are used in drama and in live theatre to create meaning. There is the study of a performance text for example by Shakespeare, Goldoni, Ibsen, Brecht, Williams, Berkoff or Churchill and the study of a live theatre production.

In Year 13, we study a live theatre production and continue the exploration of the set play. We will create, develop and perform a devised original drama and you will be contributing to a text-based drama in a live theatre context for an audience.

Inspirational starting point

Above all, try to watch lots of theatre. There are many organisations, such as the National Theatre and The Globe, who stream their productions for free.

Preparation for the course

Ideally, students should be familiar with the main theatre practitioners, genres and styles of drama studied throughout Key stages 3 and 4 and have some experience of exploring play texts. In preparation for performance components, students should practice their physical and vocal skills through learning and performing monologues.

As part of the Making Theatre content, students may choose up to three specialisms: performer, lighting designer, sound designer, set designer, costume designer, puppet designer or director. It is good practice for students to explore these specialisms in advance of the course.

Future pathways

Students may go on to study a range of subjects at university and A Level Drama and Theatre is valued by both universities and drama schools. The transferable skills developed throughout the course also enable students to progress into a range of employment in the creative industries, business and education.

Indicative entrance criteria:
No previous qualifications required

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7262



Coursework: **60%**
Examination: **40%**



Economics

Why study Economics?

Economics is one of the most popular A Levels in most schools for good reason. Students often choose it because they want an insight and entry into the world of finance, but it is equally intriguing as a social science – the study of how people behave. Economics will teach you not only to understand the world economy, but more generally to analyse novel situations and apply logical principles to them.

The ability to interpret mathematical models for lay-people is becoming increasingly valuable, in a world where all areas of business are starting to use data to help make the most profitable or environmentally sound decisions.

Course content

In Year 12, you will learn to answer questions about financial systems and how people interact with them. If everyone loves chips, then why is caviar so much more expensive than potatoes? Why do governments build roads and schools, but not computers? How do we measure the success of an economy, and how can we improve it? In order to answer such questions, you will need to apply mathematical models, as well as considering human behaviour, in order to construct convincing arguments.

Following on, we will see how some of the ideas we have learned affect business, and understand why some firms grow into giants like Google and Volkswagen, whereas others remain small. Finally, you will apply everything you have learned in a global context.

How can we measure, and attempt to manage, international trade, poverty and inequality?

Inspirational starting point

Wealth Inequality in America - video

<https://bit.ly/2ls4wHp>

The Debt Limit Explained- video

<https://bit.ly/3j1nuZ>

Preparation for the course

Economics features regularly in the news and current affairs. A great way to prepare for the course would be to start to read the Economist magazine. In particular, you will need to interpret graphs effectively in order to understand economic principles, so looking at the “daily chart” section would be helpful.

Future pathways

Governments, think-tanks and universities employ pure ‘economists’, but people who have studied Economics move equally well into the world of business and finance. According to the “Times Higher Education”, Economics graduates earn the second highest salaries, second only to Medicine.

Indicative entrance criteria:
Mathematics GCSE Grade 6
(ideally also English language or
Humanities GCSE Grade 6 or
equivalent)

Exam board:
Edexcel
Syllabus:
9ECO

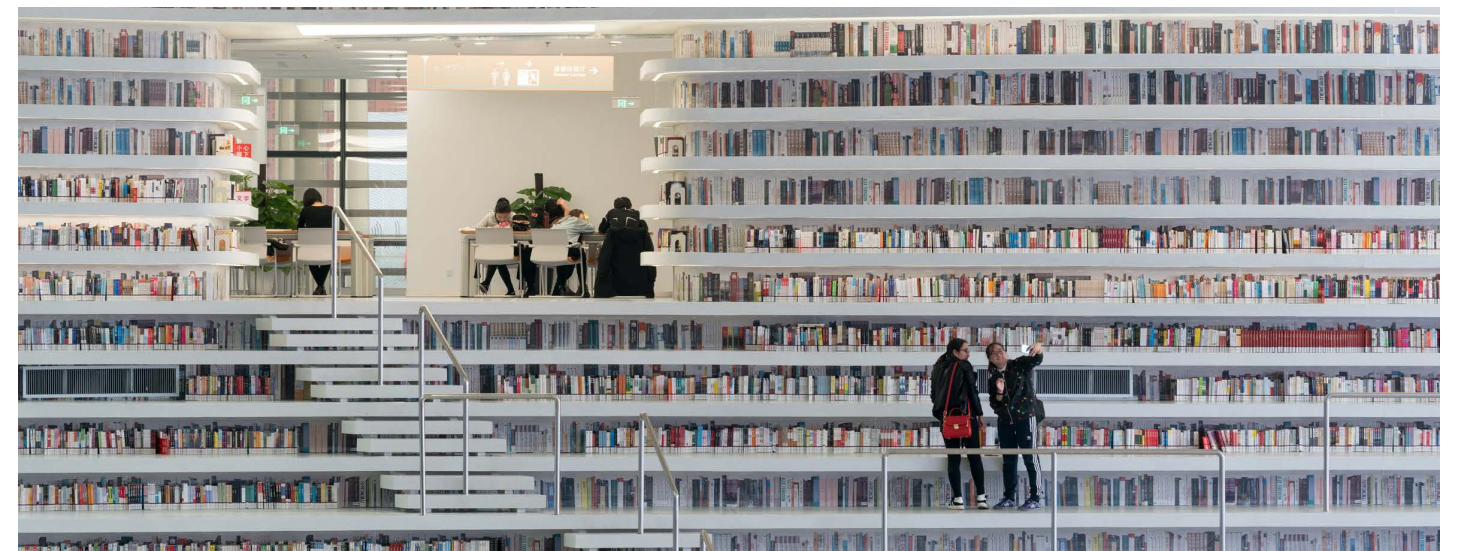


Coursework:

0%

Examination:

100%



English Literature

Why study English Literature?

For voracious readers, word lovers, poets and theatre goers, English Literature is the perfect choice. Studying literature feeds the imagination. It is a study into the human psyche, human experience and social influences over the years. It allows you to travel back in time, share the experiences of others, take on new perspectives, explore ideas, beliefs and values and challenge or discover your own.

Our A Level course will introduce you to some of the greatest poetry, prose and drama ever written. You will learn how to approach the analysis of texts from a range of different genres, eras and cultures with confidence. You will learn how to express informed and independent opinions and judgements about them based on sound evidence, and how to incorporate critical viewpoints into your essays to support and develop your own arguments.

Analytical skills are central to this subject. Many of these skills are related to independent thinking – the ability to analyse sophisticated ideas and the ways in which they are presented, to synthesise large and complex text, and to know how to build a convincing argument are just a few. The ability to read any content with a deeper appreciation and investigation is an essential skill that will only increase in importance as the platform for sharing views grows.

Course content

In Year 12, we will study Love Through the Ages: exploring aspects of this central literary theme as seen over time through different texts (one Shakespeare play, one prose text and an anthology of Love poetry). In Year 13, we will focus on a unit titled Shared Contexts, with the option Modern Times: literature from 1945 to the present day.

This takes the end of WW2 as its historical starting point and explores both modern and contemporary literature’s engagement with some of the social, political, personal and literary issues which have helped to shape the latter half of the 20th century and the early decades of the 21st century. Students will study three texts: one prose, one poetry and one drama text, at least one of which must be written post-2000.

Inspirational starting point

“The best moments in reading are when you come across something – a thought, a feeling, a way of looking at things – which you had thought special and particular to you. Now here it is, set down by someone else, a person you have never met, someone even who is long dead. And it is as if a hand has come out and taken yours.”

Alan Bennett, *The History Boys*

Preparation for the course

Reading: Minimum 3-5 texts (drama, poetry or prose), at least one pre-1900

Future pathway

English Literature is a highly regarded A Level and one of the Russell Group universities’ ‘facilitating’ subjects – so called because choosing them allows a wide range of options for degree study.

It is widely recognised by universities that the skills developed through the study of English Literature are among the most transferable, with English graduates going on to develop the widest range of careers – among the most popular are publishing, broadcasting, marketing and PR, journalism, law, teaching and politics.

Indicative entrance criteria:
English Literature GCSE Grade 6
or equivalent

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7712



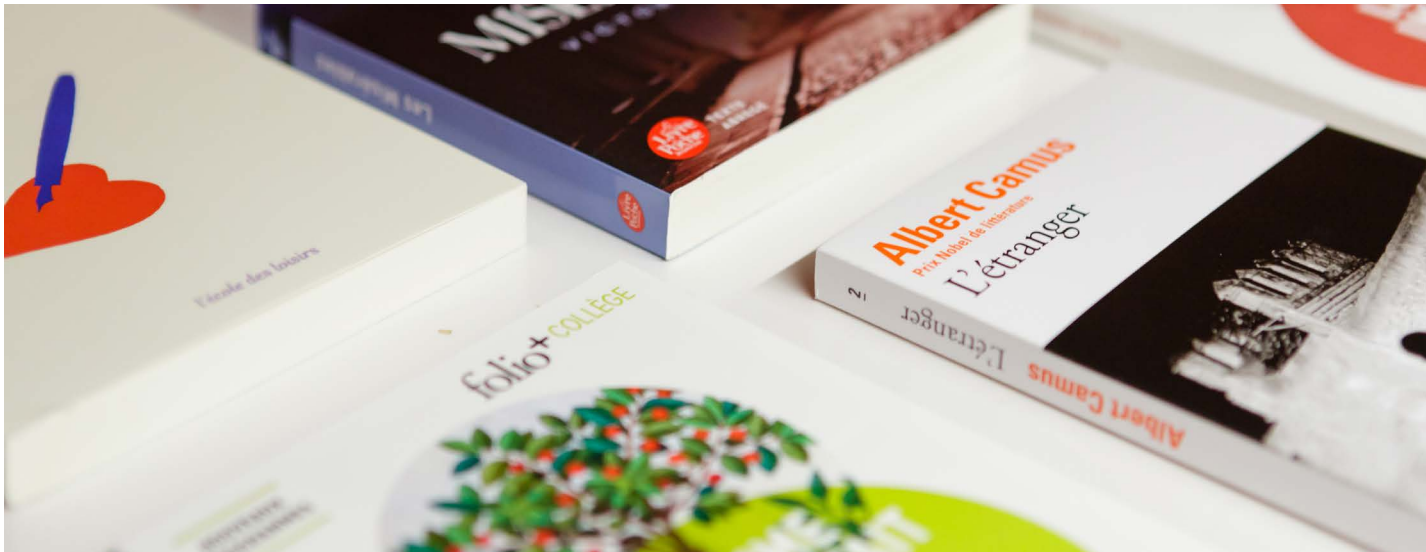
Coursework:

20%

Examination:

80%

(40%+40%)



French

Why study French?

Choosing to study a language gives you an enormous advantage, not just in terms of linguistic competence. As an individual, you will grow in overall confidence, develop strong communication skills and an awareness of other diverse cultures.

French, with a reach of over 300 million people across the five continents is the international language of cooking, fashion, theatre, the visual arts, dance and architecture. Your A Level in French will give you access to great works of literature, as well as an incredibly rich culture of films and songs. The greats of Francophone culture; Victor Hugo, Molière, Léopold Senghor, Edith Piaf, Jean-Paul Sartre, Alain Delon and Zinedine Zidane await you.

Course content

The A Level course is a fascinating one that enables you to simultaneously develop your linguistic competences and get under the skin of French-speaking society, culture and political life. You will explore issues such as the changing nature of family, diversity, criminality, the online world, immigration, political tensions and contemporary Francophone music.

There will be in-depth studies of either two novels or a film and a novel. You will submit an independent research project of your choosing.

You will also be expected to undertake a stay in the French-speaking world. This could be either an exchange or a cultural/study tour and will give you an invaluable opportunity to experience Francophone culture and everyday life and deeply consolidate your linguistic skills.

Inspirational starting point
Paroles by Jacques Prévert

Preparation for the course

You should follow news and current affairs in French closely over the Summer using a range of media, such as newspapers, the internet, TV and podcasts. You should take every opportunity to consolidate and extend your spoken French throughout the Summer, such as through sports activities and clubs and spending time with French-speaking friends.

Read French and tackle some of the wonderful works of French literature, both old and new. Why not spend the Summer tackling Camus' L'Étranger or Sagan's Bonjour Tristesse?

Future pathways

In addition to developing spoken competence, you will develop invaluable transferable skills such as critical thinking, risk-taking, resilience and cultural and cognitive flexibility. Language skills are highly sought after by universities and employers and are a great asset for many international organisations as well as a wide variety of fields including the Arts, Business, Law, Science, Philosophy, History, Theatre, Engineering and Psychology.

Indicative entrance criteria:
GCSE French Grade 6 or equivalent

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7652



Coursework: 0%
Examination: 100%



German

Why study German?

German is the second most commonly used scientific language in the world. It is the language with the most native speakers in the European Union and the most-spoken language of Switzerland. Germany is the world's second-largest exporter and its economy ranks number 1 in Europe and number 4 worldwide.

The German-speaking world plays one of the most significant roles in the Arts. Indeed, many of the most important contributions to literature, music, art, film and philosophy come from the German-speaking world. Knowledge of the language is highly regarded by universities and it is a very logical language with many links to English, making it relatively easy for English speakers to learn.

In our increasingly globalised society, there has never been a more exciting and important time to be multilingual.

Course content

You will further develop your linguistic skills, including spoken, and translation skills. Our A Level course allows you to delve deeply into aspects of German-speaking society, such as music, fashion and the digital world. Amongst other topics, you will debate and explore multiculturalism and learn about artistic culture and political life. Topics include:

- Youth politics,
- The consequences of reunification,
- Germany and the EU,
- Art and architecture.

You study two novels or one film and one novel in-depth. You will also complete an individual research project of your own choosing which you will debate in detail at the end of the course.

You will be expected to undertake a visit to a part of the German-speaking world during the course. This will enable you to truly experience everyday life and culture and will prove an invaluable experience to consolidate your linguistic progress. This could be as part of an exchange or a cultural/study tour.

Inspirational starting point
Die Verwandlung – Franz Kafka

Preparation for the course

Students should already have a sound knowledge of the grammatical and linguistic structures covered at GCSE.

We recommend that you take advantage of the wide range of media available to keep up to date with current affairs in the German-speaking world. Take every opportunity to keep practising your language skills and start exploring German literature. Read books such as Bernhard Schlink's Der Vorleser and watch films, such as Goodbye Lenin or Das Leben der Anderen.

Future pathways

Knowledge of German opens up endless opportunities to study and work all over the world, in a wide range of fields, including law, science, the arts and engineering.

Indicative entrance criteria:
GCSE German Grade 6 or equivalent

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7662



Coursework: 0%
Examination: 100%



Geography

“Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future”
Michael Palin

Why study Geography?

There has never been a more important time to study A Level Geography. Climate change, migration, environmental degradation, social issues and natural hazards are at a critical point in determining our future. Being a highly respected academic A Level subject, it is useful not only for Geography-based degrees, such as Environmental Science, but also for further studies like Biology, Business Studies and Economics.

Course content

In Year 12, we will study Changing Places, Global Governance and Ecosystems under Stress.

In Year 13, we look at the Water and Carbon cycle, Glacial systems and landscapes, and Population and the environment.

Preparation for the course

Watch some geographical documentaries which will help develop your general geographical knowledge and understanding and help you see what an amazing world we live in.

Podcasts:

Costing the Earth – There are some great podcasts here to pick from on a wide variety of geographical issues <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r4wn/episodes/player>

Royal Geographical Society – “Ask the Geographer” podcasts – <https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/ask-the-expert-podcasts/>

Books:

Prisoners of Geography by Tim Marshall

Factfulness: Ten reasons we’re wrong about the world – and why things are better than you think by Hans Rosling

Films:

Touching the Void
Slumdog Millionaire

Future pathways

According to the Royal Geographical Society, Geography graduates have some of the highest rates of graduate employment.

Geography is fantastic for any kind of career that involves the environment, planning, or collecting and interpreting data.

Popular careers for people with geography qualifications include: weather forecasting, energy and sustainability, town and transport planning, surveying, conservation, waste and water management, environmental planning, tourism.

The army, police, government, research organisations, law and business world also love the practical research skills that geographers develop.

Because geographers learn about human and population development, geography can be useful for jobs in charity and international relations too.



History

Why study History?

Historians are best placed to make sense of our rapidly changing world. No other discipline deals so centrally with change as history. Historians also grapple with causation, and for any of the questions we might ask about the present – what prompted the Brexit vote or the emergence of Trump-like populism? – history gives us a grounding in how to answer them.

The past itself is inherently fascinating – no matter what you find interesting, everything has a history. Not only can historians move about in time and space, but we also have the privilege of being able to study absolutely anything: from the history of food, health and emotions to the history of ideas, sexuality and the environment, as well as more traditional political and socio-economic topics.

Furthermore, there are many skills that historians share with other disciplines: the ability to handle evidence, construct arguments, deal with ambiguity and assess conflicting interpretations are all executed to a high Level by historians.

Course content

Our A Level course is made up of two units, which are studied over both years 12 and 13:
A depth study on the Transformation of China (1936-1997) and a breadth study of the late British Empire, 1857-1967, which explores Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Our course has been designed to have a wide international scope. It will provide an understanding of the forces that have shaped the modern world. In addition, you will complete an extended historical investigation as coursework. This should take the form of

a question in the context of approximately 100 years. This is a fantastic opportunity to develop your own interests and will be great preparation for researching and writing essays at university level. You will engage with a wide range of historical interpretations, and with the sources that historians have used as evidence to answer their questions about the past.

Inspirational starting point

Maoism – A Global History, Julia Lovell

Preparation for the course

Broaden your knowledge of global history by reading, for example, ‘Sapiens’ by Yuval Noah Harari or Peter Frankopan’s ‘The Silk Roads: A New History of the World.’

Deepen your understanding of a topic that interests you – start by listening to a few podcasts for ideas (e.g.: You’re Dead to Me, History Extra, In Our Time) or watching some historical films. Then find out more: ask for reading recommendations, complete a course through FutureLearn or the Open University and immerse yourself in the literature, art and music of the time.

Future pathways

The disciplinary skills of a historian can lead anywhere: the ability to analyse critically and communicate clearly are invaluable in a wide range of subjects and career paths. Moreover, studying history encourages us to ask and answer important questions about our increasingly complex world.

Indicative entrance criteria:
Geography GCSE Grade 6 or equivalent

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7037



Coursework: 20%
Examination: 80%

Indicative entrance criteria:
GCSE Grade 6 or equivalent qualification

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7042



Coursework: 20%
Examination: 80%
2 papers



Mathematics

(40%+40%)

Why study Mathematics?

If you love solving problems or enjoy the satisfaction of getting a single right answer, Mathematics may well be the subject for you.

Mathematics can be useful in many other areas: from engineering to economics and medicine to computing. The social sciences, geography and its related fields will require mathematics in order to analyse statistics. Many students say "Maths is a subject where I know that hard work will get me a better grade". They take it because they are confident that their determination will be rewarded. Maths is hard, and universities and employers know that, so they respect people who have done well in it.

Course content

Mathematics at A Level is split into Pure and Applied. Most of the mathematics you have learned to date is Pure Mathematics and you will extend your understanding of this in many ways. You will learn how to solve cubic equations in addition to quadratics, study vectors in three dimensions rather than just two and explore the properties of "sin" and "cos" beyond triangles.

The most significant idea developed is that of calculus, which allows you to measure the rate at which a variable changes. Newton first developed this idea in order to prove that the Earth travels around the sun in an elliptical orbit, but it now has a multitude of applications. In Mechanics you will learn how to simplify the complexity of the real world to make predictions about its behaviour. By applying Newton's principles you will learn to answer questions: at what angle should you kick a football to attain the greatest

range? Why does your stomach lurch when a lift comes to a stop? Statistics helps us to make decisions when faced with uncertainty. Does a drug work? Is a jury biased? How certain can you be when making such a statement? You will learn to use probability to answer such questions and will also develop the statistics you have learnt at GCSE, discovering new ways of analysing data to compare populations.

Inspirational starting point

Fermat's Last Theorem - Simon Singh

Preparation for the course

Mathematics is a subject which builds upon previous learning, and so if you are not totally secure in the concepts of GCSE mathematics, you will find learning new ideas difficult. If you can continue to improve your understanding of the ideas from GCSE by practicing on [drfrostmaths.com](https://www.drfrostmaths.com): if you are not already at GES, you can sign up with us in order to see our Year 11 scheme of work - it would be useful for you to practice questions from this.

Future pathways

Learning mathematics is challenging but the reward is significant. Mathematicians are key individuals in a wide variety of roles in today's world because of their ability to spot patterns, think abstractly and to generalise concepts. People who have studied mathematics at a high level occupy top positions at companies from Google and Facebook, UBS and Deloitte to Aston Martin. As high-tech industries grow, these skills are only going to be more in demand.

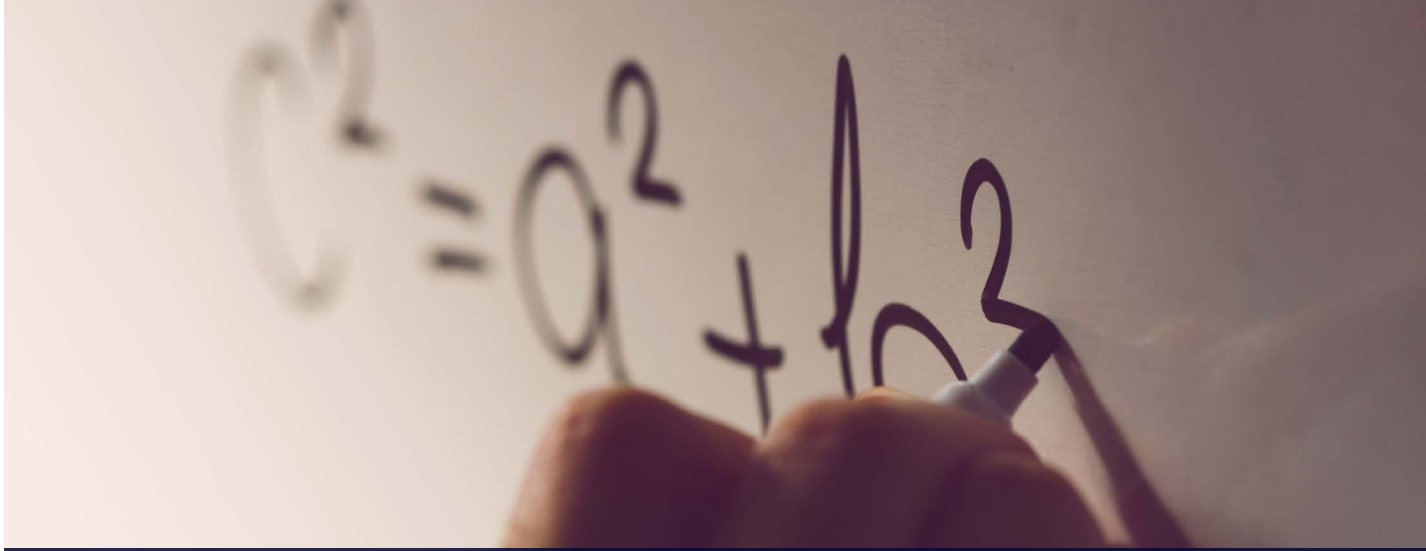
Indicative entrance criteria:
Mathematics GCSE
Grade 7 or equivalent

Exam board:
Edexcel
Syllabus:
9MA0



Coursework:
0%

Examination:
100%



Further Mathematics

(40%+40%)

Why study Further Mathematics?

Because you love mathematics, and you're really good at it! Further mathematics builds upon the material in mathematics A Level - you'll learn about more abstract concepts and apply them to many more real-life situations. If you aim to study Mathematics, Physics, Computer Science, Engineering or Economics at a top university like Cambridge, Harvard or the Sorbonne, then studying Further Mathematics A Level is almost essential.

Course content

What number has the property that its square is negative? The answer to this question is found in the Further Mathematics course, and it also poses new and interesting scenarios in which geometrical skills can be applied to shed light on algebraic problems.

You'll learn to use matrices both to solve simultaneous equations and to explore transformations of points and shapes on the plane, and much more about using vectors to describe objects in three dimensions.

The calculus which you encounter in your A Level Mathematics course is extended and developed so you'll be able to solve a much greater number of problems, including finding solutions to equations which involve rates of change.

You'll learn how to describe space using not only (x, y) Cartesian coordinates but also with polar coordinates, and through doing so you'll find some interesting new graphs. The applied lessons will build on the statistics and mechanics encountered in the Mathematics course. You will learn to use certain statistical models

(Poisson, exponential, rectangular) to make predictions and test hypotheses, and make sensible assertions about how confident you are in your decisions. You'll be able to model collisions between particles, use your trigonometric understanding to describe circular motion and employ calculus to Newtonian models to make them more realistic and predictions more accurate.

Inspirational starting point

The Map of Mathematics - Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OmJ-4B-mS-Y>

Preparation for the course

You should use [drfrostmaths.com](https://www.drfrostmaths.com) to keep improving your fluency with the topics you have studied so far, especially algebra, rules of indices and graphs.

You might also read some general interest maths books such as Chaos by James Gleick or Fermat's Last Theorem by Simon Singh.

Future pathways

Those who want to study mathematics, physics or computer science at university will benefit greatly from successfully completing the A Level in Further Mathematics. The course challenges students to reason carefully and critically in ways which are beneficial to many other possible study and career paths, and as such a highly regarded qualification it can add weight to applications for all sorts of jobs or university courses.

Indicative entrance criteria:
Mathematics GCSE
Grade 7, but ideally 8 or 9 or equivalent (need to be studying Mathematics A Level too)

Exam board:
Edexcel
Syllabus:
9FMO



Coursework:
0%

Examination:
100%



Music

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

Why study Music?

Music A Level is a creative and empowering course. It gives you the opportunity to engage critically with selected pieces at depth. At the same time, you can experience artistic performance and learn to compose music. The course will allow you to develop as a perceptive, analytical, and passionate musician through the wide-ranging programme of study.

Studying an Arts subject such as Music allows you to use expression, open-mindedness, and creativity in a fundamentally human way. These skills are highly valued by universities and open doors to countless career options. If you enjoy performing, composing, and using analytical skills to explore a wide range of music, you should consider choosing this subject at A Level.

Course content

In Year 12, you will study compositional techniques and work on one of two compositions. You will study set pieces from:

- Instrumental Music,
- Vocal Music,
- Music for Film,
- Popular Music & Jazz.

This will include excerpts from Mozart's 'The Magic Flute', Bernard Hermann's 'Psycho', and The Beatles' 'Revolver'.

You will refine your performance on your own instrument.

In Year 13, you will complete both of your compositions:

- From a set brief based on the compositional techniques previously studied,

- A piece of your own choice

Study further set works from the areas of

- Fusions, and
- New Directions.

You will also record your performance coursework.

Preparation for the course

- Listen to a wide range of music, aiming to relate this to the A Level areas of study.
- Recap history and theory of music covered in the GCSE course (get in touch if you haven't done this previously)
- Ensure you are confident reading music in the treble and bass clef, and understanding key signatures, cadences, and chords.
- Continue to practise your chosen instrument.

Future pathways

Possible careers directly related to music include:

- Performance musician,
- Music teacher,
- Music therapist,
- Arts/concert administration and management,
- Film, television and video game composition.
- An A Level in Music is a valuable pathway to further study at a university or conservatoire, or to work in the music industry. Music is highly regarded by many universities and employers, as it compliments other subjects, as it compliments other subjects well, and shows that you have a broad range of skills.

Indicative entrance criteria:

GCSE Music: Grade 6 or above.
If no GCSE, students should be able to perform on an instrument (including voice) at ABRSM Grade 6, and have a grasp of music theory to ABRSM Grade 5. Auditions or entry exams may be required.

Exam board:
Edexcel
Syllabus:
9MU0

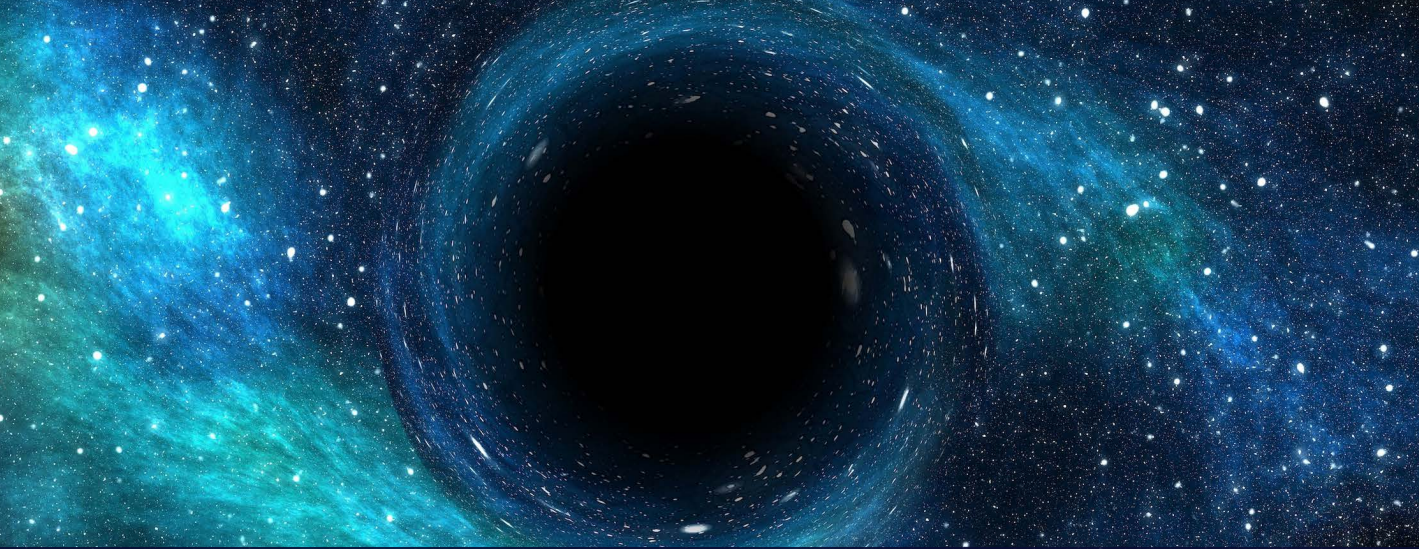


Coursework: **Examination:**

60%

(30% performing,
30% composing)

40%



Physics

Why study Physics?

Physics explains your place in the world around you. It also attempts to show how your world fits into the vast space that is the universe. The laws of physics transcend borders, so wherever you are it puts maths into practice and teaches you to think and develop intellectually. As possibly the most versatile subject to pursue at A Level it will make you attractive to university recruiters, will open doors into all kinds of interesting career choices and complements most other A Level subject choices.

You don't have to be a genius to study physics but you'd be pretty smart to choose it.

Course content

Being the most fundamental of the experimental sciences, Physics seeks to explain the universe itself from the very smallest particles to the vast distances between the galaxies.

In Year 12, we will build on prior knowledge and topics including Mechanics, Waves and Electricity, while introducing new topics such as Particle Physics and Quantum Phenomena.

In Year 13, we will develop these ideas further through the study of Electrical, Gravitational and Magnetic Fields. Other topics will include Thermal Physics and Nuclear Physics.

In addition, you will study one of the following: Astrophysics, Medical physics, Engineering physics, Turning points in physics or Electronics.

Future pathways

Studying Physics at A Level or degree level opens up all sorts of career opportunities.

- Geophysicist/field seismologist
- Healthcare scientist, medical physics
- Radiation protection practitioner
- Research scientist (physical sciences)
- Scientific laboratory technician
- Meteorologist • Structural or Acoustic engineer
- Product/process development scientist
- Systems developer
- Technical author.

You can also move into engineering, astrophysics, chemical physics, nanotechnology, renewable energy and more. With physics, the opportunities are endless.

Inspirational starting point

For the Love of Physics : From the End of the Rainbow to the Edge Of Time – A Journey Through the Wonders of Physics – Walter Lewin

Preparation for the course

We recommend the GCSE to Level A. Progression activities and additional reading. Read and complete activities:

- GCSE to A Level Progression
<https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/physics/specifications/AQA-7407-7408-SP-2015.PDF>

- Six Easy Pieces – Richard P Feynman

Indicative entrance criteria:

Science GCSE Grade 6 or equivalent

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7408



Coursework:

0%

(but 12 required
practicals)

Examination:

100%



Spanish

Why study Spanish?

Spanish, with more than 500 million speakers, makes the rich cultural offering of over 20 Spanish-speaking countries available to you. As well as indulging in the original works of Cervantes, Federico García Lorca, Borges, Cortázar, García Márquez, Octavio Paz, Mario Vargas Llosa and a whole lot more, the resurgence of Latin pop has thrust Latin culture, its origins and influences, into the mainstream for you to explore.

Studying a language opens endless doors for you. In addition to gaining invaluable language skills, which allow you to truly immerse yourself in countries and their cultures, experience literature and film in their original form and have access to study and work opportunities abroad.

Course content

The A Level course is wide-reaching and in-depth. Linguistic competence is developed and honed and you explore in depth a wide range of topics related to Hispanic society, such as social and technological change, highlights of artistic culture and multiculturalism, politics and the influence of the past on today's Hispanic world.

During the course you will also have the exciting opportunity to study in-depth Hispanic literature and film: either one novel and one film or two novels. For the spoken element of the course you will also undertake an independent research project of your choosing. You are expected to take part in a visit abroad during the course. This will help you experience the culture and everyday life in a Spanish-speaking country. These visits are expected to be either an exchange or cultural/study tour.

Inspiration starting point

Latinoamérica - Calle 13
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rA2FAVRAO2Y>
A journey across Latin America in one song

Preparation for the course

Students should already have a sound knowledge of the grammatical and linguistic structures covered at GCSE and should take the opportunity over the Summer to further hone their linguistic skills by taking advantage of all opportunities to practise their spoken Spanish. You can keep up to date with current affairs through a range of media and by starting to read and watch some of the masterpieces of Spanish film and literature.


Future pathways

An A Level in Spanish will open doors to further study, travel and work opportunities. Spanish, with its global reach, is highly valued in the work of numerous international organisations as well as in the fields of Accountancy, Banking, Marketing, Sales, Tourism and Trade.

As well as becoming competent in Spanish, you will acquire transferable skills such as resilience, resourcefulness, creativity, critical thinking, and linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility.

Entrance criteria:
GCSE Spanish Grade 6
or equivalent

Exam board:
AQA
Syllabus:
7692



Coursework: 0% Examination: 100%

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