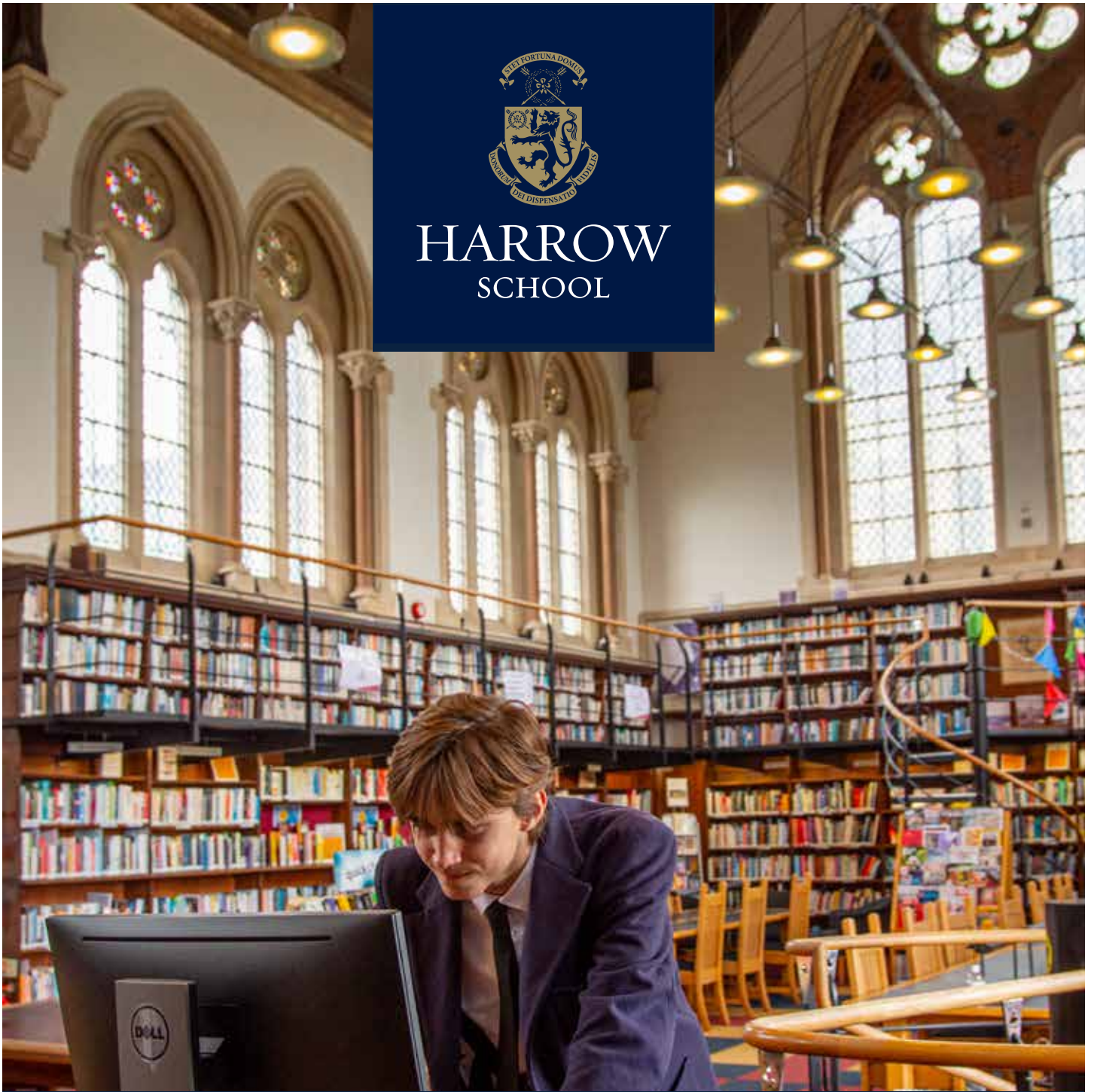


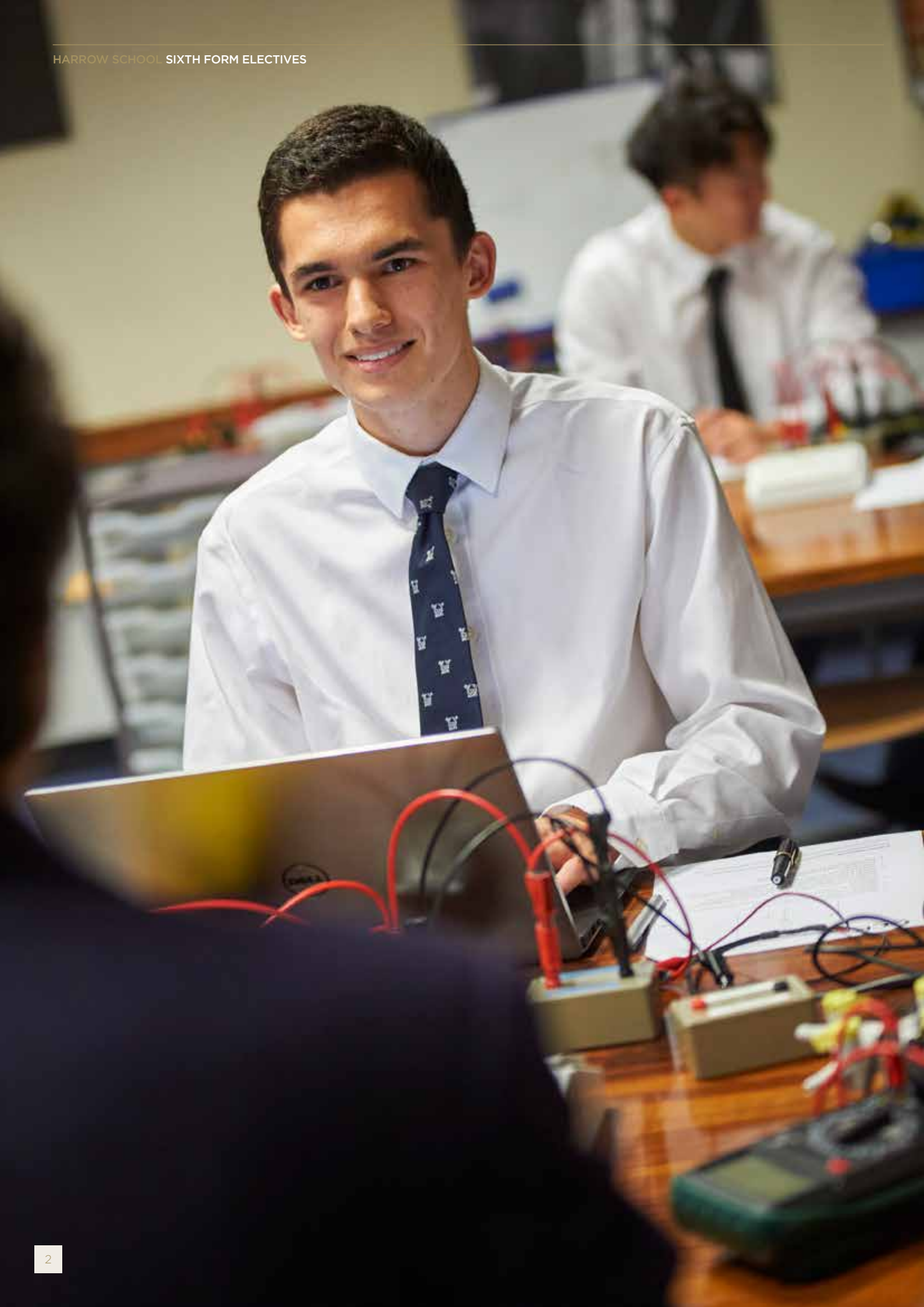


HARROW
SCHOOL



SIXTH FORM ELECTIVES





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Electives are unexamined courses that Masters elect to offer and boys, in turn, choose, either to complement or to contrast with their A level subjects. Electives offer boys an opportunity to explore areas of study beyond the confines of any examined syllabus. They are designed to promote independent learning, extension work, lateral thinking and problem-solving skills.

Most Electives are short courses, consisting of eight lessons, although there are also a few longer courses, which comprise 24 lessons and last a whole term.

In the Lower Sixth, Electives are taught in all three terms. They form an integral part of the new Harrow Diploma, which requires boys to gain nine Elective credits over the course of their two years in the Sixth Form, with an expectation that they take at least one Elective in each of the five subject groups: Individuals and Societies; Maths, Science and Technology; Literature and the Arts; Life Skills and Wellbeing; and Interdisciplinary Courses. Boys register their preferences in the first week of the Autumn term, and the lessons begin in Week 2.

Upper Sixth Electives are not part of the Harrow Diploma. They are taken, in the Autumn term only, by boys who are studying three subjects for A level. They take three short Elective courses or one longer course, and they may opt for Electives from any of the five groups. They register their preferences in the first week of the Autumn term, and the lessons begin in Week 2.

This document contains brief descriptions of all the Electives courses that are being offered in 2021-2022.

A D Todd

Director of the Super-Curriculum

GROUP A: INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE SUIT (TMB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

The suit is an iconic outfit suggestive of both individual power and conformity. Where did the suit come from? What social and historical trends shaped the suit? What does the suit tell us about masculinity today? We consider these questions through cultural theory, history, literature and art. Texts will include *Sex and Suits: The Evolution of Modern Dress* by Anne Hollander, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde, and *The Painter of Modern Life* by Charles Baudelaire.

20TH- AND 21ST-CENTURY POLITICAL IDEAS (DRW)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course explores some of the dominant ideas that have shaped how people live and study in the 20th and 21st centuries. The course focuses on the analysis of primary texts. Preparatory reading will underpin pupil-led discussions on the sources provided. Ideas include Marxism-Leninism, Social Democracy, Black Power, French thought (Sartre and Foucault), the New Left, the New Right, Feminism and the Third Way.

EXPLORING THE SILK ROAD (GJBC)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

The Silk Road was the first glimpse of the globalised world we are unable to escape today. Goods, cultures, religions and diseases were disseminated from far flung corners of the globe along a network of trade routes that connected East and West between the second century BC and the 18th century. This course explores these historical flows and connections through the lens of the contemporary geopolitical structure of Eurasia, the cities that rose and fell as a result, and the overland routes that are available to modern-day travellers.

THE RECEPTION OF GREEK TRAGEDY (RHTN)

(RHTN)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course traces the reception of Greek tragedy from the Hellenistic period to the modern day, including Roman, early modern and modern receptions of ancient drama. Although our discussions will be grounded in the plays of the three great ancient tragedians Sophocles, Euripides and Aeschylus, we will branch out into broader themes such as psychoanalysis, gender and 'self v other' in the context of tragedy. All texts will be studied in translation.

‘BECAUSE IT IS THERE’: A BRIEF HISTORY OF MOUNTAINEERING

(MJT)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

In this course we ask why human beings are irresistibly drawn to climbing ever higher, more dangerous and challenging mountains. We explore the history and evolution of mountaineering over the last 250 years, review the nature of mountaineering in the present day and speculate on its future development. The course is underpinned by a philosophical inquiry into the ethical implications of undertaking such life-threatening pursuits.

EMPIRE AND IDENTITY

(EMH)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

What is the relationship between literature and politics? How do epic poems explore the ideas of authority and colonisation, or more broadly, the experiences of the coloniser and the colonised? What role does romance play in the colonial dream? This course will look broadly at three epic texts (in translation), composed under different social and historical contexts, and endeavour to explore the themes of empire and identity which pervade them all. We will also be concerned with questions of gender, religion and modern literary reception.

GLOBESITY

(ERC)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course is a geographical exploration of the prevalence of obesity in both advanced and developing countries. We examine the creation of obesogenic environments (environments that encourage people to eat unhealthily and not do enough exercise) through a consideration of the role of transnational corporations, globalisation and inequality. We also evaluate the current strategies that are being employed to combat obesity.

GROUP B: MATHS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

HUMAN EVOLUTION: SEVEN MILLION YEARS OF CHANGE

(WMAL)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course is an exploration of changes in characteristics in the human species since our divergence from chimpanzees, focusing on consciousness, language, tool-use and culture. How have those changes affected our identity as a species and our sense of ourselves as exceptional, and how can we use this understanding to project ourselves sustainably in the future?

THE CHEMISTRY OF COOKING

(DH)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

You become a chemist any time you step into a kitchen. You're surrounded by reagents and equipment and, as you cook, you oversee intricate chemical transformations that influence the taste, texture and appearance of food. In this practical-based course we conduct experiments and cook food in order to explore why dishes are prepared in different ways. You don't need to be taking A level Chemistry, but be aware that this course involves a lot of practical work.

RECORDING AND SOUND TECHNOLOGY

(SM)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course provides an introduction to the recording process, covering the basics of acoustics, sound, production and working with a digital audio workstation. You will study the history of recording, sampling and synthesis, and produce your own track in the Recording Studio.

CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY

(MJMR)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth, in all its forms and interactions. In the words of Professor David Macdonald, 'without biodiversity, there is no future for humanity'. In this course we consider how different types of biodiversity (habitat, species, genetic) are defined, and we examine various techniques for measuring them (quantitatively). The importance of biodiversity for the maintenance of ecological stability will be discussed, as will some of the best ways of conserving it.

LIFE ON THE ICE

(ODMB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

Polar bears, beluga whales, emperor penguins, fur seals, and albatrosses. Millions of years of evolution have enabled these organisms to survive in some of the most extreme and inhospitable parts of the world, the Arctic and Antarctic. These polar regions play an essential role in the global climate system and are rich in biodiversity. However, global warming is fuelling ocean acidification and causing huge losses of ice across these areas, putting entire ecosystems at risk. In this course you will learn about polar biology, the impacts of climate change, and what we can do as individuals to protect these amazing habitats.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

(CMC)

Course duration: long course (24 lessons)

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly permeating all industries and having a profound impact on many aspects of our existence. This course is designed to give you a firm understanding of what AI is and its applications. You will become acquainted with terms like machine learning, deep learning and neural networks, and learn how to programme basic AI machines. By the end of the course, you will have had hands-on interactions with several AI environments and applications, and have built and deployed some simple AI models and intelligent machines.

ENRICHED PHYSICS

(JAPB AND MTG)

Course duration: long course (24 lessons)

This course, aimed at boys hoping to apply to study physical science or engineering subjects at university, explores physics beyond the A level curriculum, using full mathematical rigour. Beginning with some essential mathematics (complex numbers and differential equations) we move on to classical particles and waves before introducing quantum theory and Schrodinger's equation. This course is only suitable for those taking A level Physics and Mathematics.

GROUP C: LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

READING THE SCREEN: FILM STUDIES

(TMK)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

In this course we examine the various historical and critical approaches to cinema as an art form, exploring its artistic, cultural and political implications and how it evokes emotion through its direction. You will reflect on an eclectic mix of films, and will also produce a short film of your own.

ON THE ROAD TO FIND OUT: AN EXPLORATION OF CULTURE, MUSIC AND RELIGION THROUGH THE WORKS OF CAT STEVENS

(CEGB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

One of the most famous singer-songwriters of the 20th century, Cat Stevens inspired thousands with songs of hope, spiritual exploration and optimism. Through the lens of his discography, this course will explore concepts of spirituality, personal growth, philanthropy, religious conversion and the music business.

THE HISTORY OF THE ESSAY

(FSW)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

The essay (from French 'essayer', meaning 'to attempt') is the foundational writing style of our time. It began in France in the late 16th century, and the format spread across Europe like wildfire. This course will look at key essays from the 16th to the 21st century, considering the form of the essay, its purposes, and its importance in the history of medicine, science and philosophy.

CLASSICAL AND ROMANTIC MUSIC

(DNB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course is an exploration of some of the most popular and beautiful music ever written and performed, from the Classical period (roughly 1750–1820) and the Romantic period (roughly 1800–1910). It involves some research and examination of musical scores, but is mainly an opportunity to listen to, learn about and, above all, enjoy some wonderful music.

THE VAMPIRE IN LITERATURE

(VHA)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

Malevolent, seductive and bloodthirsty... This course charts the literary development of the vampire from the 18th to the 20th century, from Byron's unfinished horror story of 1819, via Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897), to Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire* (1976). Along the way we consider the politics of gender, sexuality, power and aesthetics, and also look at the real-life cases of Romanian Count Vlad the Impaler (aka Count Dracula) and Hungarian Countess Elizabeth Báthory – two prolific serial killers with a literal taste for blood.

THE POWER OF THE PEN: EIGHT BOOKS TO EXPAND YOUR WORLD

(RMT)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

In this course we look at excerpts from eight books, whose authors and ideas represent four different continents. Some of the themes we explore are multiculturalism, feminism, bullying, colonisation, war and travel. The writers include Bernadine Evaristo, Robert Graves, Ernest Hemingway, Ma Jian, Tanizaki Jun'ichiro and Virginia Woolf.

GROUP D: LIFE SKILLS AND WELLBEING

THINKING FAST AND SLOW

(JDBM)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

Our minds are tripped up by error and prejudice (even when we think we are being logical). Using the research of Daniel Kahneman, this course investigates strategies and techniques that enable you to make better decisions at school, at home, in the workplace, and in everything you do. The central thesis is a dichotomy between two modes of thought: 'System 1' is fast, instinctive and emotional; 'System 2' is slower, more deliberative and more logical.

ARMY LEADERSHIP

(PSL)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

'There is nobody who cannot vastly improve his powers of leadership by a little thought and practice', said the great British military commander Field Marshal William Slim. This course is not just for boys in the CCF, but for anyone who is interested in furthering his knowledge of the British armed forces and their approach to leadership. Areas covered will include the philosophy of military leadership, methods of instruction, fieldcraft and tactics lessons, and case studies of specific leadership scenarios.

AN INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

(GBF)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

What are people most afraid of? What do our dreams mean? What makes us happy? What are the causes and cures of mental illness? This course tries to answer questions like this, with an overview of the scientific study of thought and behaviour. It explores topics such as perception, communication, learning, memory, decision-making, persuasion, emotions and social behaviour. We look at how these aspects of the mind develop in children, how they differ across people, how they are wired up in the brain, and how they break down due to illness and injury.

CRITICAL THINKING

(CDB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

Reasoning is the everyday process that we all use in order to draw conclusions from facts or evidence. To think critically about what you read and hear is a vital skill. This course will help you to analyse the reasoning in books, articles or speeches, to identify flaws in arguments and to approach any topic with the ability to reason clearly and think critically. In the age of fake news these skills have never been more important.

THE STRENGTH OF THE MIND

(RAJF)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course is about anxiety and how to cope with it. We examine the biopsychology of anxiety and explore the idea of mental toughness. There is a specific focus on the experience of boys at Harrow School, with real life examples of people who have worked hard to develop a stable and positive mindset.

GROUP E: INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES

MEDIEVAL SCIENCE FICTION

(ERPB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

From alchemical mind-control to interplanetary chariots of knowledge, medieval literature abounds with weird and wonderful science. In this course we study both science in literature and science as literature. The texts we will be studying (all in translation – from Latin, Greek, Arabic, Old French, and Middle English) paint a detailed picture of how medieval writers creatively conceived the universe around them.

BACH'S ST MATTHEW PASSION: MUSIC MEETS HISTORY, THEOLOGY AND MATHEMATICS

(DNW)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course involves lots of listening – to J S Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, one of the most wonderful and extraordinary pieces of music ever written. We will explore Bach's combination of creative genius and intellectual flair by examining his use of reflective poetry alongside scripture, his integration of Lutheran hymns, the role of the soloists, orchestra and chorus, and what might be described as the 'mathematical' structure of the work.

THE 450 MILLION DOLLAR PAINTING

(JESB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course is about a very famous and beautiful Renaissance painting, *Salvator Mundi*, usually attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. Everything about this work of art is controversial. Who bought it? Who endorsed it? Who restored it? Who decided its market value? And even ... who painted it? This course will look at some of the ethical issues in the art world that this painting, and its sale, force us to confront.

FAITH, ETHICS AND SHORT STORIES

(SWB)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course looks at some of the short stories of the mid-20th-century American author Flannery O'Connor, who wrote in a sardonic Southern Gothic style, often about grotesque characters in violent situations. Her work shocks, offends, inspires, challenges, enlightens and comforts. We will read some of her most notable stories, considering them in the context of her surprisingly simple and short life. This course is not just for those studying English or Theology & Philosophy, but will be of interest to anyone who enjoys a good story.

ARCHITECTURE 101

(DMD)

Course duration: short course (8 lessons)

This course covers the basics of architecture, looking at core design principles and movements, and iconic architects such as Le Corbusier, Gaudi, Mies van der Rohe, Norman Foster and Zaha Hadid. The course is underpinned by collaborative project work, designed to encourage the creative and critical thought process, by visualising and testing potential solutions to complex spatial and social issues within a holistic global scenario.





HARROW SCHOOL

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