

Year 12 Liberal Studies Options Booklet

Lent term 2021

Liberal Studies in the Remove

These courses are designed to broaden your horizons, to pique your curiosity, to allow you to explore areas of knowledge which either complement your examined courses or cover topics in unrelated areas which may interest, intrigue or fascinate you. The courses will be rigorous but unexamined.

Please read the descriptions in this booklet carefully, and consider which courses you would like to study. You will choose your courses via an online link which will be made available to you soon.

Do choose your courses in advance of this as the choices will be allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis. Course maximums tend to be 15 but for some courses the maximum is lower. Where relevant, this is stated in the booklet. (If you have been asked to study EAL during this period each week then please look over the description at the end of the booklet and choose that option on the online form.)

You may select your choices from any of the categories and courses below.

- **Category A: *Film, Art and Culture***
 - [1. The role of Cinema in shaping our lives](#)
 - [2. Before Stars Wars Ruined Everything](#)
 - [3. Spanish and Latin America Film Studies](#)
 - [4. Understanding Opera: it's not over until the fat lady sings](#)
 - [5. Introduction to classical literature and language](#)
 - [6. The Italian Renaissance](#)
- **Category B: *Exploring Creativity***
 - [7. Ceramics](#)
- **Category C: *Politics, Philosophy and the Humanities***
 - [8. Social Psychology and the Philosophy of Mind](#)
 - [9. Military History](#)
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 - [11. A History of modern Europe in 50 objects](#)
 - [12. India 1885-1947: the unmaking of an empire](#)
 - [13. Truth and truthfulness](#)
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- **Category D: *Science and Technology***
 - [15. Mobile App Development](#)
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- **Category E: *Practical Skills***
 - [18. Technical Theatre](#)
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 - [22. Beginners' Chinese](#)
 - [23. Continuers' Chinese](#)
 - [24. Cookery](#)

CATEGORY A | *Film, Art & Culture*

1. The role of cinema in shaping our lives: why do films have such an influence on us and what role should they play?

Course description

We look at the role of film in society and how it has grown to become such a ubiquitous art. What makes a 'great' movie? We will study the history of film, the economics and future of the industry. Finally, how has the internet and other technologies such as CGI and 3D have affected the world of movies.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

Film and Theatre Studies as a BA, opportunity to produce short films, choice from a range of specialist courses to develop skills that can lead to postgraduate study and careers in the media, advertising and marketing. Chance to learn about innovative twentieth and twenty first century theatre and performance through an exciting and varied mix of theoretical and practical approaches. Critical and creative skills that open up possibilities for working in theatre, while making you attractive to a wide range of other employers.

2. Before Stars Wars Ruined Everything – New Hollywood films from 1967-1977

Course description

A film studies course, focusing on the extraordinary set of films and film-makers known as 'New Hollywood' (1967 – 1977), a decade defined by late '60s counter-culture politics and a revolutionary style of film-making. With a different, ground-breaking film as a focus each week, students learn not only how to appreciate the historical and cultural background behind these films, including the 'nouvelle vague', the British New Wave, and the new philosophies emerging at the time, but also how to read a film, giving the students a lexicon of terms with which to describe and deconstruct how films are made.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, with extended film highlights, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in film or film studies. The course should also be of interest to anyone interested in studying any of the Liberal Arts subjects, including Art, English or History.

3. Spanish and Latin America Film Studies: an appreciation of Popular Culture and Cinema

Course description

This course will include a brief history of Spain, and an introduction to film studies. Each session we will discuss and analyse films in terms of their historical context and their themes. There will be active discussion about the role film and popular culture has had in moulding modern Spanish and Latin American society. This course is open to all, and would particularly be beneficial to those studying languages, English and History at A level.

Style

This is a seminar based course, delivered by the teacher but with plenty of opportunity for class discussion and pupil presentation.

Academic area

Although this course is of particular interest to those students studying Spanish, it is definitely not a requirement. We will be looking specifically at Spanish and Latin American cinema and the important cultural role it has played. Students will also be encouraged to analyse film clips both cinematographically and in relation to their cultural background. There is also an element of student presentation.

4. Understanding Opera: it's not over until the fat lady sings.

Course description

Over the term you will study some of the most important operas that have made an impact on society. From Monteverdi to contemporary composers, you will consider how opera has influenced society and confronted key issues through Europe and beyond. You will discover divas, design and dramatic deaths. You will discuss how opera has been transposed onto the musical theatre stage and how it is adapting to remain relevant for modern audiences. You will develop your understanding of the role of opera through the ages, exploring the music, politics, fashion and society.

Academic area

This will suit anyone with an interest in culture and the Arts. No prior musical knowledge required, but an interest in music, musical theatre or theatre would be key.

5. Introduction to classical literature and language

Course description

This course provides an introduction to some of the key texts of Western literature from both the Greek and Roman traditions. There will be opportunities for students not currently studying Latin or Greek at A level to develop their translation skills, however all texts will also be available in translation. The course is tailored to meet the needs and interests of the students, and so authors studied vary, although Homer, Sophocles, Vergil and Ovid will be included.

Style

This is a class-based course, but in a university tutorial-type setting.

Academic area

This course is appropriate for students with an interest in either the classical world or Western literature, particularly those who were unable to take Latin, Greek or Classical Civilisations at A level. It is also particularly useful for those considering studying Classics, English or other related courses at university.

6. The Italian Renaissance

Course description

In this short course, we will look at what we mean by 'Renaissance' and why Italy was so important during this period. We will consider the reasons for the Renaissance, the developments and changes during the period and will focus on some of the most influential Italian artists such as Giotto, Massaccio, Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

The course is suitable for anyone who has an interest in history, art, Italy or just a general curiosity about one of the major eras of intellectual, cultural and artistic development. It will also provide a good introduction to this exciting period for students considering an undergraduate course in any of these disciplines.

7. Ceramics

Course description

Grayson Perry, the transvestite potter, won the Turner Prize in 2003 with classic Grecian-like urns bearing friezes of car-wrecks, cell-phones, supermodels, as well as more dark and literary scenes often incorporating autobiographical references. This course gives you the chance to produce your own classical urn with richly decorated surfaces. You will be guided through coil-building, slab rolling and 'scrafitto' incising with the end product being glazed. Indulge in some well-needed therapy through clay to relieve the stresses of your A-Levels.

Academic area

This will suit anyone with an interest in the Creative Arts.

NB. There is a maximum of 10 students for this course. Please prepare a second choice option in the event that this course is full.

8. Social Psychology and the Philosophy of Mind

Course description

This course starts with the criteria needed to judge whether a person is acting freely. But this philosophical problem of whether we possess free will is then approached through a number of famous psychological theories and experiments from the 1950s onwards, including Behaviourism, Asch's conformity experiments, Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance, Harlow on the nature of love, Milgram and obedience, Zimbardo and authority, Libet and Haynes. Having considered the empirical data, we will then consider the (deterministic) theories of Freud, as well as the major philosophical discussions of the mind/body problem, consciousness and free will.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in Psychology or Philosophy (either as an amateur or as a potential undergraduate). The course should also be of interest to anyone interested in studying any of the Social Sciences (e.g. Anthropology, Economics, Sociology).

9. Military history

Course description

This course covers warfare from Napoleonic times to the Vietnam War with a strong focus on the First and Second World Wars. In addition to covering major campaigns, it will investigate military leadership, strategy, tactics and the importance of new weapons and communication systems. Possible topics for the First World War include the Invasion of France in 1914, the Battle of the Somme, the War at Sea (the rise of the battleship and the Battle of Jutland) and the German Spring Offensives of 1918. For the Second World War, we may look at the Fall of France in 1940, the Invasion of Russia in 1941 (Operation Barbarossa), the War at Sea including the Battle of Midway, the British Bomber Campaign, the Battle of Kursk in 1943 and the German defeat in 1944/45.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion. It will involve the frequent use of maps supplemented by the occasional video.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in military history.

10. Linguistics

Course description

Why do we say 'geese' and not 'gooses'? or indeed 'moose' but not 'meese'? Why is it that swearwords are all to do with sex? And why do we rarely say what we actually mean? Linguistics sets about to answer questions like these. Linguistics is the scientific study of languages drawing on various and varied areas such as biology, psychology, and sociology, along with languages themselves. Starting with the building blocks of language—the sounds you can make with your vocal tract—we then look at how these sounds interact with each other, how bringing them together in certain orders lead to meaning, how context affects meaning, and how we somehow learn this incredible faculty seemingly without even trying.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in language-learning. Knowledge of other languages is helpful but not essential. It could also serve as an introduction to anyone wishing to study languages at university.

11. A History of modern Europe in 50 objects

Course description

This course will look at a range of artefacts each week as a focal point for the study of various key events in European history from c.a. 1500 to the end of the twentieth century. The course would be well-suited for any A level history students who are keen to broaden their knowledge beyond their examination syllabus, as well as any students who have not chosen history for A level but have an interest in the past and in thinking about the forces, ideas and individuals that have helped mould the continent over recent centuries.

Examples of some of the objects which will be considered, and used as a starting point, for study/discussion of the events which they help illuminate, include the following:

Martin Luther's Bible – how could one single innocuous-looking book lead to the end of over 1000 years of Christian unity in Western Europe? Why did these inked pages lead to such persecution and bloodshed whilst also inspiring so many to humanitarian acts and self-sacrifice?

Spanish 'Pieces of Eight' – way back in the times of the genuine 'Pirates of the Caribbean', how did the exploitation of South American silver and gold help lead to the extraordinary dominance of the Habsburg dynasty in sixteenth century Europe and its subsequent rapid and unforeseen decline?

A replica of the House of the Virgin Mary in Prague- what light does this shed on the Catholic Church's methods in seeking to eradicate the challenge of Protestantism in the so-called 'Counter-Reformation'?

Potatoes still laid regularly today, by visitors, on Frederick the Great of Prussia's grave- how did the humble spud lead to a revolution in agriculture and unprecedented population growth across Europe, whilst also being at the root of Irish animosity towards the British?

Diderot's Encyclopaedia- the original, eighteenth-century version of Wikipedia; its author claimed that, in writing it, he 'aimed to change the way that people think.' Did he?

The Phrygian Cap- Why was this peculiar piece of headgear all the rage back in 1789 for French Revolutionaries and, in wearing it, what were they trying to say about the new order they hoped to create? Did they succeed?

The Flags of 1848- Why were new flags suddenly being flown in *Locations* as far apart as Ireland, Hungary, Germany and Romania after revolutions broke out the *Length* and breadth of Europe? Why weren't people instead waving copies of Marx and Engels' Communist Manifesto, published in the same year?

The Maxim Gun- did you know that, just down the road, in West Norwood Cemetery, lie the mortal remains of the man responsible for this 'Purveyor of Death'? Did this invention change people's lives? Er, you could say that...

A Suffragette-defaced penny- Now who would want to deface a poor, harmless one-penny piece and why....?

A Russian Revolutionary plate- not your average piece of crockery. Was there anything to celebrate, looking back on events in Russia in November 1917, or did it all go horribly wrong long before 'Uncle Joe' Stalin was given his chance to have a go at running the great socialist ship of state?

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

This course is suitable to anyone interested in History and social sciences.

12. India 1885-1947: the unmaking of an empire

Course description

India's struggle for independence is an extraordinary story. The pivotal question of this course is how a valued and seemingly permanent imperial possession – the “jewel in the crown” – came to be granted independence only sixty years after the establishment of the Indian Congress in 1885. On the face of it, decolonisation seems to have been the direct result of nationalist pressure but the reality was much more complex. We will explore the full social, political and economic context up to the transfer of power in 1947 and investigate to what extent Partition was inevitable.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in Psychology or Philosophy (either as an amateur or as a potential undergraduate). The course should also be of interest to anyone interested in studying any of the Social Sciences (e.g. Anthropology, Economics, Sociology).

13. Truth and Truthfulness

Course description

What does it mean to be truthful? What role does truth play in our lives? What do we lose if we reject truthfulness? Modern culture exhibits two attitudes toward truth: suspicion of being deceived (no one wants to be fooled) and skepticism that objective truth exists at all (no one wants to be naive). This tension between a demand for truthfulness and the doubt that there is any truth to be found is not an abstract paradox. It has political consequences and signals a danger that our intellectual activities, particularly in the humanities, may tear themselves to pieces. This course blends philosophy, history, and a fictional account of how the human concern with truth might have arisen. We will look at the ideas of ancient thinkers such as Herodotus and Thucydides, as well as more contemporary writers such as Nietzsche and Foucault.

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in Philosophy, History and Literature (either as an amateur or as a potential undergraduate). The course should also be of interest to anyone interested in studying any of the Social Sciences (e.g. Anthropology, Economics, Sociology).

14. Britain 410 –1066: The Dark Ages

Course description

The centuries following the collapse of the Western Roman Empire are often referred to as the Europe's 'Dark Age,' but how true is this characterisation? In the British Isles, what are the momentous shifts that occurred between the Roman withdrawal and the Norman Conquest? How can we compare the lives of those living in Britain at the beginning and end of this period; what did they write down? How did the events of these centuries impact the later development and culture of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland as distinct but interconnected entities? How do we experience the legacy of the 'Dark Age' in things we encounter every day in the modern UK?

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion.

Academic area

This course provides critical context and background for the Upper School history curriculum (starting in 1066) and expands skills needed for any humanities discipline. Students will grapple with primary sources and discuss historical intricacies with their classmates, no prior knowledge or experience is expected. This course will be especially helpful for students who intend to pursue university courses in history, classics, English, art history, medieval studies, archaeology, and other related subjects.

15. Mobile App Development

Course description

This course will introduce you to the basics of mobile app and Web Design such as HTML, CSS and JavaScript. You will develop web pages from scratch using these technologies in an environment used by professional designers. In the latter part of the course we will build on these technologies to create mobile apps which are fully functional and ready to go but without the need for commercial proprietary software. All apps can be developed using basic web design skills and some pre-prepared libraries. This course is open to those who are just beginning their web development journey through to those who have considerable experience and want to develop the skills for a professional career in the mobile app design industry.

16. Big brains. Human brains. Consciousness. What's the point? An evolutionary perspective

Course description

Not all living organisms have a brain. Some animals don't even have a central nervous system let alone a brain. Yet they successfully manage to survive and reproduce. So what is the advantage to having a supercomplex big brain like we do? And where does communication and language come into this? Do we need one's inner dialogue to think deep thoughts? Is an awareness of one's awareness uniquely human? Does this help us survive better in anyway? In this course we tackle the complexities of such questions and others such as whether we will ever evolve into Homo SuperSapiens.

Style

Through lectures, discussions, games and scientific documentaries we delve into the fields of Neuroscience, Psychology, Anatomy and Biological Anthropology to seek some possible answers.

Academic area

This fascinating course is open to all those who are curious about Biology. However, it is, by nature quite academic so best suited to pupils who are keen to learn and have a strong grasp of Science in general.

17. Nature of poisons

Course description

This course is fairly open ended and will attempt to address a wide number of questions. What is a poison? How does it act? Are there any beneficial effects? What is a drug?

Style

This is a seminar-based course, delivered by the teacher with plenty of opportunity for discussion. Small Research Groups will be asked to collect and collate current relevant information available on the internet.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in Chemistry, Biology, Medicine, Psychology.

18. Technical Theatre and Production

Course description

The track record of the College for producing designers, art directors, producers, administrators, agents and creatives in film, theatre, television and events is second to none – and almost all of them have been inspired by working in the Prissian or Edward Alleyn Theatres. As film and theatre productions begin to ‘open up’ again the arts and entertainment industry need people who make performance possible; it is a richly rewarding career path.

No previous experience in the theatre is necessary and the course will be tailored to the interest of those signing up. We will give students a broad introduction to the world of theatre and film including video, lighting, sound, scenic art and stage management. Previous visits have included trips to Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Royal Opera House, as well as to a theatre production with a strong technical element.

Style

This is a practical course.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in theatre, film or the wider arts industry – this includes those whose interest might be in logistics or administration in all its forms.

NB. There is a maximum of 8 students for this course. Please prepare a second choice option in the event that this course is full.

19. Mindfulness – A Practical Introduction

Course description

This is a 10-week introduction to mindfulness specifically designed for schools. The course is structured into a set of ten lessons, each teaching a distinct mindfulness skill, and designed to do so in a way which engages young minds. The lessons typically include images and animations which bring these skills to life and most importantly, practical exercises which teach the core skills and make them relevant to the pupils lives.

The course intends to help the young people who experience it to overcome difficulties, thrive and flourish – and the research that has taken place into its effectiveness suggests it does indeed have the potential to meet these more ambitious goals, including:

- To experience greater well-being (e.g. feel happier, calmer, more fulfilled)
- To fulfil their potential and pursue their own goals e.g. be more creative, more relaxed, academically, personally
- To improve their concentration and focus, in classes, in exams and tests, on the sports field, when playing games, when paying attention and listening to others

Style

Practice-based with introductions and then chances to take part.

20. Introduction to Analogue Photography

Course description

Via an exploration of history's most prominent photographers, students will learn how to read photographs while acquiring the technical skills necessary to expose, develop and print analogue photographs. The highlights of the course (COVID rules allowing) include visits to London's best contemporary photographic exhibitions and to Photofusion, a professional darkroom, minutes from Dulwich.

Style

A mixture of teacher presentation, seminar, excursion and practical.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone interested in the visual grammar, history, self expression and craft of traditional photography. It will support those keen on digital photography, but a warning - once you have made your first handmade analogue print, you may be converted!

NB. There is a maximum of 6 students for this course. Please prepare a second choice option in the event that this course is full.

21. US University Application preparation

Course description

The course will take an overview of the application process – what US universities are looking for, how to construct the personal essay and make your application stand out. The course will include sessions led by US admissions officers from leading universities and external consultants.

Style

This is a practical course – students will be writing essays and conducting research.

22. Beginners Chinese leading to HSK Level 1 Qualification

Course description

This is a two-term beginner's Chinese Mandarin course which takes students to Level 1 of the Chinese language qualification HSK (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) in Listening and Reading. Candidates who pass HSK Level 1 can understand and use basic Chinese words and sentences for everyday use and have a sound foundation with which to continue Chinese further. HSK is an internationally recognised Chinese language qualification for non-native speakers of Chinese. The examinations are run world-wide by the Chinese Government and are set and assessed at differing levels of challenge to encourage progress: Level 1 for beginners, Level 6 to near-native fluency.

The course will cover:

- an introduction to spoken Chinese (the 4 tones plus the neutral tone)
- pronunciation and use of the phonetic guide (pinyin) which is used in the examination papers
- the origins of characters
- the basics of character writing (stroke order, component characters which re-appear in other characters)
- acquisition of vocabulary (150 words)
- listening and reading skills
- an introduction into Chinese culture

Style

Student will practise skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. They will be expected to prepare for lessons throughout the course, taking the initiative to study independently as well as under the guidance of the class teacher.

Academic area

The Beginners Chinese course will suit those who are interested in languages, particularly character-based and tonal languages. It will also appeal to those who have eye to potential career opportunities presented by China's world presence and global reach if they choose to progress their Chinese language skills further.

23. Continuers Chinese (a post-GCSE course leading to HSK Exam Qualifications)

Course description

The course takes students to level 3 of the Chinese Government HSK exams (Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi) and the first level of the HSKK speaking examination (Hanyu Shuiping Kouyu Kaoshi). The HSK examinations are internationally recognised Chinese language qualifications for non-native speakers of Chinese. The examinations are run world-wide by the Chinese Government and are set and assessed at differing levels of challenge to encourage progress: Level 1 for beginners, Level 6 to near-native fluency.

The course will cover:

- development of listening and speaking skills in Chinese
- pronunciation and intonation
- acquisition of daily, conversational vocabulary and phrases
- Chinese cultural topics

This course provides a stepping-stone to wider opportunities for learning and using Chinese and to developing a language skill-set of the future.

Style

Student will practise skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking. They will be expected to prepare for lessons throughout the course, taking the initiative to study independently as well as under the guidance of the class teacher.

Academic area

The course is appropriate for anyone with GCSE level Chinese and who is interested in progressing their Chinese. For those interested in applying to study in China during their gap year under a Chinese government Confucius Institute scholarship, success in these examinations is required as part of the application process.

24. Sweet and Savoury Cookery Club

Course description

A beginners guide to cooking from basic breads and egg dishes to more complex finer dining. The course will help you develop skills across a broad spectrum of food preparation to suit all budgets, time scales with healthy vegan and vegetarian options built in. There will also be time for a few delicious sweet options!

Style

Live webinar. Open to all abilities.

NB. Although you will be working from home, you will be expected to attend each session in full and attendance will be taken.

EAL

25. IELTS Preparation – EAL Sarah Horsfield

Course description

This course is compulsory for the DC Boarders who have been assessed by Ms Horsfield, Head of EAL, and asked to attend. This course will prepare overseas Boarders, who do not have a relevant English language qualification, for the IELTS test which is needed for university application. Ms Horsfield will contact students to let them know if they are required to attend this course.

Style

Lessons will focus on the Writing and Speaking elements of the IELTS test.