King's 1502

Sixth Form

#FutureReady

SUBJECT INFORMATION

Dear Student,

I am delighted to present information regarding the Sixth Form courses we are offering from September 2025. Each subject description in this booklet provides guidance about what you will study, the examinations you will take and entry grade requirements. I do hope they will prove useful, along with our Open Evenings, in helping you to make your final selection.

Entry Requirements

Students considering transfer to King's Sixth Form are required to meet the entry requirements of an average of grade 6 or higher across eight GCSE subjects, with a minimum of a grade 5 in both Mathematics and English Language (university matriculation requirements). Most subjects recommend a grade 7 - 9 in a subject to be studied at A Level, and this is compulsory for Mathematics and Science subjects. In addition, subjects with a large mathematical content, such as Economics and Physics, require a minimum of grade 7 in Mathematics.

The Core Sixth Form Curriculum

We offer a choice of linear A Levels where all examinations are taken at the end of the academic course and a vocational course which is modular with some exams at the end of Year 12. You will choose the subjects you would like to study for the full two years of the Sixth Form. For most, this will mean choosing three A Levels. By offering three A Levels from the start of Year 12, we can give more curriculum time in each subject, so you have an even greater chance of securing strong grades.

For a small number, four A Levels may be appropriate, namely those who wish to study Further Mathematics, or where there is a clear rationale for studying four for those whose academic profile suggests they would be able to cope with the demands of an extra A Level. Should you fall into this category, please indicate this on the options choices form when you make your final choices.

We are proud of the broad range of subjects we offer in the Sixth Form. Whilst the core curriculum is, understandably, focused largely on academic A Levels, our curriculum offer is as broad (and in some cases more broad) than those of our competitors in similar schools. We are proud, too, of the academic attainment of our pupils, whose results this summer were outstanding and better than those of our local competitors.

The Extended Curriculum

Alongside the main A Level curriculum, we also encourage students' academic development through our 'Extended Studies' programme. The majority of students taking three A Levels will take the Extended Project Qualification in Year 12, in which they create a research question and investigate it before completing an extended essay. This is a challenging and highly-respected course which develops their independent learning and presentation skills. In Year 13, we offer a choice of courses including Japanese, Art Award, Spanish for Business and Theatre Studies. All students take part in compulsory activities afternoon each week, that can involve sport or a variety of other possible activities, including community work, volunteering or work experience. Your Form Tutor will be a crucial figure in guiding you and offering advice and support.

Careers

Our main priority in King's Sixth Form is to prepare you for success in your A Levels and for the wider world after school. Whilst we want you to achieve highly in your chosen academic subjects, we also want to prepare you more broadly for higher study or employment and to develop you into an independent, confident and personable young adult with a bright future ahead. Most of our students go on to higher education but not all and, increasingly, there are attractive alternatives such as apprenticeships. We have a Careers Officer based in the Sixth Form Centre to offer expert advice and much of your time in your form group will be spent preparing you for the next stage of your life.

I do hope you find this booklet useful and wish you every success in this new, exciting stage of your academic life.

Yours faithfully

Richard Griffiths,
Deputy Head (Academic)

CONTENTS

Art

Exam Board: EDUQAS

A Level Art follows on as a natural extension of the way students have worked at GCSE. The significant difference is that students are expected to take much greater control over the direction of their studies. Students can enjoy Art and Design while they develop their creative thinking and the skills, understanding and techniques required to succeed at A Level.

Students will also extend their critical understanding of the work of other artists, designers and craftspeople. The course provides an excellent and essential foundation for further study of Art and Design, Architecture and many related subjects in Higher Education.

Course Structure

Terms 1 & 2 - Coursework Development

Students will use these terms to investigate varied approaches to Art, investigating a wide range of media and building skills, whilst having the opportunity to participate in group collaborative projects and develop their critical and analytical skills in preparation for the assessed components outlined below:

Component 1: Personal investigation (Terms 3, 4 and 5) = 60% of final grade

A portfolio of practical work showing their personal response to either a starting point, brief, scenario, or stimulus, devised and provided by the candidate or centre plus a related written study of approximately 3,000 words.

Component 2: Externally set task (Terms 5 and 6) = 40% of final grade

Students are issued with their exam paper on 1 February of Year 13 which will provide candidates with a number of themes, each with a range of written and visual starting points, briefs and stimuli. From these, one must be selected on which to base a response.

Attributes Required

The most important attributes required to do well are less to do with grades and more to do with the personal qualities you will need. These are as follows:

- a high level of drawing ability gained at GCSE;
- strong organisational skills;
- the ability to adapt readily to new experiences;
- willingness to take the initiative and control the direction of work;
- motivation to visit galleries and exhibitions in your own time as appropriate;
- willingness to work 'in the field' when appropriate to projects;
- time - as at GCSE, it is time-consuming to achieve a top grade; and
- most importantly - motivation and enjoyment.

This is a subject you will need to enjoy if you are to get the most out of it.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

The course is demanding in terms of the standard you are expected to achieve and it is designed for students who have gained GCSE in Art already at grades 6 – 9.

Former students have combined Art with a wide variety of subjects, from traditional Arts subjects such as English, History and Classics to Mathematics and the Sciences and subjects such as Computer Science and D&T.

In recent years, many Art students have progressed on to Art and Architecture courses at university and a similar number have also moved on to courses such as Psychology, Law, English Literature & Language, Advertising, Engineering, Geography, Chemistry, German, Music, Accounting, Classics and Business.

Biology

Exam Board: AQA

The Biology A Level aims to introduce students to the wide variety of topics under the heading of Biology. This gives them a good understanding of how organisms function as individuals and how they fit into the world around us. A large proportion of the course also involves looking at genetics and techniques used in laboratories all over the world.

The Course Structure

We follow the AQA A Level Biology Specification (7402) which can be found at http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/as-and-A Level/biology-7402.

The specification is a broad curriculum, covering a diverse and interesting range of topics that will lay the foundations for further study and careers in biological sciences. The specification is divided into eight sections that cover the following topics:

1. Biological molecules
2. Cells
3. Organisms exchange substances with their environment
4. Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms
5. Energy transfer 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

Assessment
In the examinations, students will be required to demonstrate:

- their knowledge and understanding of the content developed in one section or topic, including the associated mathematical and practical skills;
- the ability to apply mathematical and practical skills to areas of content they are not normally developed in; and
- the ability to draw together different areas of knowledge and understanding within one answer.

Students will sit three examinations:

Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
Content • Any content from topics 1-4, including relevant practical skills.	*Content* • Any content from topics 5-8, including relevant practical skills.	*Content* • Any content from topics 1-8, including relevant practical skills.
Assessment • Written exam – 2 hours • 91 marks • 35% of A Level	*Assessment* • Written exam – 2 hours • 91 marks • 35% of A Level	*Assessment* • Written exam – 2 hours • 78 marks • 30% of A Level
Questions • 76 marks: a mixture of short and long answer questions. • 15 marks: extended response questions.	*Questions* • 76 marks: a mixture of short and long answer questions. • 15 marks: comprehension question.	*Questions* • 38 marks: structured questions, including practical techniques. • 15 marks: critical analysis of given experimental data. • 25 marks: one essay from a choice of two titles.

Field Work

All students are strongly advised to attend the residential field course that takes place during Year 13. This provides an opportunity to carry out necessary fieldwork techniques that will be examined in Paper 2 and apply elementary statistical analysis to the results obtained. The field course takes place at a residential field studies centre in North Yorkshire. The approximate cost of the course, including travel, accommodation, meals and insurance is £280.

Demands of the Course

Biology is an academically demanding subject that will challenge you to investigate and appreciate the complexities of living organisms and their interactions with their environment. To be successful you should enjoy reading about biological topics in journals, e.g. Biological Sciences Review. You will be expected to read around the topics so you can cope with unfamiliar contexts and apply your knowledge.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Students must achieve a grade 7 in GCSE Biology to study this course at A Level. Experience indicates that those students who achieve below grade 7 in Biology at GCSE, or gain less than the equivalent of grade 7 in the Biology sections of the Core and Additional Science examinations, are unlikely to be successful at A Level. Also, given the mathematical content of the subject at A Level, students must achieve a minimum of a grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics otherwise they are likely to find many aspects of the course demanding.

Biology is a useful starting point for a wide range of degree courses and careers, including the wide variety of Biological Science courses, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry, Ecology, Zoology and Genetics to name just a few.

Many students take Biology in combination with Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics. Students studying Psychology, Geography or Computer Science may also find Biology a suitable additional subject.

Business

Exam Board: Edexcel

The world in which we live is dominated by businesses big and small. A Level Business is an exciting and interesting subject that can help you understand the world in which we live. Businesses are dynamic organisations that reflect the values of society and the people working in them. Studying A Level Business will help you gain an insight into both. Business is a flexible subject that may be combined with a wide range of subjects both at A Level and in Higher Education.

Course Structure

Students will follow the Edexcel specification that will be examined through three exams:

Paper 1: Marketing, people & global business
Paper 2: Business activities, decisions & strategies
Paper 3: Investigating business in a competitive environment

At a glance, the specification is split into four themes:

Theme 1: **Marketing and people** • Meeting customer needs • The market • Marketing mix and strategy • Managing people • Entrepreneurs and leaders	**Theme 2:** **Managing business activities** • Raising finance • Financial planning • Managing finance • Resource management • External influences
Theme 3: **Business decisions and strategy** • Business growth, objectives & strategy • Decision-making techniques • Influences on business decisions • Analysing competitiveness • Managing change	**Theme 4:** **Global business** • Globalisation • Global markets and business expansion • Global marketing • Global industries and companies (multi-national corporations)

Students are encouraged to use an enquiring, critical and thoughtful approach to the study of Business, understand that business behaviour can be studied from a range of perspectives and challenge assumptions.

Assessment

Paper 1 100 marks 35% 2hrs	Two data response case studies broken down into a number of parts, each including one extended open response question.
Paper 2 100 marks 35% 2hrs	Two data response case studies broken down into a number of parts, each including one extended open response question.

Paper 3 100 marks 30% 2hrs	A pre-release context is issued in October of Year 13. Section A: focus on the broad context Section B: focus on a strand within the context In each section there will be a case study broken down into a number of parts, each including one extended open response question.

The transferable skills underpinning these units include:

- carrying out calculations;
- interpreting data;
- making and presenting arguments;
- making and justifying business decisions;
- identifying problems and proposing solutions;
- recognising that a problem exists;
- conducting research and challenging assumptions.

Business is a useful and interesting A Level subject that will broaden the education of those students who might otherwise have pursued traditional academic courses. It will be of vocational relevance and give insight into the working of the real business world. The department makes use of IT in its teaching and has developed the use of One Note as a useful learning resource. There will also be the opportunity to visit industrial sites and learn from visiting speakers.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

There are no specific requirements at GCSE, though students should be aware of the fact that the course involves some numerical and statistical work.

Nearly all jobs involve some type of business knowledge and, for those pursuing the subject at A Level, the course will provide searching and stimulating preparation for Higher Education and subsequent employment. Business Studies and Management courses are extremely popular degrees. The department can provide help for those students wishing to read Business at university.

Chemistry

Exam Board: AQA

Chemistry underlies many aspects of life today. An A Level chemist will be able to understand the principles behind many evolving processes, such as the manufacture of new medicinal drugs and the development of battery powered vehicles. The theories and principles that make up the course will be illustrated, wherever possible, in contexts relevant to real life.

Course Structure

A Level Chemistry is divided into four main areas: Physical, Organic, Inorganic and Analytical Chemistry. Physical Chemistry defines the underlying principles of much of Chemistry and involves the study of atomic structure, bonding, kinetics and thermodynamics. Inorganic Chemistry examines trends in parts of the periodic table, such as group two and period three and involves a detailed study of the transition metals. Organic Chemistry is all about the chemistry of families of compounds containing carbon. Analytical Chemistry involves the study of methods used for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of elements and compounds and has plenty of problem-solving opportunities.

Many of the unanswered questions in GCSE Chemistry will now be tackled – like what 'pH' actually stands for and why some reactions happen spontaneously at room temperature whereas others do not. The mystery of electron shells and their connection with the shape of the periodic table will be solved once and for all.

Chemistry is a practical subject and there are requirements for designing, implementing, analysing and evaluating experiments in all parts of the course. Students will be teacher-assessed on their practical skills throughout the course.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Chemistry at A Level demands hard work and genuine interest. Its logic is both challenging and satisfying. Work is set by both subject teachers on a weekly basis and it is also helpful for students to read around the subject in order to achieve their potential.

Students must achieve a grade 7 in GCSE Chemistry to study this course at A Level. Also, given the mathematical content of the subject at A Level, students must achieve a minimum of a grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics, otherwise they are likely to find many aspects of the course demanding.

Chemistry is a useful and highly regarded A Level and is essential for most university courses involving the life sciences or the physical sciences. It is required for the vast majority of medical and veterinary courses. It can be taken at A Level combined with any subject, although Physics, Biology and Mathematics are the most common. A Level Chemistry does not involve Mathematics beyond the difficulty of GCSE level but A Level Mathematics may be required for a degree course in Chemistry.

Computer Science

Exam Board: AQA

We are living in the midst of a revolution powered by computers. This revolution has brought changes to all aspects of society. AQA have worked closely with universities and industry to develop this A level specification.

Computer Science can provide a student with the necessary education to innovate in extraordinary ways. Computer technology is at the heart of many endeavours to make a meaningful difference in the world, whether through scientific research, medical advances, helping disabled people lead more fulfilling lives, improved communication and transportation or many other areas. These advances generally happen not by applying existing technology to a new problem, but by collaborating with experts in other fields and developing innovative solutions.

Computational thinking can bring careful, logical approaches to problem solving and an understanding of the power of abstraction to many fields of human endeavour. The ability to think logically and to develop solutions is applicable even if one does not ultimately write those solutions in a programming language.

Course Specification

The A Level Computer Science specification can be found at the following web URL: https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/computing/specifications/AQA-7516-7517-SP-2015.PDF

The AQA A Level specification in Computer Science encourages students to develop:

- An understanding of, and the ability to apply, the fundamental principles and concepts of Computer Science, including abstraction, decomposition, logic, algorithms and data representation.
- The ability to analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including writing programs to do so.
- The capacity for thinking creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.
- The capacity to see relationships between different aspects of Computer Science.
- Mathematical skills related to: Boolean algebra, comparison and complexity of algorithms, number representations and bases.

Subject Content

The A Level specification requires students to develop a knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of Computer Science and programming including:

- Fundamentals of programming
- Fundamentals of data structures
- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Theory of computation
- Fundamentals of data representation
- Fundamentals of computer systems
- Fundamentals of computer organisation and architecture

- Consequences of uses of computing
- Fundamentals of communication and networking
- Fundamentals of databases
- Big Data

Skills

A Level Computer Science requires students to be able to:

- take a systematic approach to problem solving
- design, write and test programs to either a specification or to solve a problem
- articulate how a program works, arguing for its correctness and efficiency using logical reasoning, test data, and user feedback
- use abstraction effectively to appropriately structure programs into modular parts with clear, well-documented interfaces
- apply computing-related Mathematics

Assessment

Paper 1 - Assessed
On-screen exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
40% of A Level
Paper 2 - Assessed
Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
40% of A Level
Non exam assessment - Assessed
75 marks
20% of A Level

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Whilst the study of Computer Science at GCSE is not a compulsory requirement, it is recommended. We expect students to have achieved at least a grade 6 but usually higher. We also expect a minimum grade of 6 in GCSE Mathematics as an indicator of analytical ability.

Design & Technology: Product Design (7552)

Exam Board: AQA

This creative and thought-provoking qualification gives students the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in several careers, especially those in the creative industries. They will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design and technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put their learning into practice by producing prototypes of their choice. Students will gain a real understanding of what it means to be a designer, alongside the knowledge and skills sought by higher education and employers.

Course Structure

The course is structured to cover the wide range of knowledge and skills required to be successful. The course breaks down the content into two main areas, the **Technical Principles** which covers how to go about designing and manufacturing in a modern world environment, and the practice of manufacturing through the study of **Designing and Making Principles.** There will be a large emphasis on a variety of design methodologies including the iterative process which will figure prominently. Links will be made to the application of mathematical and scientific principles and these will be examined at the end of the course.

Students will be required to sit examinations in both units, with Paper 1 being worth 120 marks (30% of final grade) and Paper 2 being worth 80 marks (20% of final grade). Paper 1 will cover technical principles and Paper 2 will cover designing and making principles.

Topics to be covered in technical principles include:

Materials and their applications Classification of materials Methods for investigating and testing materials Performance characteristics of materials Enhancement of materials Forming, redistribution and addition processes The use of adhesives and fixings The use of finishes Digital design and manufacture	The requirements for product design and development Health and Safety Protecting designs and intellectual property Design for manufacturing, maintenance, repair and disposal Enterprise and marketing in the development of products Design communication Modern manufacturing systems Modern industrial and commercial practice

In addition, students will be expected to complete an NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) which will be submitted at the end of the course. This NEA will be worth 100 marks and is 50% of the final A Level grade.

In practice, Year 12 will be used to develop your skills in and knowledge of the subject with an internally marked and graded project that will guide you through the process of completing the NEA in Year 13.

In addition, students in Year 13 will continue to develop their subject knowledge to fully prepare for the final examinations. Subject content will be taught in a variety of styles from direct written tasks through to learning through short term practical projects.

In summary:

Technical principles
How it's assessed
Written exam: 2.5 hours 120 marks 30% of A Level
Questions
Mixture of short answer and extended response

Designing and making principles
How it's assessed
Written exam: 1.5 hours 80 marks 20% of A Level
Questions
Mixture of short answer and extended response questions.
Section A:
Product Analysis: 30 marks
Up to six short answer questions based on visual stimulus of product(s).
Section B:
Commercial manufacture: 50 marks
Mixture of short and extended response questions

NEA: Practical application of technical principles and designing and making principles.
How it's assessed
• Substantial design and make project
• 100 marks
• 50% of A Level

Evidence
Written or digital design portfolio and photographic evidence of final prototype.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

The course is designed to follow on from the GCSE D&T course and it is aimed at students who have gained a high GCSE grade in D&T. The most important thing to recognize, however, is that grades are only part of the criteria for potential success. To do well, you need to be able to display several personal qualities that will help you strive to achieve at the highest level. These are:

- strong organisational skills;
- a willingness to take the initiative and control the direction of work;
- a commitment to work outside the normal lesson timetable (it is time consuming to achieve a top grade); and
- most importantly - motivation and enjoyment.

This is a subject you will need to enjoy if you are to get the most out of it. A desire to keep in touch with current design trends and an appreciation of design are also important qualities.

This subject may be taken with a wide range of subjects to support further study in Higher Education in subjects as diverse as Applied Sciences, Architecture, Engineering, Design and Business.

Economics

Exam Board: Edexcel

(a) Why do we have a recession? Can anything be done about it? Is there such a thing as a free lunch? Why are Premiership footballers paid so much more than doctors? Does the Chancellor know what he's doing? Think you could do better? So, study Economics. Economics at King's is a rewarding intellectual experience, offering highly marketable skills in a way that is both stimulating and analytically rigorous.

Course Structure

Students will study the Edexcel specification, examined via three exam papers:

Paper 1: Markets & business behaviour
Paper 2: The national & global economy
Paper 3: Microeconomics & macroeconomics

The course is split into four themes. Themes one and three cover Microeconomics and themes two and four cover Macroeconomics.

Theme 1 **Markets and market failure** • The nature of economics • How markets work • Market failure • Government intervention	**Theme 2** **UK economy – performance & policies** • Measures of economic performance • Aggregate demand and aggregate supply • National income and economic growth • Macro objectives and policy
Theme 3 **Business behaviour & labour market** • Business growth and objectives • Revenues, costs and profits • Market structures • The labour market • Government intervention	**Theme 4** **A global perspective** • International economics • Poverty and inequality • Emerging & developing economies • The financial sector • Role of the state in the macro economy

The transferable skills underpinning these units include: using complex models in written, numerical and graphical forms; applying models in context and evaluating their use; interpreting and evaluating data from multiple sources; suggesting possible solutions to problems; understanding the relationships and linkages that underpin macroeconomic models; predicting the possible impact of policy changes; and evaluating the effectiveness of government policies.

Assessment

Paper 1 100 marks 35% 2hrs	Paper 1 is split into three sections Section A: Five combined multiple choice and short-answer questions (5 x 5 marks) Section B: One data response question broken down into five parts (5, 8, 12, 10 and 15 marks) Section C: Essay: Choice of extended open-response questions; students select one from choice of two (25 marks)
Paper 2 100 marks 35% 2hrs	Paper 2 is split into three sections Section A: Five combined multiple choice and short-answer questions. (5 x 5 marks) Section B: One data response question broken down into five parts (5, 8, 12, 10 and 15 marks) Section C: Essay: Choice of extended open-response questions; students select one from choice of two (25 marks)
Paper 3 100 marks 30% 2hrs	Paper 3 is split into two sections Each section comprises one data response question broken down into a number of parts, including a choice of extended open-response questions; students select one from a choice of two.

Economics is a Social Science and it therefore spans the divide between the Arts and Sciences. Economics impacts on our everyday lives and therefore helps to illuminate current affairs. It also clarifies social, political and philosophical issues.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

This is an excellent subject for the numerate, literate and able student. It combines well with most subjects, although we would not generally advise students to take both Economics and Business. GCSE Mathematics at grade 7 or above is recommended, as an indication of analytical ability.

Economics can form the basis of many different university courses or careers. It is a qualification respected by university admissions tutors as an indication of analytical ability. It can be a complement to other A Levels in the Sciences, Social Sciences or Humanities, and may lead to degree courses in any discipline.

For those students contemplating a degree in Economics, it should be noted that the vast majority of Russell Group universities request A Level Mathematics as an entry requirement for studying straight Economics. The department provides help for those students wishing to read Economics at university.

English Subjects

"O, had I but followed the arts!"
Twelfth Night

English provides you with opportunities to explore, experiment and question the world around us. It is empowering and exhilarating.

English is flexible and adaptable and helps you develop skills that are transferable to every other subject you choose to study. Studying English allows you to:

- work independently;
- think critically;
- foster personal attributes such as self-motivation, self-discipline, a sense of responsibility and an ability to work with others;
- enhance your written and spoken communication;
- develop your own interests and enthusiasms;
- consider a range of personal, cultural and historical issues;
- debate issues in stimulating ways;
- explore how language shapes our society; and
- examine the influence of the media in our society.

English Literature

Exam Board: AQA – Specification B

Students take the AQA English Literature B examinations.

Course Structure

The course involves the study of significant texts from different genres. Students explore how texts connect and inter-relate and how they can illuminate each other. Set texts change from year to year and may vary between sets. For Paper 1, students may study one of two literary genres: Tragedy or Comedy. They study three texts: one Shakespeare play, a second drama text and one further text. Possible texts include:

- *Othello* – Shakespeare
- *King Lear* – Shakespeare
- *Death of a Salesman* – Miller
- *The Great Gatsby* – Fitzgerald
- A selection of poems by Keats

Paper 1 is assessed by one written exam of 2 hours and 30 minutes that represents 40% of the total A Level mark.

For Paper 2, students read and explore texts that contain elements of more modern cultural genres. There are two study options: Elements of Crime Writing or Elements of Political and Social Protest Writing. Students study three texts: one post-2000 prose text, one poetry text and one further text. Possible texts include:

- *Atonement* – McEwan
- *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* – Coleridge
- *Hamlet* – Shakespeare
- *Brighton Rock* – Greene
- *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* – Agatha Christie

Paper 2 is assessed by one written examination of 3 hours that represents 40% of the total A Level mark.

The coursework element introduces students to aspects of Critical Theory, including Narrative Theory, Feminist criticism, Marxist criticism, Post-colonial criticism and Eco-criticism. Students produce two pieces of work of 1250-1500 words, each on a different literary text. One response will be a conventional essay; the other could be re-creative or a further conventional essay. This work constitutes 20% of the final A Level mark.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

An interest in reading is essential for students who study English Literature. The ability to express oneself clearly on paper is also vital. Strong grades, passes, normally at grade 7 (or above) and at least grade 6, in English Language and English Literature at GCSE are required.

English Literature at A Level will consolidate the techniques necessary in other subjects that involve extensive reading and essay-writing, such as History, Religious Studies and Psychology. Study of the literary elements of courses in Modern Languages or Latin is also helped greatly if a student is taking English Literature.

English Language

Exam Board: AQA

English Language differs substantially from the Literature course. It does not contain the mixture of literature and language found in GCSE English.

Course Structure

English Language explores the language that surrounds us. From a conversation between friends to a politician's election speech, students explore how form, structure and language shape meaning. The course studies the systematic frameworks of language, the variation of language according to context, and changes in language over time, as well as exploring contemporary language variation and change in the British Isles. Students will also explore how children learn language and how they are able to understand and express themselves through language.

The coursework element introduces students to independent, investigative language study. It enables them to pursue areas of individual interest and to explore methodological issues concerning data collection and analysis. It allows them to develop a creative and critical

approach to their studies and places language in its wider geographical, social and temporal contexts.

They could pursue an area of individual interest such as:

- representations of different individuals, social groups or nationalities
- regional dialect
- gendered talk
- the language of new communication technologies
- children's language use
- the language of the media
- the language of different occupations or pastimes

Another aspect of the coursework is designed to develop students' ability to write for specific audiences and purposes and to explore key issues of representation and ideology.

Students will produce one piece of original writing based on one of the following areas:

- The Power of Persuasion
- The Power of Storytelling
- The Power of Information

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Students should have reached grade 7 (or above) and at least grade 6 in GCSE, and a real sensitivity for language will be an asset. An interest in reading is also crucial. In addition, an awareness of current events, wider issues in society and an open mind are essential. This course involves thinking as an individual.

The study of English Language at A Level will develop abilities to analyse language and to write appropriately for various purposes. The skills will consolidate and complement those found in languages and other subjects in the Arts and Humanities.

Extended Studies Programme

About the Department

The Extended Studies department includes a wide variety of subjects, including the EPQ in Year 12 and a choice of courses (academic and practical) in Year 13. The academic subjects are regularly updated, but currently include the following:

- Introductory Japanese
- Community Sports Leadership Award
- The Art Award
- Theatre Studies
- Spanish for Business

Due to the wide-ranging subjects offered, the department includes numerous members of staff, all of whom are very experienced in their subject area. There is also the option for a bespoke MOOCs programme, for students looking to add experience for a specific degree course, career path or outside interest.

Life Skills programme

There is a new alternative option for Extended Study in the form of the new Life Skills programme, where instead of studying one academic module, students gain a different skill each half term, allowing students to expand their horizons in a more practical sense.

This academic year we have on offer:

- Interview skills with Mr J Slack
- DIY Skills with Mr G Steele
- Self Defence with Miss McMaster
- Personal Finance with Mr MacGregor
- Culture Vultures with Mrs Richards

Examination Results for Academic subjects

All academic subjects are recognised qualifications and so all students will sit an exam or complete coursework in their chosen subject.

The results in EPQ are typically excellent:

2021 Results: 81% of all grades at A*-A

2022 Results: 60% of all grades A*-B; 92% A*-C

2023 Results: 86% of all grades A*-B; 100% A*-C

Academic Subject Content & Syllabus

The teaching and content of the subjects very much depends on the subject in question. The Japanese course comprises all four aspects of learning a language and is taught by Mrs Dudley who in her first year of delivering Japanese at King's.

Every subject includes a written element, but students are asked to consider which of the options they are best suited to and most likely to enjoy.

Enrichment Opportunities

Opportunities vary depending on the course in question. For example, with the Extended Project Qualification, students take part in in-house training where they learn about research skills, how to reference and also time management.

Other courses include the opportunity to volunteer with younger students and to gain skills and experience that way, whilst there are theatre trips involved as part of the Theatre Studies course.

Careers

The Extended Studies programme is designed to facilitate other subjects, whilst also helping students gain knowledge and skills in a new subject area. Consequently, the knowledge and skills gained can help students pursue a wide variety of careers.

For example, those taking Japanese, particularly language students, find it is a very helpful addition to a UCAS application when applying to university. We have, in the past, had a student who opted for the Japanese course because they had an interest in Japanese cars and felt the language skills would be beneficial to them in the future.

The other options do of course lend themselves well to specific areas, sport or art related, and can help students clarify if the subject in question is one they wish to pursue further in the future. Universities and employers alike value the wider range of subjects that the Extended Studies programme has to offer.

Geography

Exam board: AQA

The department has five subject specialists and has consistently enjoyed annual examination success, as exemplified by previously receiving the reward of being the leading Geography Department in the UK for A Level performance by the Good School's Guide.

Course Structure

The course follows the AQA specification which comprises an exciting range of specialist Physical Geography and contemporary Human Geography topics.

Component 1: Physical Geography (40% of overall A Level)
Covers three topics: Coastal Landscapes and Processes, Water and Carbon Systems and Hazards (earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, tropical storms and forest fires).
Assessment: 2hr 30m examination, consisting of short and extended written responses.

Component 2: Human Geography (40% of overall A Level)
Covers three topics: Contemporary Urban Environments, Changing Places (migration, regeneration and economic changes in two locales) and Global Systems and Governance.
Assessment: 2hr 30m examination, consisting of short and extended written responses.

Component 3: Geography Fieldwork Investigation (20% of overall A Level)
Students complete an individual investigation which includes data collected in the field. The investigation is defined and developed by the student themselves relating to any part of the specification content.
Assessment: 3000-4000 word report.

To assist with this, we undertake a five-day residential course in North Wales. This usually happens in April (approximate cost is £430 per pupil after a contribution from the school). Here, students are introduced to a range of fieldwork techniques and topics that can then be developed.

In addition to compulsory fieldwork visits, we also hope to offer a summer 'inspire & awe' trip to a suitably spectacular location (previous tours have been to Iceland, New York and the West Coast of the USA).

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Nearly all students taking Geography at A Level will have passed GCSE Geography with at least a grade 6 or higher. Pupils will be allowed to join the course not having studied the subject at all but only after discussion with the Head of Department and if the pupil demonstrates suitable desire and aptitude.

The main skills required in Geography are a genuine commitment to reading and researching allied to a detailed, concise and accurate style of writing. An active interest in current affairs and major national/international/world events is also important.

A Level Geography continues to be a very popular choice, both nationally and within the school. It is of high relevance to the ever-changing world around us. Issues linked to

climate change, sustainable living and geopolitics are never out of the news, so in effect, it is right here, right now!

Geography A Level is very well regarded by all leading universities and fosters the traits that employers value, including analysis and evaluation, working in the field in a team and presentation skills. Importantly, the subject is the starting point for a plethora of different careers. Employment possibilities, to name just a few, range from town planning, the armed services and procurement and logistics to journalism, environmental sustainability, disaster management and water analysis.

Due to the subject's unique nature of being a bridge between the Arts and Sciences, with Physical Geography linking to more empirical data and environmental research, and Human Geography focusing more on spatial, social, political and economic issues, a wide range of other A Level subject choices alongside Geography, are suitable.

History

Exam Board: AQA

The course is the AQA specification and students will learn:

- the significance of events, individuals, issues and societies in history;
- how and why societies have changed over time;
- about the theories of historians and the language they have used to discuss their ideas;
- to understand the nature of historical evidence and the methods used by historians to analyse and evaluate it;
- to develop an understanding of how the past has been interpreted and represented; and
- to express their own historical ideas confidently and effectively.

Course Structure

Component 1: Breadth Study
1H: Tsarist and Communist Russia, 1855-1964
Assessment: 2hr 30m written examination

Component 2: Depth Study
2B: The Wars of the Roses, 1450-1499
Assessment: 2hr 30m written examination

Component 3: Historical Investigation
African-American Civil Rights, 1863- 1965
Assessment: 3,500-4,000 word extended essay

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Preferably a grade 7 (or higher) and at least a grade 6 in GCSE History is required to continue with the subject in Year 12. Students who did not take History, but have a good range of GCSE results may study the subject at A Level by agreement with the Head of Department.

Students who study History have access to a wide range of career and Higher Education opportunities. By the end of the course, you will have learned how to evaluate and analyse information, weigh up evidence and how to communicate complex ideas effectively. These skills are recognised and valued by employers, universities and colleges.

History can be combined with a number of other subjects, such as a Modern Language or Science-based course, to create an attractive portfolio of qualifications. The wider development of skills that History achieves is almost unique and is, therefore, highly sought after.

History provides an excellent foundation for a number of popular career choices including law, journalism, business, academia, politics and publishing to name but a few.

Mathematics

Exam Board: OCR (H240)

Mathematics is now the most popular A Level in the UK. At A Level, students' ability to reason logically and precisely is refined and progress is made towards modelling the real world. Although technically challenging, it is intellectually rewarding for those prepared to fully engage themselves. Such students often proceed to Higher Education courses involving Mathematics.

Course Structure

In Year 12, the course consists of Pure Mathematics (algebra, geometry, calculus), Mechanics and Statistics.

In Year 13, the course again incorporates Pure Mathematics (algebra, geometry, calculus), Mechanics and Statistics. Year 13 extends on the work covered in Year 12.

Subject content is as follows:

Pure mathematics

- Proof
- Algebra and functions
- Coordinate geometry in the x-y plane
- Sequences and series
- Trigonometry
- Exponentials and logarithms
- Differentiation
- Integration
- Numerical methods
- Vectors

Statistics

- Statistical sampling
- Data presentation and interpretation
- Statistical hypothesis testing
- Probability
- Statistical distributions

Mechanics

- Quantities and units in mechanics
- Kinematics
- Forces and Newton's laws
- Moments

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Students must have achieved a minimum of GCSE grade 7 in Mathematics to study and succeed in this subject; algebraic fluency is a key requirement.

Mathematics is a key element in many courses in Higher Education and is, therefore, widely required as an entry qualification. In today's digital world, Mathematics is attracting interest as a valuable qualification in its own right. It is probably true to say that almost anybody taking A Level Mathematics will reap significant benefit at some time during their working life.

Further Mathematics

Exam Board: OCR (H245)

This subject can only be taken by those also studying A Level Mathematics and is chosen from within the option blocks as one of the A Level subjects. The course covers advanced work in Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Statistics (and, possibly, Additional Pure). The course is demanding but accessible to strong candidates.

Course Structure

Pure mathematics

- Proof
- Complex numbers
- Matrices
- Further vectors
- Further algebra
- Series
- Hyperbolic functions
- Further calculus
- Polar coordinates
- Differential equations

Statistics

- Probability
- Discrete random variables
- Continuous random variables
- Linear combinations of random variables
- Hypothesis tests and confidence intervals
- Chi-squared tests
- Non-parametric tests
- Correlation
- Linear regression

Mechanics

- Dimensional analysis
- Work, energy and power
- Impulse and momentum
- Centre of mass
- Motion in a circle
- Further dynamics and kinematics

Additional pure mathematics

- Sequences and series
- Number theory
- Groups
- Further vectors
- Surfaces and partial differentiation
- Further calculus

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

It is very rare that a student holding less than grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics succeeds in this subject; strong algebraic skills and a preparedness to work hard are required.

For those intending to study Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Computing, Actuarial Sciences or Engineering at any of Britain's top universities, Further Mathematics offers a distinct advantage both at the time of application and in the early stages of the degree course. Students applying for Biological Sciences (including Medicine and Psychology) will

benefit from the higher level statistics modules that would not be covered in A Level Mathematics alone.

It is important to see Further Mathematics as a broadening rather than a narrowing choice. Universities are actively seeking ways to differentiate between the best candidates and Further Mathematics is an indicator of a very high achiever. Additionally, although very few Higher Education courses formally demand Further Mathematics as an entry requirement, the evidence is that those holding the qualification have a significant advantage on many courses, especially Mathematics, Physics and Engineering.

Modern Languages

Exam board: AQA

A Level courses are available in French, German and Spanish. Studying a language to A Level is very rewarding, whilst also equipping students with a valuable skill for life. We study a range of engaging A Level topics, many of which link with areas studied in other subjects, and all four skills of language learning are fully developed - listening, speaking, reading and writing. Grammar is also essential as students practise and build their confidence in putting together their own accurate sentences in the language, understanding how the language works. Although this builds on material covered at GCSE, we also develop the ability to argue a point of view with a degree of spontaneity at A Level. Texts studied are authentic and up to date and range from press material and internet sources to documentary or imaginative writing; extensive use is made of authentic audio and video material. A Level also includes the study of either two books (novel, play, poetry) or one book and one film. Whilst we take advantage of any opportunities to explore the historical, cultural and literary heritage of Spain, France or Germany, the contemporary scene and the future of these countries within the world occupy the foreground. Students are expected to read, listen and learn vocabulary on a regular basis and independently. Spoken language lessons with the native speaker Language Assistants are an integral and important part of the course.

Course Structure

We follow the AQA specification in which all four skills are assessed.

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing – covering topics as listed below
Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
160 marks in total
40% of A Level

Paper 2: Writing – based on the study of one text and one film or two texts from the list set by AQA
Written exam: 2 hours
90 marks in total
30% of A Level

Paper 3: Speaking – covering topics as listed below
Includes discussion of individual research project
21–23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation time)
60 marks in total
30% of A Level

A Level topics are specific to the individual language:

French:

- Aspects of French-speaking society: current trends
- Aspects of French-speaking society: current issues
- Artistic culture in the French-speaking world
- Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world

German:

- Aspects of German-speaking society
- Artistic culture in the German-speaking world
- Multi-culturalism in German-speaking society
- Aspects of political life in German-speaking society

Spanish:

- Aspects of Hispanic society
- Artistic culture in the Hispanic world
- Multi-culturalism in Hispanic society
- Aspects of political life in Hispanic society

We are continuing to develop the programme of trips available to Sixth Form students to help with their language study. These include a visit to France for a week of study or work experience, an exchange with our German partner school, and a visit to Spain. Where possible, students participate in one-day study events run at universities locally. Extension lessons are available in Year 13 for those interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge or broadening and deepening their language study.

Students are expected to purchase a suitable dictionary and to make regular use of online language reference tools such as wordreference.com.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

A grade 7 at GCSE is the minimum requirement for the course and grades 8 / 9 will normally be expected.

Languages are a popular subject to study at university in combination with other disciplines, such as a second language (including new languages from scratch such as Japanese, Italian, Arabic), English, History, Geography, Economics, Law and Medicine. Universities respect the skills and discipline the A Level linguist develop and an A level in a language opens the door to a wide range of possible university courses. The A Level language student typically can reasonably combine their language study with almost any other subject area, e.g. with Mathematics, Science, History, Geography or Business. In addition to courses and careers specifically for professional linguists, there are more and more university courses that enable further study of a language to be undertaken, e.g. in the fields of management, science, technology, medicine and law. Our global society has greatly increased the demand by industry for those who have language skills. Statistical evidence shows that employment rates for language graduates compare favourably with many other mainstream disciplines.

Music

Exam Board: AQA

Music is a stimulating and challenging option at A Level that offers students a unique opportunity to develop a wide range of skills in depth. Whatever your ambitions post-A Level, studying Music ensures you will stand out from the crowd.

Course Structure

Following on from GCSE, the course can be broken down into three components: Performing (35%), Composing (25%) and Appraising/Analysis (40%).

Performing (35%)
Students must prepare and perform a short recital (either solo and/or ensemble) lasting a minimum of 10 minutes. The choice of music is entirely up to the candidate and should be of at least Grade 6-7 standard.

Composing (25%)
At the end of the course, students must submit two compositions. One of these is a 'free' composition in any style. The second composition is written in response to a set composition brief. Seven (7) composition briefs are published each year which between them offer the chance to write in a wide range of styles for a wide range of ensembles (e.g. Film Music, Musical Theatre, Contemporary Music, Jazz/Swing, Classical Pastiche). Every year, brief 1 offers students the opportunity to focus on a specific compositional technique: harmonizing a chorale in the style of J.S. Bach.

Appraising/Analysis (40%)
Students develop their understanding of musical contexts/musicology, musical elements and musical language through studying a range of set works taught through the context of seven areas of study. These are:

1. Western Classical Tradition 1650 – 1910 (compulsory)
2. Pop Music
3. Music for Media (Film, Television, Gaming)
4. Music for Theatre (Musical Theatre from 1925 to the present day)
5. Jazz (1920 to the present day)
6. Contemporary traditional music (fusions of trad. music with contemporary styles)
7. Art Music since 1910 (contemporary, experimental, electronic, minimalist etc.)

During the A Level course you will explore **three areas of study**. AQA states that Area of Study 1 is compulsory (set works include Mozart: Marriage of Figaro (extracts), three Baroque Concerti and a selection of Romantic Piano Music). However, **it is up to the students in each class which two further areas of study they wish to explore during the two year course (choose two from AoS 2-7)**. There is also a large degree of student choice when it comes to which works they might like to study in detail within each Area of Study. The final examination consists of aural analysis questions and essays.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

It is expected that students opting for A Level music will have studied Music at GCSE. We recommend that all candidates have a good level, that is Grade 6 or 7 (or above) plus in Year 12 of practical skill on their chosen instrument (or singing), and that they have

studied Music Theory to at least Grade 5 level. The Director of Music is happy to discuss individuals' options at any time.

A Level Music is uniquely rewarding and challenging in the range of academic and practical skills required. As such, it is not only excellent preparation for further musical study (whether at university or conservatoire) but also a popular choice with keen musicians who are considering other academic/career paths. Time and time again, university tutors (irrespective of their subject) and potential employers are quick to recognize the benefits of having studied Music at A Level, requiring as it does both academic rigour and creative flair. Whether their future plans involve Medicine or Music, Physics or Philosophy, A Level musicians always stand out from the crowd.

Physics

Exam Board: AQA

The A Level course consists of eight core topics together with one optional topic and practical assessment.

Course Structure

The A Level AQA Physics course will be examined in three, two hour written examinations. The material to be studied can be separated into the following eight sections:

- Particles and Radiation which includes delving into the world of antimatter and quarks, addressing the question of whether light travels as a wave or as a stream of particles
- Waves which include how a diffraction grating is used to analyse the spectra of light from stars
- Mechanics and Materials which includes projectile motion and exploring the physics of bungee jumps
- Electricity which includes the application of high temperature superconductors in power cables and very strong electromagnets
- Further Mechanics (Periodic motion) which includes the study of the motion of planets
- Thermal Physics which includes linking the properties of a gas to the motion of its molecules
- Fields and their consequences which includes understanding how particle accelerators such as the Large Hadron Collider in CERN work
- Nuclear Physics which includes radioactive decay, half-life and understanding how a nuclear reactor works

The optional topic of Turning Points in Physics that will be studied examines the development of modern Physics in an historical context plus an introduction to special relativity. Practical skills will be assessed in the laboratory. Aspects of measurements and errors, which includes an awareness of the nature of measurement errors and their numerical treatment, will be assessed in written examinations. Also, students' ability to use measuring instruments such as a micrometer screw gauge, vernier calipers and an oscilloscope will be assessed. Investigative skills of collecting and processing data and then analysing and evaluating the results will be examined.

Students will have encountered some of these topics at GCSE but at A Level they are covered to a greater depth and from a different perspective.

Students perform practical work in the laboratory on a regular basis, working either individually or in teams of two. Practical work allows students to investigate the subject for themselves and, at the same time, develop various experimental skills including the use of data-logging equipment.

There is also more numerical work at A Level and so a sound mathematical background is expected. Whilst it is not necessary for Physics students to study Mathematics to A Level standard, it would undoubtedly be helpful.

A variety of extracurricular opportunities are available to our students in the Sixth Form. These include residential courses such as Headstart, Smallpiece Trust and the Senior Physics Challenge in which students spend up to a week at a university attending academic lectures, meeting people from industry and carrying out project work in physics or engineering. Students are also encouraged to take part in Nuffield Science Bursary projects that run over the summer holiday and give students an insight into the world of scientific research and development. It is anticipated that, following previously highly successful trips, students will be offered the opportunity to travel to CERN in Switzerland, the home of the Large Hadron Collider, to learn about the fundamental research done at the world's largest particle physics laboratory. Plans are also in place for an educational visit to Sellafield, Ltd in Capenhurst, a company responsible for safely decommissioning nuclear power stations, reprocessing spent fuel, nuclear waste management and fuel manufacturing.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Students must achieve a grade 7 in GCSE Physics to study this course at A Level. Experience indicates that those students who achieve below grade 7 in Physics at GCSE, or gain less than the equivalent of grade 7 in the Physics sections of the Core and Additional Science examinations, are unlikely to be successful at A Level.

Also, given the mathematical content of the subject at A Level, students must achieve a minimum of a grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics otherwise they are likely to find the course demanding.

Physics is an essential course for those students considering careers in most types of Engineering, Astronomy or Electronics. It is also a highly desirable course for those considering careers in Geology, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Dentistry, Telecommunications, Computing, Chemistry or Material Science.

Politics

Exam Board: AQA

Students follow the AQA specification and over the course will learn:

- to develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the political system of the UK, including local and EU dimensions;
- to develop their capacity for critical thinking, to see relationships between different aspects of Government and Politics and to perceive their field of study in a broader perspective, including some comparisons with other political systems;
- to develop knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts and processes;
- to understand the essential characteristics and inter-relationships of the legislature, executive and judiciary;
- to assess the adequacy of the existing political arrangements for ensuring representative democracy and participation;
- to analyse current political debates; and
- to express ideas in a coherent and articulate manner.

Course Structure

Component 1: UK Politics
This unit explores the nature of politics and how people engage with the political process in the UK. In this unit, you will deal with the nature and sources of the British constitution, the structure and role of Parliament, the powers of the Prime Minister, the role of the judiciary as well as core themes relating to democracy, elections, political parties and pressure groups.

Component 2: The Government and Politics of the USA and Comparative Politics
This unit will introduce you to the major governmental processes within the USA and also encourage you to compare it with those of the UK. This unit will deal with the constitutional framework of the US government, the electoral process, political parties and pressure groups. It will also provide you with a detailed understanding of the executive legislative and judicial branches of government. In the second part of the course, you will develop comparisons between the systems of the UK and the USA.

Component 3: Political Ideas
This unit will introduce you to the subject of political ideology and will examine the major ideas of liberalism, conservatism, socialism, as well as feminism. You will be required to study the core elements of each ideology, as well as the different varieties that exist within each belief system.

Assessment

Component 1: written examination: 2 hours
Component 2: written examination: 2 hours
Component 3: written examination: 2 hours

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

No prior knowledge of politics is required. Students should have reached grade 6 (or above) in GCSE History, English and other similar subjects and may begin the subject by agreement with the Head of Department.

Students who study Government and Politics will have access to a wide range of career and degree opportunities. By the end of the course, students will have a good working knowledge of the UK system of government and will have a deep understanding of a range of political ideologies and how they operate, both in theory and reality. Students will be analytical, articulate and informed, attributes valuable to universities and employers. Students studying this subject have gone into a number of careers ranging from law, journalism and business to speech writing for politicians in the UK, EU and USA.

As a combined honours degree with History, Economics, Philosophy or a language, Politics will provide undergraduates with an attractive foundation for their future careers.

Psychology

Exam Board: AQA Psychology (7182)

According to the British Psychological Society, psychology is the "scientific study of human mind and behaviour: how we think, feel, act and interact individually and in groups".

Psychology is a fascinating A Level option that equips students with a variety of transferable skills suitable for a vast array of career pathways. Its status as a science was rightly recognised in 2008 when the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency) brought Psychology in with the other three sciences. Since then, the dramatic increase in the popularity of Psychology at both A Level and degree level has continued. In 2020, it was the second most popular examination subject at A Level, and it remains in the top five subjects studied at degree level. It is one of the most popular A Level options at King's.

Students will be taught by two teachers. Alongside lessons, we organise several activities and trips to enhance and complement understanding of the specification content:

- True Life Conferences where time-served criminals come into school to discuss their experiences from the perspective of forensic psychology.
- Key speakers such as Dr Guy Sutton, an international neuroscience expert and director and founder of Medical Biology Interactive, who covers aspects of the structure and functioning of the brain.

Course Structure

The A Level examination consists of three papers of two hours each covering all topics from the two-year course. The papers contain a variety of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions. Two papers will consist of compulsory questions but the third will be optional questions. Papers are of equal length and topics are equally weighted within papers. A brief summary of the specification content is given below.

Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology

Social influence: Explanations of why some people tend to obey and conform and others tend to be more independent; research into this area and how research findings may help explain social change.

Memory: Models of how memory works and evidence that supports such theories; explanations for forgetting; research into the accuracy of eyewitness testimony and implications of this research on police questioning.

Attachment: Caregiver – infant interactions; multiple attachments and the role of the father; the work of Lorenz and Harlow; the genetic and learning theories of attachment and attachment types; maternal deprivation and the effect of institutionalisation; the influence of attachment on adult relationships.

Psychopathology: How psychological abnormality is defined; the clinical characteristics of phobias, depression and OCD; the behavioural approach to treating phobias such as systematic desensitisation and flooding; cognitive approaches to explaining and treating depression such as CBT; biological explanations of OCD.

Paper 2: Psychology in Context

Approaches in Psychology: Psychologists approach the study of human behaviour from different perspectives. The A Level covers:

- The behaviourist approach: classical conditioning and Pavlov's research; operant conditioning; types of reinforcement and Skinner's research.
- The cognitive approach: the study of internal mental processes; the role of schema; the use of theoretical and computer models to explain and make inferences about mental processes; the emergence of cognitive neuroscience.
- The biological approach: the influence of genes, biological structures and neurochemistry on behaviour.
- The psychodynamic approach: the influence of Freud and the role of the unconscious; the structure of personality; defence mechanisms including repression, denial and displacement; psychosexual stages.
- Humanistic Psychology: free will, self-actualisation and Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Biopsychology: The structure and functions of the nervous and endocrine systems; the basic structure of the brain; areas associated with language and split-brain research; methods used to study the brain and various biological rhythms such as the sleep / wake cycle.

Research methods: Basic research methods, the scientific process, data handling and inferential statistics.

Paper 3: Topics in Psychology

Issues and Debates in Psychology: Topical debates such as free will/determinism, the nature of sexism in Psychology, cultural differences and whether psychology should be considered a science.

Schizophrenia: Characteristics of the disorder; issues with classification and diagnosis of Schizophrenia; the biological and psychological explanations for the disorder as well as the biological and psychological treatments.

Relationships: Factors that affect romantic attraction; the nature of virtual relationships; celebrity attraction; evolutionary explanations of partner preferences.

Forensic Psychology: Criminal profiling; the nature of the criminal justice system; psychological and biological explanations for offending behaviour.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

A minimum of grade 6 in GCSE Dual Award Science (or a 6 in Biology) and grade 6 in both Mathematics and English Language will be needed to cope with the demands of the course.

The demands of Psychology A Level are such that it spans the divide between the Arts and Sciences. It is an academically demanding subject. A curiosity about what makes people tick and an enquiring mind are vital for students wanting to study Psychology, whilst the ability to read widely, write fluently and critically, and analyse novel situations is essential. As a result, it is an A Level that can be used as a stepping stone towards a wide range of competitive degree courses and careers. This is evidenced by some of our recent students who have gone on to study Law, Medicine, Mathematics, Dentistry, History, Architecture, Computer Science, Neuroscience, Fine Art, Sports Science, Biology and English Literature to name but a few.

Religious Studies (Philosophy and Ethics)

Exam Board: OCR

We follow the OCR Religious Studies syllabus for Philosophy and Ethics. The syllabus tackles issues that are at the forefront of many areas of intellectual and ethical discussion and aims to promote a critical and enquiring response in the students. It helps them identify and explore issues that are fundamental to religion and to the world at large.

Course Structure

There are three units assessed by three, two hour written papers.

Philosophy of Religion

In Philosophy of Religion, we study philosophical issues and questions raised by religion and belief. These include arguments regarding the existence or non-existence of God, the nature and influence of religious experience and the problems of evil and suffering. We also explore philosophical language and thought through significant concepts and the works of key thinkers, illustrated in issues or debates in the Philosophy of Religion:

- ancient philosophical influences
- arguments about the existence or non-existence of God
- the nature and impact of religious experience
- the challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil
- the nature of the soul, mind and body
- the possibility of life after death
- ideas about the nature of God
- issues in religious language

Religion and Ethics

In Religion and Ethics, we study ethical theories and key ethical concepts, as well as developments in the way these ideas are applied to significant issues:

- The theories of Natural Law and Situation ethics, Kantian ethics and Utilitarianism as applied to:
    - Euthanasia
    - Business ethics
    - Sexual ethics
    - Meta ethics – the idea that there is no such thing as an objective 'right and wrong'
    - Religious versus psychological theories of Conscience: The extent to which we should follow our conscience in making decisions about moral issues.

Development in Christian Thought

We explore religious beliefs, values and teachings, sources of wisdom and authority and practices that shape and express religious identity. Also central are the ways in which religious traditions have evolved and developed over time, and how they respond to challenges and significant contemporary social issues.

- Human Nature
- Death and the afterlife
- Knowledge of God's existence
- Who Jesus Christ really was
- Christian moral principles and moral action.
- Religious pluralism
- Gender
- The challenge of the secular world.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

Many students who did not take Religious Studies GCSE choose to take it at A Level and they do not find this a hindrance.

Religious Studies is an academic subject recognised by all universities. The skills and awareness it develops, particularly in ethics and logical reasoning, make it a valuable aid to almost any career. At A Level it complements most subjects, especially other Arts subjects such as English and History. It combines particularly well with Psychology. Additionally, it offers those pursuing Mathematics and the Sciences a chance to broaden their curriculum.

How is it assessed?

Three two-hour exams. 3 40-minute essay questions in each.

BTEC Sport Level 3: National Extended Certificate (Equivalent 1 A Level)

Exam Board: Edexcel

With a track record built over 30 years of learner success, BTEC Nationals are widely recognised by industry and higher education as the signature vocational qualification at Level 3. They provide progression to the workplace either directly or via study at a higher level.

Course Structure

The topics included are:

Unit 1: Anatomy and Physiology

The effects of exercise and sports performance on:

- the skeletal system
- the muscular system
- the respiratory system
- the cardio-vascular system
- the energy systems

Unit 2: Fitness Training (will include practical element – although not assessed on practical ability).

- Examine lifestyle factors and their effect on health and well-being.
- Understand the screening processes for training programming.
- Understand programme-related nutritional needs.
- Examine training methods for different components of fitness.
- Understand training programme design.

Unit 3: Professional Development in the Sports Industry

- Understand the career and job opportunities in the sports industry.
- Explore own skills using a skills audit to inform a career development action plan.
- Undertake a recruitment activity to demonstrate the processes that can lead to a successful job offer in a selected career pathway.
- Reflect on the recruitment and selection process and your individual performance.

Unit 6: Sports Psychology

- Understand how personality, motivation and competitive pressure can affect sport performance
- Examine the impact of group dynamics in team sports and its effect on performance
- Explore psychological skills training programmes designed to improve performance

How is it assessed?

67% External Assessment:

- examinations – all learners take the same assessment at the same time.
- set tasks – learners take the assessment during a defined window and demonstrate understanding through completion of a vocational task.

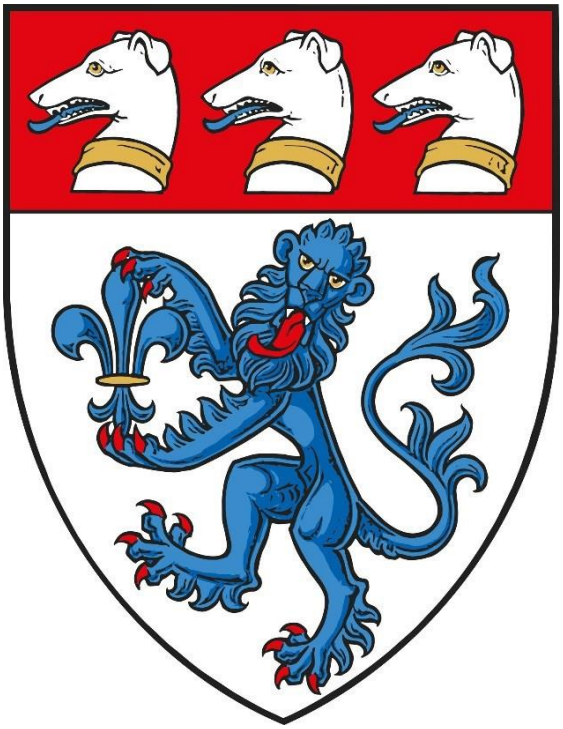
33% Internal Assessment

- Write up the findings of their own research
- Use case studies to explore complex or unfamiliar situations
- Carry out projects for which they have choice over the direction and outcomes
- Demonstrate practical and technical skills.

The course is taught by PE teachers, each specialising in one area of the course.

Course Entry Requirements & Guidelines

There are no specific requirements at GCSE, although a grade 6 (B) is desirable. Further to this a strong qualification in Biology is also advantageous.



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