BURY
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
SIXTH FORM

SIXTH FORM
A LEVEL OPTIONS

CONTENTS:

ART

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7201

What to expect

A Level Art and Design provides students with a variety of transferable skills. Not only can students learn to work independently, problem-solve, and further develop communication skills, the A Level Art and Design course also enhances leadership and resilience to work at a challenging level. Studying Art and Design at A Level is excellent preparation for careers in Design, Architecture, Animation and Illustration.

The course is designed to expand knowledge, skills and understanding of a broad spectrum of art movements and contemporary practice. By the end of the course, all students will have a wealth of skills in many art disciplines, producing a diverse portfolio in preparation for university interview.

Course Content

The Art & Design A Level course begins in Year 12 when students study a range of in-depth skills and techniques workshops, focussing on developing their unique and individual art practice. Painting, Drawing, Printmaking, Ceramics, Sculpture, Installation, and Digital Media are just some of the specialised workshops covered. Life drawing is an essential skill for portfolio success and all A Level students have the opportunity to partake in Life Class; something which is not openly offered until degree level. Students are taught by specialist teachers, who are practising artists themselves, giving our students extensive contemporary knowledge of skills and understanding of concepts.

Towards Easter of Year 12, students will be supported to devise their Personal Investigation – an individual programme of study tailored to their chosen line of enquiry. This sustained project runs from the Summer Term in Year 12 through to the end of the Autumn Term in Year 13. All coursework equates to 60% of the overall mark.

From the beginning of February in Year 13, students begin their Externally Set Assignment (ESA) set by the examination board. This is a series of set questions which the students choose one theme from and then produce a body of work, over approximately ten weeks. This then results in a fifteen-hour examination over three full school days, set under exam conditions in the summer. The ESA equates to 40% of the overall mark.

Where can A Level Art take me?

At BGS our students have taken the trajectory step into Higher Education studying degrees such as Architecture, Interior Architecture, Fine Art, Sculpture, Fashion, and Animation. The successful portfolios and programmes of study have given a 100% pass rate for many years.

> **“I like to work independently in different areas of art to develop my own artistic perspective and enhance my skillset at a much higher level.’ 'Studying Art & Design has allowed me to express and develop my originality through countless ideas and experiments.”**

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7402

What to expect

A Level Biology explores the theories and principles involved in living systems, building on what you learn at GCSE. If you are interested in recent developments in genetic engineering or disease prevention, understanding how we evolved, finding out how cells carry out so many different processes in a seemingly effortless fashion, the true impacts of pollution on the natural world, or how DNA is fundamental to life then this is your subject. The A Level Biology examinations place a great deal of emphasis on applying knowledge in unfamiliar contexts; this requires agile thinking and a keen interest in scientific innovation.

Course Content

Practical work is at the heart of the curriculum, A Level biologists are required to undertake twelve formally assessed practical tasks. Throughout the course, you will take part in many more investigations to develop your understanding of experimental techniques, the theories behind experiments and how to critically analyse your findings. You will attend a residential field trip to Anglesey, a practical DNA workshop at Manchester University, and participate in the Royal Society of Biology Olympiads. There are also plenty of opportunities to attend internal and external lectures to widen your understanding.

The A Level Biology course covers a wide range of topics and themes including genetics, cell biology, evolutionary biology, biochemistry, and biological molecules.

How will I be assessed?

In the Summer of Year 13, you will sit three exams, which cover the entire two years of the course and the assessed practicals are taken throughout the A Level course.

Where can A Level Biology take me?

A Level Biology opens up a wide range of university courses including: audiology, biological sciences, biochemistry, biomedical sciences, dentistry, environmental sciences, evolutionary biology, forensics, healthcare, medicine, medical science, microbiology, neuroscience, nursing, optometry, pharmacy, pharmacology, physiotherapy, podiatry, psychology, radiography, sports science, teaching, veterinary science, and zoology.

Past students have achieved great success applying for medicine, dentistry, and veterinary science and are extremely well supported by the Science Faculty in preparation for these competitive Higher Education applications.

Entry Requirements

In addition to the standard entry requirements for automatic entry into the BGS Sixth Form, we require a minimum of a Grade 7 at GCSE in Biology to study this subject for A Level. This is owing to the demands of the A Level Biology course and the need for a solid GCSE foundation in this area for success.

“What I love about A Level Biology is the challenge it provides. Undoubtedly more detailed than GCSE Biology, A Level Biology explains how the natural world works and the importance of these functions. Whilst the A Level Biology course is challenging, it has been extremely interesting and enjoyable. The course covers similar topics to GCSE but in much more detail, and it is fascinating to understand how cells and organisms function and can interact.”

Business

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7132

What to expect

A Level Business will provide you with an excellent insight into the daily operational/ tactical decisions made by businesses as you study each of the key functional areas of Human Resources, Marketing, Operations Management and Accounting. In addition, you will start to understand the bigger strategic challenges faced by businesses of all sizes as they try to expand into new markets at home and abroad, finance new product development, or engage in mergers or takeovers in order to increase market share. Lessons will be context driven, providing you with lots of case material with which to practise and improve your analytical and evaluative skills.

Course Content

The course is split into two main sections which include the following topics:

Tactical/Operational Decision Making
- Introduction to Business
- Management, leadership and decision making
- Marketing
- Operations Management
- Accounting
- Human Resources

Business Strategy
- Analysing the strategic position of a business
- Choosing strategic direction
- Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
- Managing strategic change

Students do not need to have studied GCSE Business to opt for A Level Business.

How will I be assessed?

The course is examined through three 2-hour papers that include a mixture of multiple choice, calculations, short answer questions and essays, mostly based on given case material.

Where can A Level Business take me?

This course provides a solid foundation from which to pursue further study in a Business-related degree including Business Management, Accountancy, Marketing, Events Management and the like at prestigious universities. The department has taught many students who have achieved great success at A Level and have gone on to lead illustrious careers in industry and commerce both in the UK and other countries.

> **“A Level Business has taught me so much already! The classes are so much fun and the areas we study are so informative.”**

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7405

What to expect

A Level Chemists develop an in-depth understanding of chemicals and how they influence everyday life. Students learn how to synthesise organic chemicals which is relevant in the pharmaceutical world as they form the basis of important medicinal drugs. The chemistry content of the A Level course builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE. The A Level course covers the full range of Organic, Inorganic and Physical aspects of Chemistry. Students will have opportunities to develop a combination of independent and co-operative strategies in their learning and practical tasks, as well as their enquiry and problem-solving skills.

Course Content

The three main branches of Chemistry are studied in great depth.

Physical Chemistry

Atomic structure, amount of substance, kinetics, energetics, equilibria, bonding, redox, thermodynamics, the rate equation, acids and bases, equilibrium constant kp, electrode potentials, and electrochemical cells.

Organic Chemistry

Introduction to organic chemistry, alkanes, alkenes, halogen alkanes, alcohols, organic analysis, Inorganic Chemistry: periodicity, Group 1 elements, Group 7 elements, optical isomerism, aldehydes and ketones, carboxylic acids and derivatives, aromatic chemistry, amines, polymers, amino acids, protein and DNA, chromatography, organic synthesis, and NMR spectroscopy.

Inorganic Chemistry

Properties of period 3 elements and their oxides, transition metals, and reactions of ions in aqueous solution.

How will I be assessed?

At the end of Year 13, students will take three examinations. All examinations assess knowledge of both the theory and practical content over the duration of the two-year course. In addition, you will have the opportunity to perform a wide range of experiments in order to develop your laboratory skills.

Where can A Level Chemistry take me?

Chemistry is an excellent basis for progression to a science degree. It provides a wide range of career opportunities, including Medical Science, Chemical Engineering, Pharmacology, and Research. There are also an increasing number of Higher and Degree Apprenticeship opportunities in sectors such as Chemical Engineering.

Entry Requirements

In addition to the standard entry requirements for automatic entry into the BGS Sixth Form, we require a minimum of a Grade 7 at GCSE in Chemistry to study this subject for A Level. This is owing to the demands of the A Level Chemistry course and the need for a solid GCSE foundation in this area for success.

“There are a lot of different aspects involved in chemistry, from the more mathematical side to the more theoretical side, which balances out the subject well. There is also a lot of practical work within the course, which is always explained really well by our teachers!”

Computer Science

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7517

What to expect

Computer Science is an exciting subject, which allows students to apply their academic skills practically, by writing computer programs to solve problems. Students who can think logically, are creative, and enjoy practical work are likely to enjoy the subject. It can lead to a range of interesting jobs, in a field in which much innovation and research is currently taking place.

Course Content

Students will start by gaining further experience of procedural-oriented programming but developing programs that have a graphical user interface instead of a command line one and learn about other aspects of programming such as communicating with database servers using SQL. They will then progress on to object-oriented programming in C# and finally they get a taste of the functional programming paradigm using Haskell and assembly language programming using the ARM instruction set.

Students will also study the fundamentals of computing devices, the logic gate circuits that enable computing devices to perform operations, the structure and role of the processor, the low-level language of the machine, and how it is used to program the hardware directly. Topics such as networking and the storage and processing of the vast amounts of data that are now generated all the time (Big Data) are also covered.

How will I be assessed?

At A Level there are two exam papers that each last two-and-a-half hours. One of these is a practical programming exam and the other is a traditional paper-based exam. A single piece of coursework also needs to be produced. Each exam paper is worth 40% of the final mark for the course and the coursework project is worth 20%. For the coursework, students work on a substantial project of their choice, either developing a program to solve a problem or investigating an aspect of Computer Science. Most students produce their projects using C# but it is also possible to use other languages such as ASP or PHP for web page programming or to develop applications for mobile devices.

Where can A Level Computer Science take me?

Students go on to study a variety of subjects at University. Most choose to follow a course such as Computer Science or Computer Systems Engineering, but others study courses such as Mathematics or Business, and some have gone on to follow apprenticeship courses. In recent years, students have gone to universities including Cambridge, Manchester, Warwick and Lancaster.

> **“I enjoyed all the practical work and the opportunities to develop my coding skills in new directions.”**

Drama & Theatre

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7262

What to expect

A Level Drama offers students a dynamic and inspiring journey into theatre, blending practical creativity with theoretical understanding. The course promotes independent theatre-making and equips students with essential transferable skills for higher education and the workplace, whether in drama or other fields.

Course Content

The subject content for A Level Drama and Theatre Studies is divided into three components.

Component 1 - Drama and Theatre
Drama and Theatre assesses the knowledge and understanding of drama through the study of two set texts. One from a significant era in theatre history, and another 20th or 21st century drama. Previously studied texts include Ibsen's 'Hedda Gabler' and Lorca's 'Yerma'. You will experience and respond to a range of theatre productions, either digitally streamed or live where possible. You will work on developing analysis and evaluation skills for several aspects of production, from performance to design.

Component 2 - Creating Original Drama
You will begin by exploring the working methods of several significant theatre practitioners and styles of theatre. Creating Original Drama allows you to use the skills developed to devise your own work based upon a contemporary theme which is of particular interest to your group. You will have the opportunity to contribute in this examination as a performer, a designer or a director.

Component 3 - Making Theatre
Making Theatre is a practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts each taken from a different play. Extract 3 is performed as a final assessed piece where you will again contribute as a performer, a designer or a director. A reflective report analysing and evaluating the theatrical interpretation of all three extracts is also part of the assessment.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Drama and Theatre: Written Exam, 3 hours, Open Book, 80 marks, 40% of total A Level

Component 2: Creating Original Drama: NEA Coursework, 60 marks, 30% of total A Level

Component 3: Making Theatre: NEA, assessed by visiting examiner, 60 marks, 30% of total A Level

Where can A Level Drama take me?

A Level Theatre Studies is suited to future courses in arts subjects such as Drama or Film Studies, as well as subjects such as English, Social Sciences or Law. Former students have gone on to study Film, Law and Psychology at university, as well as pursue Drama School routes. Recently we were thrilled to see a former Theatre Studies student begin a BA (Hons) in Musical Theatre Performance at The Hammond School.

> **I chose A Level Theatre Studies because I have a natural interest in this subject and to help to build my confidence. At university I plan to study Clinical Psychology and I know the skills that I have acquired during the time I have studied Drama will be extremely useful.**

Economics

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7136

What to expect

Economics is an exciting and relevant discipline which equips students with many transferable skills through the completion of interesting and varied tasks both in and out of the classroom. Economics enables students to develop an analytical approach to problem-solving which helps in understanding a wide range of issues. Economics is the discipline that opens our eyes to the workings of the world in which we live and in which our students will eventually work. Its main focus is how consumers, businesses, and the government make decisions about how to allocate resources.

Course Content

In Microeconomics, you will use models such as demand and supply to explain how markets work and why they might fail, analysing possible government policies which attempt to correct such market failures. Other key models relate to wage determination and causes of inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth as well as the traditional Theory of the Firm. Economic theory generally assumes that economic agents act rationally but this is not necessarily always the case; the alternative view is covered by a new and exciting branch of Economics; 'Behavioural Economics', which our students will also get a chance to study.

In Macroeconomics, students look at the developments in the UK's economic performance over the past fifteen years and compare this with other European and Global economies. Furthermore, they will learn how to analyse and evaluate macroeconomic policies aims to solve macroeconomic problems such as inflation, unemployment and recession- issues you will hear mentioned daily in the news!

Both Microeconomics and Macroeconomics require an interest in current affairs. There is no pre-requisite to studying A Level Economics, however, students will need to be competent at Mathematics.

How will I be assessed?

There are three examinations, each worth 33.33% of the A Level and each are two hours in duration.

- Markets and Market Failure - micro
- National & International Economy - macro
- Economic Principles and Issues - micro & macro (synoptic)

Where can A Level Economics take me?

Economics is a subject which prepares you to live and work in the UK or other economy. We have had many students going on from A Level to study Economics-related degrees at some of the most prestigious universities in the country including Oxford, LSE, UCL, Bristol, Bath, Nottingham, Durham, Leeds, and degree apprenticeships at large corporations such as Ernst & Young and Siemens, to name but a few. We are proud of each and every student who passes through our department and many have gone on to pursue exciting and illustrious careers such as forensic accountancy, city banking, investment analysis, the Police, solicitors as well as numerous who have taken up management positions within large companies.

> **“Economics is everywhere. I now believe that it is true. Lessons are varied, interesting, and every theory that we learn can be applied to the real world. Economics presents me with a real academic challenge.”**

English Language

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7702

What to expect

English Language combines elements of psychology, sociology and linguistics, creating a diverse and ever-evolving subject that gives students the opportunity to really explore, understand, and analyse how language is used in the world around them. As part of the course, students study a range of linguistic theories and conduct detailed stylistic and linguistic analyses on texts from Old English through to the language of Snapchat and Instagram. Students also have the chance to investigate an aspect of language that is of interest to them, and to develop their creative skills through the writing of a text of their choice.

Course Content

Paper 1: Language, the individual and society
Students will look at the variety of ways in which topics, themes and ideas are represented in language. They develop detailed analytical skills, exploring the ways in which a text's audience, purpose and genre shape the ways in which language is used within it. The development of children's language from birth to 11 years old is also explored; looking at real life examples, students explore how babies achieve the extraordinary feat of becoming fluent speakers, readers, and writers.

Paper 2: Language diversity and change
This part of the course allows students to gain insight into language diversity and change over time. They have the chance to investigate how different people use language, considering the ways in which language is affected by geographical and social factors. Students explore attitudes towards different accents and dialects, whether gender shapes communication styles, and the distinctive features of different social groups' use of language. Studying Language Change also allows students to explore how the English language has been shaped over time, gaining insight into the history of many of the words we use in everyday speech and exploring the factors that continue to change our language even today.

NEA (Coursework) - Language in action
For the coursework element of the qualification, students conduct their own research project into an area of their choice. Students also work creatively, writing a text aimed at a target audience of their choice.

How will I be assessed?

There are two written examinations, each worth 40%, plus coursework which is worth 20% of the final A Level grade.

Where can A Level English Language take me?

English Language A Level is excellent preparation for a vast array of degree subjects including English, Linguistics, Modern Foreign Languages, Psychology, Creative Writing, Child Development, Education, Speech Therapy, and Journalism. Beyond this, the analytical and communication skills that students develop in studying English Language equip them to confidently begin their career in whichever sphere they choose.

> **A Level English Language has been really fun. I've learned so much about the history and varieties of my own language and I've especially enjoyed learning about how babies learn to talk. I'll be taking my notes to Uni to use in my English degree, where I'm sure they'll come in handy!**

English Literature

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: OCR/H472

What to expect

The study of English Literature is the study of the human psyche, human experience, and the thoughts of some of the most brilliant minds in human history. Any text is the product of its time; a study of it will teach a student to read in context and to understand the influences over the author. The skills developed in the study of Literature include critical thinking, analysis and creative expertise. In short, the study of English Literature helps students to explore some of life's greatest questions and to develop the skills of analysis and argument required for entry to the most prestigious universities and careers.

Course Content

Component One: Drama and Poetry Pre-1900

Set text: Hamlet by William Shakespeare

Students will explore and respond to one of Shakespeare's most famous tragedies, developing a detailed, critical understanding of the play by closely analysing its language and dramatic effects, and exploring its performance over the centuries.

Set texts: Selected Poems by Christina Rossetti and A Doll's House by Henrik Ibsen

Comparing Rossetti's compelling poetry with this play by the 'Father of Modern Drama', students draw fascinating links and explore themes such as gender roles, deception, class divisions, greed,and relationships.

Component Two: Comparative and Contextual Study

American Literature, 1880 – 1940

Set Texts: *The Great Gatsby* by F Scott Fitzgerald and *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck

Students become experts on American literature of this period, analysing the development of US society through the fiction that it produced.

NEA (Coursework)

Students write a short close analysis of one text and a longer comparative essay that explores a theme or topic of their choice. This is an opportunity for students to study 21st Century texts and to make their own choices, guided by their teachers.

How will I be assessed?

Two written examinations which are each worth 40% of the final grade, plus two coursework pieces that comprise 20% of the total A Level.

Where can A Level English Literature take me?

English Literature A Level is widely respected by the most prestigious universities and courses. It is an asset to any university application, and widespread demand for excellent communication skills means that English Literature degrees offer innumerable potential career paths, such as Politics, Law, Journalism, Education, Creative Writing, the entertainment industry, and Marketing.

"I believe that studying English Literature has the power to make you a better person. It challenges you to gain a deeper understanding of the world and with that you become more empathetic, understanding and open-minded."

Further Mathematics

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: Edexcel

What to expect

A Level Further Mathematics is designed to broaden and deepen a student's mathematical knowledge and skills developed when studying A Level Mathematics. Studying Further Mathematics consolidates and reinforces your standard A Level Mathematics work, helping you to achieve your best possible grades in both qualifications. The subject provides a stimulating experience for those who enjoy mathematics and wish to study it in more depth, widening their exposure to new concepts. Further Mathematics introduces new topics such as matrices and complex numbers that are vital in many STEM degrees. As well as learning new areas of pure mathematics, you will study further applications in optional areas such as mechanics, statistics, or decision mathematics.

Course Content

All Further Mathematicians are required to complete the Core Pure 1 and Core Pure 2 Modules. Within this module students will extend their mathematical knowledge to include complex numbers, matrices, polar coordinates and hyperbolic functions. They will also further explore calculus and algebra, including challenges such as more advanced differential equations.

Within Further Mathematics, we have the flexibility to tailor the course modules to the academic profile of the class.

- Within the Further Pure modules, students would explore calculus, trigonometry, matrices, polar coordinates and many other aspects of the course in much more detail. This would delve further into the world of pure mathematics - useful for students who were looking for a career or degree path including pure mathematics.
- Within the Statistics modules students would look at statistical distributions, statistical tests, hypothesis testing and regression models.
- In the study of Further Mechanics students explore elasticity, work, and power and kinematics. This module links well with the study of physics.
- The final option is Decision Mathematics, and this area of learning is unique to Further Mathematics. Within this module students will explore algorithms, critical path analysis, game theory, and many other new aspects of Mathematics. This is well suited to students who are or will be looking to study Computer Science.

How will I be assessed?

All material is examined at the end of Year 13. The Core Pure 1 and 2 material is examined in two, 90 minute papers, which account for 50% of the grade. The final two modules will be examined in two separate papers.

Where can A Level Further Mathematics take me?

If you are planning to take a degree such as Engineering, Sciences, Computing, Finance/ Economics, or perhaps Mathematics itself, you will benefit enormously from taking Further Mathematics. Students who have studied Further Mathematics in recent years have gone on to Russell group universities, including Oxford and Cambridge, to study degrees such as Mathematics, Neuroscience, Physics and Computer Science.

“It has been an excellent experience studying Further Mathematics and learning more advanced calculus and trigonometry and this course has also made my regular Maths stronger.”

Geography

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7037

What to expect

There has never been a better or more important time to study A Level Geography. Dealing with vital issues such as climate change, migration, environmental degradation, social issues, and natural hazards, A Level Geography is one of the most relevant subjects you could choose to study. Students enjoy the scope of the material they cover in Geography, the insights it can provide into the world around us and the highly contemporary nature of the issues it tackles.

Course Content

The A Level Geography course is often split into Human and Physical Geography even though Geography is a very fluid subject with many of the issues overlapping. Human topics such as urbanisation and globalisation are highly topical and allow students to apply their knowledge to a worldwide context. Physical Geography explores topics such as natural hazards, what can be done to predict them and the management that is in place if one occurs.

To study A Level Geography, you need to have an enquiring and open mind. Geography is a study of the world around us and you need to be aware of issues worldwide, not just in the UK. You will debate issues such as migration and health care, and think about them from political, social, environmental and economic perspectives. Your opinion is important, but you also need to think about debates from someone else's point of view. Reading newspapers and articles to keep your subject knowledge up to date is vital and in lessons you will learn about the stories behind the headlines.

How will I be assessed?

There are two written examinations, one each for Physical and Human Geography, contributing 80% of the A Level grade. An independent coursework investigation based on fieldwork accounts for the remaining 20%.

Where can A Level Geography take me?

Geography is seen as a bridge between the arts and sciences, enabling you to keep your options for your future open. It combines well with a wide range of other subjects. Taken with sciences like Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology, Geography supports applications for almost any science- based university course like Engineering, Psychology, Environmental Sciences, Oceanography and Geology; taken with Humanities like English, French, History or Economics, Geography provides a base for courses in Business, Law , Media, Politics and Philosophy.

> **“Geography has elements of Maths, Science and Humanities, so our classes are always made up of a wide variety of students with different interests, making our debates on current issues really interesting. The highlight of Year 12 was the four-day residential fieldtrip to the Yorkshire coast, where we learnt a lot of Geography, practised skills for our NEA and had lots of fun!”**

History

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA

What to expect

History A Level gives students the opportunity to gain an understanding of historical concepts and a coherent knowledge of the past. They acquire the ability to communicate, argue and reach balanced conclusions, as well as developing techniques of critical thinking. We inspire students to engage critically with the past and historians' interpretations of events through attendance at lectures, conferences and historical visits.

You will develop skills of analysis, research and communication and the ability to debate an issue and argue a case effectively, key skills crucial to future employment.

Course Content

The subject content for A Level History is divided into three components:

Component 1: Breadth Study:
Consolidation of the Tudor dynasty: England 1485-1603

Component 2: Depth Study:
Democracy and Nazism: Germany 1918-45

Component 3: History Investigation:
A personal study based on Russia.

How will I be assessed?

There are two written examinations, each paper is worth 40% of the A Level and both are two hours and thirty minutes in duration. There are three questions on each paper and they are both marked out of 80. Component 3: History Investigation: a personal study based on Russia is an NEA worth 20% of the final grade.

Where can A Level History take me?

The methods of investigation, study and research in History are very useful training for a variety of careers including Law, Journalism, Accountancy, Publishing, Management, Teaching and Medicine.

> **Whether you love the scandal of the Tudors or have an interest in the fascinating change from democracy to dictatorship in 1930s Germany, learning about History is both exciting and important. I would recommend the A Level History course to anyone!**

Languages

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA

What to expect

Our best linguists often choose to continue their study of French, German or Spanish beyond GCSE to A Level. Here they are taught in small, specialised groups where we build on the foundations laid at Key Stages 3 and 4 in order to progress to A Level standard. We make greater use of authentic resources and encourage independent learning and research in the target language into areas of interest. Studying a language to A Level is challenging yet rewarding and is excellent preparation for Higher Education and employment as it improves communication skills and adds an extra dimension to students' knowledge, understanding and cultural awareness. Students can take part in well-established foreign trips and our exchange programmes; the exchanges give unique opportunities to students to immerse themselves in the language and culture and allow them to experience life in France, Spain or Germany.

Course Content

In each language, the assessments are based on the following areas of study.

- Aspects of French/German/Spanish-speaking society: current trends and issues
- Artistic culture in the French/German/Spanish-speaking world
- Aspects of political life in the French/German/Spanish-speaking world
- One text and one film from the list set in the specification
- Individual research project

How will I be assessed?

You will have three examinations which will make up 100% of your A Level mark.

Paper 1: Listening, Reading, Translation
Paper 2: Writing on the text and film
Paper 3: Speaking (discussion on one of the language topics and presentation of Individual Research Project)

Where can A Level Languages take me?

Recent Sixth Form linguists have gone onto Oxbridge courses and have enhanced their career prospects by undertaking study abroad as part of their degree courses.

MFL results have always been excellent in recent years, exceeding the national average.

Entry Requirements

In addition to the standard entry requirements for automatic entry into the BGS Sixth Form, we require a minimum of a Grade 7 at GCSE in Languages to study this subject for A Level. This is owing to the demands of the A Level languages course and the need for a solid GCSE foundation in this area for success.

"The opportunity to take part in an international exchange is invaluable! It provides a great chance to apply your language skills in a practical context and interact with native speakers."

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: Edexcel

What to expect

A Level Mathematics is a rigorous and challenging course, which builds upon the topics studies at GCSE. It is a versatile qualification, well respected by universities and employers alike, which helps to improve both logical thinking and analytical skills, allowing students to develop resilience whilst thinking strategically and creatively.

Course Content

Pure Mathematics
Building on the material studied at GCSE, this area of mathematics allows the students to further their understanding of topics such as calculus, trigonometry, sequences and series, algebra and functions, and coordinate geometry.

Statistics
Students will learn to make predictions about future events by collecting and analysing data, making use of statistical information and techniques. A thorough understanding of probability and risk is important in careers like insurance, medicine, engineering, and the sciences.

Mechanics
Modelling and analysing the physical world around us, including the study of forces and motion. Mechanics is particularly useful to students studying physics and engineering.

How will I be assessed?

Content is examined at the end of the two-year course. Students will sit two Pure exam papers, which are 2 hours long, and these will account for two thirds of their grade.

They will also sit one applied paper, which will examine the Statistics and Mechanics material. This is also 2 hours long, and will account for one third of their grade.

Where can A Level Mathematics take me?

An A Level in Mathematics can open doors to numerous career paths, not just those which use Mathematics, as success in this A Level demonstrates resilience, logical thinking skills, and critical thinking. However, an A Level in Mathematics would most certainly be beneficial if you were to go on to study, or pursue a career in, areas such as finance, economics, medicine, or a scientific field.

In recent years, we have had students attend Russell group universities, such as Warwick and Bristol to study courses including Mathematics, Economics, Neuroscience, and Engineering. We have also had students go to Oxford and Cambridge to study Mathematics and Computer Science respectively.

Entry Requirements

In addition to the standard entry requirements for automatic entry into the BGS Sixth Form, we require a minimum of a Grade 7 at GCSE in Mathematics to study this subject for A Level. This is owing to the demands of the A Level Mathematics course and the need for a solid GCSE foundation in this area for success.

> **Maths A Level consists of logical learning which really helps with my other A Level subjects. It is extremely satisfying when you manage to work out the correct answer to a complicated and multi-faceted question.**

Music

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: EDUQAS/WJEC

What to expect

A Level Music is exciting and rewarding, unique in its combination of academic study and creative opportunity. A Level Music will develop and extend you musical performance as well as knowledge of music theory. Composition, performance, and the history of music are encompassed by the A Level specification, which develops depth of knowledge, skills in independent study, and considerable musical ability. Communication through music is enhanced by every aspect of the A Level course. Musical knowledge and skills are developed to enable students to become more confident and accomplished composers and performers of music.

Course Content

The course offers performance and composition options where candidates can choose the percentage weighting, with appraisal and analytical study across a wide variety of musical genres. Set works are studied in the area of Western Classical music: the development of the symphony, and candidates have a choice to study music from rock and pop, musical theatre, and jazz. The performance and composition elements are both completed as coursework, whilst appraising is measured through a written exam worth 40% of the total A Level.

Students will engage with the work of past masters and learn about the development of musical genres across the ages. However, there is great scope for personal creative development which embraces modern technologies and unique interpretative compositions and performances. There is an opportunity to apply music technology to the creation and performance of musical pieces.

Music is also a challenging, creative subject which extends your levels of accomplishment and inspires students to become confident composers and performers.

How will I be assessed?

Component 1: Performing - Longer recital worth 35% or shorter recital worth 25%
Component 2: Composing - Two compositions worth 25% or three compositions worth 35%
Component 3: Appraising - listening and written exam worth 40%

Where can A Level Music take me?

Whilst Music can be a useful subject for Arts and Media courses at university, the most obvious pathway is going on to study a degree in music, which can lead to a range of exciting career options, including becoming a professional musician, musical theatre performer, a sound technician, a music therapist, a teacher, or a private tutor.

A Level Music is very valuable if pursuing careers in arts administration, work in radio, theatre, or events management. Music is also viewed as an academic A Level and is highly regarded when applying for unrelated degree courses. Rather than limiting your career prospects, a music degree opens doors to a wide range of careers. Former BGS Sixth Form students have gone on to study music at a range of universities including Cardiff and Birmingham, and have studied music performance at the Royal Northern College of Music, and Birmingham Conservatoire. We have many success stories to boast about, two recent students have gone on to be a professional Opera Singer and a professional Musician.

> **Some people think that music education is a privilege - but I think that it is essential to being human. Because it is just fun.**

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7408

What to expect

A Level Physics provides the opportunity to explore the phenomena of the universe and to look at theories that explain what is observed. This subject combines practical skills with theoretical ideas to develop hypotheses to describe the physical universe. You will learn about everything from kinematics to cosmology and many recent developments in fascinating topics, such as particle physics. If you are interested in the limits of space, the beginning of time and everything in between this is the subject for you. Physics is more than a subject - it trains your brain to think beyond boundaries.

Course Content

You will already be familiar with many of the topics that you will study, including forces, waves, radioactivity, electricity, and magnetism. At A Level, you'll look at these areas in more detail and find out how they are interconnected. You will also learn how to apply maths to real world problems and explore new areas such as particle physics, quantum phenomena, and astrophysics.

There is no coursework or controlled assessment in A Level Physics, but students will cover 12 required practicals over the two-year course which can be tested in the external examinations. Additionally, students may be awarded a pass or fail for their practical competency.

How will I be assessed?

There are three papers each lasting 2 hours.
Paper 1 covers material from Year 12.
Paper 2 covers material from Year 13.
Paper 3 has a section on practical skills and data analysis, and a section on one of the optional topics.

Where can A Level Physics take me?

Studying A Level Physics doesn't restrict your options, it expands them. As well as being needed for many careers in Science and Engineering, the skills and knowledge that you can develop by studying Physics keeps the door open to doing just about everything else!

You will develop skills that can be transferred to just about any other area of work, from setting up a business to saving the planet. Even if you don't go on to become a Physicist, learning to think like one will help you draw connections that aren't obvious to others. Physics won't give you all the answers, but it will teach you how to ask the right questions.

Entry Requirements

In addition to the standard entry requirements for automatic entry into the BGS Sixth Form, we require a minimum of a Grade 7 at GCSE in Physics to study this subject for A Level. This is owing to the demands of the A Level Physics course and the need for a solid GCSE foundation in this area for success.

"A Level Physics can be very challenging, however it is very interesting going into much more detail than GCSE. I enjoy the variety of practicals and learning about how physics relates to the world around us."

Politics

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: Edexcel/9PL0

What to expect

The skills that you learn in the study of Politics will be useful for many areas of employment, such as law, teaching and broadcasting, and journalism. You will develop skills of analysis, research and communication, and the ability to debate an issue and argue a case effectively.

Course Content

UK Politics and Core Political Ideas
You will investigate in detail how people and politics interact. You will explore the emergence and development of the UK's democratic system and the similarities and parallels between direct and indirect democracy.

UK Government and Non-Core Political Ideas
This component is fundamental to understanding the nature of UK government, as it enables students to understand where, how and by whom political decisions are made. Students will explore the following key themes: the relative powers of the different branches of UK government; the extent to which the constitution has changed in recent years; the desirability of further change; and the current location of power within the UK political system.

Comparative Politics (Government and Politics of the USA)
As a world power, understanding the nature of US democracy, and the debates surrounding it, is crucial given the considerable impact that the USA has on UK, European, and global politics. Students will explore the US Constitution and the arguments surrounding US democracy. In learning about the key institutions of government in the USA and analysing the way they achieve this power and exercise it over their citizens, students will judge, ultimately, whether 'liberty and justice for all' has been achieved in the USA.

How will I be assessed?

The course is structured into the following three main areas of study, and is assessed entirely by examinations taken at the end of the two-year course.

1. Politics and Core Political Ideas
2. Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism
3. UK Government and Non-Core Political Ideas

Where can A Level Politics take me?

Former A Level Politics students at BGS have gone on to achieve great success:

- Manchester University to study Law (A*AA)
- The Leader of Bury Council
- A Special Adviser to Prime Ministers David Cameron and Theresa May
- A leading TV producer and script editor
- A member of the Diplomatic Service currently serving at the British Embassy in Tokyo.

"Politics is my favourite A-level subject, and it has allowed me to build my debating skills. The lessons are always engaging, with plenty of scope for discussion, meaning that every lesson is completely different from the last! It also allows me to expand my knowledge beyond the curriculum; it really is the subject to do if you have a genuine love of learning"

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: AQA/7182

What to expect

Psychology is concerned with the scientific and systematic study of the human mind, behaviour, emotions, and biology. It also studies non-human animals in the hope to generalise and apply from simpler species to humans. The actions, thoughts, and feelings of human beings are challenging and fascinating areas of study. whatever career you pursue, a background in psychology will enhance your employability. Studying psychology can help you understand yourself and other people by learning about aspects of human behaviour that will help you in daily life, including your interactions with others, your own learning and memory performance, your ability to cope with pressure and your understanding of the causes of psychological disorders. The Psychology A Level course assumes students have no prior knowledge of the subject. An interest in people, a willingness to work hard, to contribute, and the learn are essential requirements.

Course Content

The A Level specification has been designed to introduce the nature of psychology as a science. It incorporates practical work to develop understanding of research methods and a range of contemporary topics, in addition to traditional areas of study. Skills which students will have already developed; writing accurately, data analysis, and IT skills will be used and extended during the A Level Psychology course. During the first year we cover the same core topics, including: Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Psychopathology (Mental Health issues), Approaches, and Biological Psychology.

At BGS, the second year topics are: Schizophrenia, Gender, and Aggression. The research methods topic is taught over the 2 years as is synoptic, so draws on students' skills as researchers and is examined over all sections and papers.

How will I be assessed?

Psychology A Level consists of 3 equally weighted written exam papers, each 2 hours long, consisting of a combination of multiple-choice questions, short answer question, and extended writing (essay) questions.

Where can A Level Psychology take me?

Psychology A Level is a well-respected academic A Level that is classified as a Science A Level. It is highly valued by prestigious universities and the department has a long and established history of success in providing students with high grades that open many career and higher education opportunities. Students not only continue to study Psychology at degree level and beyond, but they are also successful at gaining places on a range of competitive university courses. some notable successes are ensuring students secured places at the following university destinations: Oxford University to study Experimental Psychology, Bristol University to study Neuroscience, Durham University to study Geography and Law, Manchester University to study Dentistry and Medicine, and Leeds University to study International Business and Economics.

"Psychology is the subject I look most forward to in the week. It has many real-world applications and although it is an A Level, I find the content highly interesting and it has enabled me to understand myself on a deeper level."

Religious Studies

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: OCR

What to expect

An A Level in Religious Studies provides a coherent and thought-provoking programme designed to develop a greater understanding of religious beliefs and teachings, as well as the disciplines of ethics and philosophy of religion. Learners will develop their skills of critical analysis in order to construct balanced, informed arguments, and responses to religious, philosophical, and ethical ideas. This course aims to engage learners thoroughly and develop an interest in Religious Studies which extends beyond the classroom and can be applied to the world around them.

Course Content

The course is structured into three main components:

Philosophy of Religion
This component includes the study of ancient philosophical influences, the nature of the soul, mind and body, and arguments about the existence or non-existence of God. It also explores ideas about the nature of God and issues in religious language.

Religion and ethics
You will explore normative ethical theories, the application of ethical theory, ethical language, and thought and debates surrounding the significant idea of conscience.

Developments in religious thought
Topics covered in the component include: religious beliefs, sources of religious wisdom and authority, practices which shape and express religious identity and how these vary within a tradition, and significant social and historical developments in theology and religious thought.

How will I be assessed?

The qualification is assessed through 3 examinations, one for each component. Each examination is 2 hours long and consists of three essays, each marked out of 40. Students must choose 3 from a selection of 4 essays on each paper.

Where can A Level Religious Studies take me?

RS, Philosophy, and Ethics is highly regarded by universities and employers as it proves that you can think, discuss, and evaluate. There are many university courses and career paths that Philosophy and Ethics can help with as studying them can make a significant contribution to any job or course that requires you to think clearly and rigorously. Religious Studies particularly prepares students for the following careers. Business: City Firms, Banks, Management Consultancies, Chartered Accountants are enthusiastic about people who have done philosophy, because they know how to think clearly. Students also go into law, politics, and the civil service. Medicine has clear links with this subject, especially due to the emphasis on Medical Ethics in the specification. Journalism is a logical career path, since you must be able to write well and present ideas logically and clearly as is advertising. Those working in the field of International Relations are now also advocating that governments should appoint advisers with an understanding of religious diversity to bring knowledge and understanding to diplomatic negotiations.

> **“A Level Religious Studies is an intellectually stimulating course. It is one of the oldest academic disciplines which requires you to think for yourself.”**

SPORTS LEADERSHIP

Qualification: Level 3 Qualification in Sports Leadership
Examination Board: SLQ

What to expect

The Sports Leaders Award has been designed to develop confident leaders through sport and physical activity.

Young people undertaking a qualification in Sports Leadership will learn and demonstrate important life skills, such as effective communication and organisation, whilst learning to lead basic physical activities to younger people, their peers, older generations, and within the community.

Course Content

The courses involve both guided and peer-to-peer learning and supervised leadership to ensure that learners have all the necessary skills that they need to lead basic physical activities to other people.

The sessions use sport to deliver fun and engaging physical activities with other students and within the community.

How will I be assessed?

Students will plan, lead and evaluate sports and physical activity sessions over a number of tutored hours and then demonstrate their leadership skills as part of their assessment.

Where can a Level 3 Qualification in Sports Leadership take me?

Leadership skills are invaluable to achieving success in all career areas.

> **“Joining the Sports Leadership course has really pushed me out of my comfort zone in the best way. I’ve developed leadership skills, learnt how to organise events, and discovered how rewarding it is to motivate others. It’s a great way to grow personally while making a positive impact in school.”**

Extended Project Qualification

Qualification: A Level
Examination Board: OCR

What to expect

There are several reasons why you may wish to consider the EPQ:

1. It carries as many UCAS points as an AS Level; it is the only AS to have A* as a grade.
2. It will allow you to develop an area of academic interest outside the constraints of your A Level subjects.
3. It will allow you to develop research and writing skills which are very close to those used at universities. This will put you at a significant advantage both when it comes to applying for university, and when it comes to writing your own dissertation as an undergraduate at university.
4. It gives you a chance to experience one-to-one teaching/supervision and seminar teaching.

Course Content

The Extended Project is a Level 3 qualification. It is an independent research project which requires students, with appropriate supervision, to:

- choose an area of interest
- draft a title and aims of the project for formal approval by the centre
- plan, research, and carry out the project
- deliver a presentation to a non-specialist audience
- provide evidence of all stages of project development and production for assessment.

Each student is allocated a supervisor and there are also a series of taught sessions run throughout the year.

How will I be assessed?

The project is marked and moderated in school before being sent to the exam board for external moderation.

Where can a Level 3 Extended Project Qualification take me?

The Russell Group universities (the top research universities in the country) have been very supportive of the EPQ, with many stating how much they value the skills it develops, with some even stating that in competitive subject areas, a preference may be given to candidates offering the EPQ.

> **"I am so pleased that I chose to do an EPQ. It gave me a chance to explore a topic which I was really interested in and was able to choose myself. It also really helped me with my other A Level subjects and gave me something to talk about at my interview for university!"**

Careers and Competitive Courses

What to expect

At Bury Grammar School we have developed two specialised programmes that run across Year 12 to Year 13 for students intending to apply for study at Oxford or Cambridge, as well as those aspiring to study Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Sciences.

Pathway to Oxbridge

- Phase 1 - Exploring academic interests (October - December)
- Phase 2 - Preparation for entrance exams (May -July)
- Phase 3 - UCAS personal statement preparation (May - October)
- Phase 4 - Preparation for interview (October -December)

Pathway to Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Science

- Phase 1 - Scientific Development (September - December)
- Phase 2 - Ethics debate and discussion (January - April)
- Phase 3 - Clinical admission test coaching (May - July)
- Phase 4 - UCAS personal statement preparation (May - October)
- Phase 5 - Preparation for Multiple Mini Interviews (October - December)

Throughout Year 12, prospective Oxbridge and MDV students are encouraged to explore their chosen subject through wider reading, independent learning and MOOCs, using the online platform Unifrog and our bespoke academic pathways programme. Students on both programmes will work in groups as well as independently to conduct research and present their learnings. We aim to develop both presenting and debating skills in order to develop confidence and fluency when discussing their chosen subject as this is paramount to success at interview.

Year 13 students applying to study Medicine, Dentistry, and Veterinary Science attend a practice Multiple Mini Interviews afternoon in school which simulates scenarios and tasks they will encounter, and gives them the opportunity to practice their skills.

This afternoon of MMIs is made possible by the various alumni, parents, and other friends of the school who volunteer their time to act as interviewers and share their expertise as medical professionals.

Students on both programmes work with subject specialist teachers who act as mentors in preparation for interviews and university entrance examinations that are held in early Year 13. With their mentors, students will practice select questions from the relevant entrance exams as well as discussing wider reading and notable developments in their chosen subject.

In Year 12, students are encouraged to apply for taster courses and to arrange their own university Open Day visits. There are form time activities and assemblies focused on how to choose the correct course and university as well as information on degree apprenticeships and other alternative career pathways.

Students intending to apply for Medicine, Dentistry or Veterinary Sciences are supported in their search for vital work experience.

Students interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge attend a conference where they can explore courses and learn about undergraduate study. Our Competitive Course Co-ordinator also arranges day trips to both Oxford and Cambridge to visit our link colleges at each university.

Sixth Form students can hone their debating and leadership skills, whilst exploring potential careers, by taking part in numerous events and competitions, for example, the Sir Rhys Davies Mock Law Trial, and the Young Enterprise competition/

With the careers department located in the Sixth Form Centre, students are encouraged to use the careers drop in sessions to discuss choice of courses, universities, and alternative pathways.

In Year 13, all students are offered mock interviews in which they meet with an external interviewer, either from industry or academia, to help them prepare for a potential university interview.

"BGS careers have given me the confidence to choose subjects and courses I enjoy, and have helped me realise where my passions lie and how I can utilise all the skills I have to choose something right for me.
During your years at BGS, make the most of all of the opportunities that come your way, and try something new. This strange new hobby or sport may open the doors to a career that you never thought possible. The Careers Department at BGS will help you every step of the way."

NOTES:

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