HARROW
SCHOOL



SIXTH FORM

2026-2028



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THE SIXTH FORM AT HARROW

This booklet has been prepared to inform boys' choices for their studies in the Sixth Form. The transition from the Fifth Form, with the milestone of GCSEs behind them, is an important stage in boys' academic careers at Harrow, bringing the opportunity to choose from a wide range of A-Levels and Elective subjects. In making their choices, boys can play to their academic strengths and develop their intellectual passions.

In the Sixth Form, boys will find that they need to take more responsibility for organising themselves. Divisions are smaller, the atmosphere is more informal, and beaks will generally look for more initiative from boys in their approach to academic work. We will expect boys to read widely, both in relation to and beyond their subjects. Prep may be set some weeks in advance, and boys will need to plan ahead, ensuring that work is not left to the last minute.

Through attendance at super-curricular lectures and engagement with the Elective courses, boys will get a taste of teaching and learning at university. To excel in that environment beyond Harrow, they will need to be critical thinkers, to articulate difficult ideas, and grow in confidence in debate and intellectual discussion. Boys should be proactive in taking the opportunity to develop their skills and attributes as much as their knowledge and understanding. The A-Level courses offered at Harrow and outlined in this booklet will help boys make that transition. The linear format of the courses with public examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth year also lends itself to learning in a university style.

Sixth Form life presents not only amazing academic and intellectual opportunities but also an even greater range of co-curricular experiences. This is a time for boys to develop their leadership qualities, take on responsibility and be excellent role models for younger boys at Harrow: a proving ground for the integrity, discernment and courage they will have to show when school life is concluded.

The Sixth Form years in any school are a time of great personal growth and development, and that is particularly true at Harrow. To make the most of it, boys will need to be self-aware, to analyse their weaknesses regularly and, at the same time, build up their strengths and their portfolio of academic and other skills. We will offer every possible support, in the form room, in Houses and more generally. At the same time, we will encourage boys to take the initiative and responsibility for themselves, their learning and their future. The deadline for preliminary subject choices is Wednesday 28 January, and Elective choices will be made in September.

Alastair Land
Head Master



ACADEMIC LIFE IN THE SIXTH FORM

Moving into the Sixth Form represents an exciting and important transition for a boy at Harrow. These two years provide an opportunity for engagement and participation in myriad aspects of School life, not least from an academic perspective. Boys in the Sixth Form enjoy more academic independence – there are longer deadlines for example, enabling learners to manage their time, prepare for the freedom of university and direct their focus into those areas that they find particularly interesting or academically worthwhile. Studying fewer subjects also enables them to explore the disciplines in greater depth and breadth. Boys in the Sixth Form have more autonomy, and with this comes a responsibility to develop in the way they learn, to take the opportunities afforded them, and ensure that they are prepared for life after Harrow. Most boys in the Sixth Form help to run academic societies, putting together programmes of speakers and making logistical arrangements.

One important way in which boys demonstrate both their aptitude and enthusiasm is through project-based work. This includes a wide range of opportunities such as essay competitions run by Oxbridge colleges and other institutions, the Engineering Award Scheme, or Olympiads and challenges. Boys who engage with such opportunities demonstrate the resilience and determination to focus on a project over an extended period. They also collaborate with their peers and develop their research techniques. Academic opportunities in the Sixth Form are extensive and varied; boys should seek to make the most of these during the two years and develop the skills, knowledge and understanding that will help them thrive in life after Harrow.

TIMELINE

2026

FIFTH FORM

January
- Talk: A-Levels and University
- Mock examinations
- Fifth Form parents' meeting
- Subject choices entered online

May/June
- (I)GCSE examinations

21 August
- (I)GCSE results published
- Subject choices confirmed with House Masters

LOWER SIXTH

October
- Careers Convention

2027

January
- Talk: Oxbridge

February
- Boys may drop fourth A-Level at half-term
- Lower Sixth parents' meeting

March
- House visits by a member of the Universities Team

June
- Internal end-of-year examinations
- Predicted grades confirmed
- University preparation course
- Higher Education Fair
- Tutor assists with drafting UCAS application

Summer
- Project-based work, subject-specific reading or independent research project
- University visits

August
- Upper Sixth subjects confirmed with House Masters

UPPER SIXTH

September
- University application forms completed
- Any gap year plans decided

October
- Applications to Oxford and Cambridge and Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science courses
- All UCAS applications submitted before the end of the first half of term
- Oxford and some other university admissions tests
- Finalise US university applications

November/December
- Upper Sixth parents' meeting
- Cambridge subject tests
- University subject tests
- University offers begin to arrive
- Oxbridge and some other university interviews

2028

January
- Oxbridge results
- Mock A-Level exams

May/June
- A-Level examinations

August
- A-Level results
- University places confirmed; otherwise enter Clearing or withdraw and reapply

CHOOSING YOUR A-LEVEL SUBJECTS



All boys choose four subjects to study in the Lower Sixth and these are due on the Wednesday following the Fifth Form parents' meeting.

Boys are expected to continue with four A-Levels throughout their Lower Sixth year, although they will have an opportunity to drop a fourth A-Level after the February half-term break in consultation with their House Master.

ASSESSMENT

Boys will sit Trials in all their subjects at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms. Their performance in those internal examinations will be considered by Heads of Subject when they make predictions for UCAS at the end of their Lower Sixth year. Those UCAS grades will also be informed by a more holistic assessment of boys' progress through the course, both by their division Masters and by the relevant Heads of Subject.

ELECTIVES

Electives are unexamined courses, which beaks elect to offer and which boys in turn choose to complement their examined subjects or to contrast with them. Electives may extend vertically beyond formal syllabuses or horizontally away from boys' four examined areas of study. Our offering of Electives is different every year and, later in the year, boys will have the opportunity to choose Electives for their Lower Sixth year. To give you a flavour of the types of Electives on offer to the current Sixth Form, visit this link.

Group A: Individuals and Societies
Group B: Maths, Science and Technology
Group C: Literature and the Arts
Group D: Life Skills and Wellbeing
Group E: Interdisciplinary Courses

Studying these Elective courses contributes to boys' ability to gain the Harrow Diploma at the end of the Sixth Form. Lower Sixth boys study their Elective courses with boys in the Upper Sixth and may choose times in the year to opt out of the Elective programme according to their own commitments across the year.

EXTRA LANGUAGES

Arabic, Cantonese, Dutch, Farsi, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Modern Greek, Portuguese, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish are available at any level off the timetable, but such lessons are charged at an additional cost. The Head of Modern Languages can supply details. Boys should discuss any interest in those languages with their House Masters and indicate it on their subject choice forms.

Any boy who wishes to study Classics at university and who has not yet taken Classical Greek GCSE may attempt that qualification in one year.

If you have any questions about the Sixth Form curriculum, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Rupert Try
Director of Studies
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UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE



Starting with an initial talk in the Fifth Form and continuing throughout the Sixth Form, boys will be given advice about appropriate university choices. Among other things, in the Lower Sixth, boys are taught how to use the Course Search database on the UCAS website, which gives information about every course currently available at British universities. Boys have already been set up with a user account for Unifrog, a software package that uses sophisticated admissions data to suggest suitable universities and courses, and which links to a boy's careers profile. In addition to these online resources, each boy will speak to his Tutor about his initial thoughts on university. In the Spring term, a member of the Universities Team will visit the Lower Sixth boys in each House and hold a group discussion and Q&A session. There are a number of online and in-person universities events, including talks for both boys and parents focused on Oxbridge, dedicated events about US universities, an online event focused on European opportunities, and a large Higher Education Fair in June with representatives from a wide variety of universities from the UK and further afield. We have a comprehensive programme of university visits to the School throughout the year, from both UK and US universities. We also give tailored advice to boys interested in exploring Degree Apprenticeships.

When considering subject options, it is important to bear several points in mind. If a boy has in his sights a specific career for which specialist training is essential or desirable, he must find out exactly what is required. These careers tend to be in the sciences, medicine, dentistry and engineering, but the advice can apply to arts and languages subjects too. The table on page 40 of this booklet gives a broad indication of what is required for degrees in some of these subjects. Remember, however, that different universities apply different rules, and it is best to consult individual prospectuses and to seek advice from informed sources before reaching decisions. The Russell Group 'Informed Choices' guidance (informedchoices.ac.uk/) clearly explains which qualifications are needed for certain degree courses and gives assistance in getting the right balance in combination. In addition, your son's House Master, Tutor, the Heads of Subject and the Head of Careers and Employability are all well placed to offer help. If there are no specific subject requirements for the course a boy wishes to follow after leaving Harrow (for example Law or Management), the best advice is to choose A-Levels in subjects that interest him and in which he is most likely to achieve the best grades. This approach will provide him with the best platform from which to make competitive university applications. Further advice about the university application process, including applying to Oxbridge (for which there is a separate booklet available after the Oxbridge meetings for boys and parents in January of the Lower Sixth), can be found in the Universities Handbook, circulated towards the end of the Autumn term in the Lower Sixth.

William Church
Academic and Universities Director
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> "If boys have in their sights a specific career, they must be careful to find out exactly what is required before they embark on their A-Levels."



US UNIVERSITIES



A significant number of Harrovians make successful applications to universities in the USA each year, and there is a programme of support at Harrow for those who wish to pursue this path. We regularly host visits from the admissions directors of several prestigious institutions, and offer guidance throughout the application process on making a college list, preparing for standardised testing and other components such as application essays. Courses are provided for boys in the Lower Sixth in preparation for the SAT, the test that candidates for most American universities sit in advance of any application. Details about forthcoming events, significant dates and useful resources are communicated to the boys through various channels.

American universities have much to offer in terms of the breadth and flexibility of their curricula as well as the often state-of-the-art working and living environments they provide for students. A degree at a North American university will typically last four years and will normally allow students to maintain some academic breadth in their course options, enabling them to explore their interests beyond a single subject area. Furthermore, US universities typically offer small class sizes and a greater number of contact hours with academic staff than is currently possible under the British university system. Most American universities revolve around a campus, a unique community conducive to students' development of their academic, social and extra-curricular interests with a high degree of advisory follow-up from faculty members. Boys may find that many US universities offer a similar lifestyle to that of Harrow School but on a much larger scale.

Although some US universities are currently test optional, a strong standardised test score is a significant boost to any application to a top US university. The SAT or ACT (the former being significantly more popular after the introduction of the new format) must be arranged by boys individually via collegeboard.org (for SAT) or act.org (for ACT). The SAT is marked out of 1600, and the median applicant to Ivy League and other top US universities will have achieved a score between 1450 and 1500. The ACT is marked out of 36 and students should aim for a score of 34+. Boys at Harrow usually prepare for the SAT by attending the SAT preparation course offered by the School, and sit the test in the Lower Sixth.

The US university application process requires several sets of documentation typically including three letters of recommendation and different sets of essays for each institution. Therefore, it is advisable to undertake research and preparation early to afford an applicant the best chance of being successful. At Harrow, the preparation process for applicants to US universities starts as soon as boys have received their GCSE grades. Deadlines for application vary but the most important dates are (all in the Upper Sixth): 1 August – applications go live on the Common App application platform; 1 November – deadline for early applications, including Early Decision, Early Action and Restrictive Early Action applications; 30 November – deadline for University of California institutions; and early January – deadline for regular applications.

Katarzyna Piotrowska-Fletcher
Director of US and Canadian University Admissions
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CAREERS



There can be no simple answer to the question of how to choose a career; there is no single path to be followed. There are, however, three key principles to remember: first, you should aim to do something that will bring you happiness and fulfilment; second, choosing a career is a process of ongoing self-reflection; third, it is advisable to keep one's options open for as long as possible. For most careers, the choice of A-Levels is not crucial, but certain careers do require specific subjects. For instance, Chemistry and Biology are essential for Medicine, while Mathematics and Physics are fundamental requirements for Engineering. If any clarification is needed, Mr Wright, Head of Careers and Employability, is happy to advise on this.

All Fifth Form boys had the opportunity to take a careers aptitude test on Unifrog in September. The results of these tests form part of a one-to-one careers meeting with Mr Wright in the Autumn term. These discussions help considerably with Sixth Form subject choices, choice of degree course and, ultimately, choice of career. We also encourage all boys to use the Unifrog platform to explore university courses and check to see if their proposed A-Levels match any course requirements.

At the end of the Fifth Form, boys will be encouraged to seek out experience of work that can usefully support a UCAS application and start to build their CV. Experience of work can also help to focus boys on potential careers and rule out those for which they might not be suitable. All boys will then have another careers meeting with Mr Wright in the Spring term of their Lower Sixth year. Having embarked on their A-Level courses, boys can look more closely at the kinds of careers open to them by:

> "Career paths in the future will be more uncertain, and boys must start to build up their portfolio of transferable skills."

- exploring the careers library section of Unifrog
- visiting the careers section of the Vaughan Library and the Careers subject area on Gateway
- sharing and discussing their Unifrog careers testing results with parents
- attending careers talks and business lunches
- talking to people actively engaged in the careers that interest them, for example at the annual Careers Convention, which will be held in October 2026
- building up a portfolio of transferable skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving and IT skills

As the world of work becomes more complicated and flexible, such preparedness becomes all the more critical. The careers provision at Harrow continues to develop as the School seeks to provide boys and OHs with the knowledge and skills to thrive over the course of their entire careers, wherever those may take them.



Michael Wright
Head of Careers and Employability
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OUTLINE OF SIXTH FORM SUBJECT CHOICES



ANCIENT HISTORY

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H407

Ancient historians study the richly varied political, social, economic and cultural lives of the Greek and Roman worlds, all in translation. The Greek and Roman worlds stand at the beginning of Western civilisation and, though remote in time from the present, they are also in many respects peculiarly close to it; many of the fundamental issues of human society that still exercise us today were first formulated in ancient times. The Ancient History course involves the study of the societies and cultures of the Athenian Greek and Roman worlds through their written texts, art and architecture, and other material remains like coins and inscriptions.

Ancient History works well in almost any combination of A-Levels and provides a solid foundation for the pursuit of any arts or humanities degree. Boys who enjoyed Ancient History at GCSE will enjoy all new material in its closer study at A-Level. However, the GCSE is not a requirement for the A-Level: boys with no previous experience of Ancient History are welcomed. No prior knowledge of Latin or Greek is required as all texts are read in translation.

It should be noted that keen historians often choose Ancient History A-Level alongside the History A-Level. Given the different periods and challenges presented by the source material in Ancient History, the two disciplines do not overlap. In fact, they work well together, with complementary skills and challenges in reading, analysing and interpreting source material.

Course details

Candidates study two defined periods of Greek and Roman history.

Greek Period Study
The Greek World at War: Athens, Sparta and Persia (492–404BC)

Roman Period Study
The Julio-Claudian Emperors (31BC–AD68): from Augustus to Nero

Candidates also choose two depth studies on the ancient world.

Greek Depth Study (one of):
- The Politics and Society of Sparta (478–404BC)
- The Politics and Culture of Athens (c.460–399BC)
- The Rise of Macedon (359–323BC)

Roman Depth Study (one of):
- The Breakdown of the Late Republic (88–31BC)
- The Flavians (AD68–96)
- Ruling Roman Britain (AD43–c.128)

James Melville
Head of Ancient History



ART

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code: 9FA0

Art at Harrow is a popular, vibrant and exciting subject with an outstanding reputation for the diversity and maturity of work produced, as well as consistently excellent grades. The nature of Fine Art is such that no two years are ever the same, with boys working in a way that mirrors the independence and creativity expected in a university art faculty.

Boys may choose to specialise in a particular medium such as painting, sculpture, or printmaking, or diversify across film, animation, or mixed media. There are no fixed boundaries regarding scale, media, or style. The department stays in step with the shifting themes and ideas of contemporary art through regular visits to galleries and museums in London, making full use of the city's rich cultural resources. We also run a biannual trip to New York and have previously visited destinations such as Venice, Florence and Rome.

Throughout the year, boys have opportunities to experience the breadth and quality of A-Level work produced in the School through regular exhibitions in the Pasmore Gallery and OSRG. The department also has a strong tradition of welcoming professional artists who exhibit, undertake residencies, run workshops, and work one-to-one with pupils. Recent visiting artists include Jeanette Barnes, Tessa Farmer, Anthony Whishaw RA, Alison Lambert, Peter Randall Page, Jane McAdam Freud, Jenny Saville RA, Chris Orr RA, BP Portrait Award winner Susanne Du Toit, and Turner Prize-winning artists Gilbert & George RA.

Boys may choose Art because it is required for a future course, such as Architecture, or because it is a personal passion or a valuable complement to their other subjects. Whatever their motivation, all boys who opt for Art at Harrow receive a first-rate visual education. The department has an excellent record of placing pupils at leading universities, including Oxford, Cambridge and the Slade School of Fine Art. Increasingly, boys also submit art portfolios to American Ivy League universities such as Harvard to strengthen their applications. Many have gone on to study at prestigious institutions such as the University of the Arts London and the Glasgow School of Art.

Assessment

- 60% coursework (internally marked and externally moderated)
- 40% Externally Set Assignment (internally marked and externally moderated)

Mark scheme

Each of the four assessment objectives is worth 25% and requires pupils to:

- Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding
- Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining their ideas as their work develops
- Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, demonstrating an ability to reflect on work and progress
- Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical understanding and realising intentions, making connections between visual, oral and other elements where appropriate

Lower Sixth Year

Coursework
Boys explore a theme agreed at the beginning of the year that meets the assessment objectives outlined above. The project serves as a foundation for developing technical and conceptual skills, incorporating life drawing and thematic development, and culminating in an ambitious final outcome. Boys are encouraged to experiment with a wide range of media and approaches. Each boy is allocated a personal studio space to develop his work alongside that of his peers.

Upper Sixth Year

Coursework and examination
In the Upper Sixth, boys continue independent studio practice, working in an unrestricted range of media.

Alongside their practical work, they complete a Personal Study – a written and illustrated essay (1500–3000 words) based on their own area of interest, connecting research with their practical outcomes.

The Externally Set Assignment (ESA) is introduced at the beginning of the Spring term. Boys have approximately one term to prepare, culminating in a 15-hour controlled assessment during which they complete a final piece.

Each unit requires supporting studies (such as sketchbooks and annotations) and evidence of sustained development over time in response to their chosen theme.

Emily Stokes
Director of Art

BIOLOGY

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H420

Biology is a relevant, stimulating and demanding A-Level subject. Successful candidates are scientifically minded, numerate and able to articulate ideas and concepts on paper in a clear, logical way. It is well supported by Chemistry and Mathematics A-Levels, which, along with Biology, should be taken by boys who intend to study Biological Sciences, Medicine or Veterinary Medicine at university.

Course details

The course comprises six modules.

One – Development of practical skills in Biology

Two – Foundations in Biology

- Cell structure
- Biological molecules
- Nucleotides and nucleic acids
- Enzymes
- Biological membranes
- Cell division, cell diversity and cellular organisation

Three – Exchange and transport

- Exchange surfaces
- Transport in animals
- Transport in plants

Four – Biodiversity, evolution and disease

- Communicable diseases, disease prevention and the immune system
- Biodiversity
- Classification and evolution

Five – Communication, homeostasis and energy

- Communication and homeostasis
- Excretion as an example of homeostatic control
- Neuronal communication
- Hormonal communication
- Plant and animal responses
- Photosynthesis
- Respiration

Six – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems

- Cellular control
- Patterns of inheritance
- Manipulating genomes
- Cloning and biotechnology
- Ecosystems
- Populations and sustainability

> “Successful candidates are scientifically minded, numerate and able to articulate ideas and concepts on paper in a clear, logical way.”

The course is assessed by three written exams at the end of the Upper Sixth.

Paper One

(2 hours 15 minutes, 37% of marks)

- Based on modules 1, 2, 3 and 5
- Multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-response questions

Paper Two

(2 hours 15 minutes, 37% of marks)

- Based on modules 1, 2, 4 and 6
- Multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-response questions

Paper Three

(1 hour 30 minutes, 26% of marks)

- Based on all modules
- Short-answer and extended-response questions

There is a significant emphasis on mathematical skills, which account for at least 10% of the marks across all three papers.

There is no coursework or controlled assessment; practical skills are examined solely in the written papers. However, there is a practical endorsement to fulfil, which requires that a minimum of 12 key practical activities be undertaken and a range of practical competencies met. These are assessed internally. A ‘pass’ for this component of the course is published alongside the A-Level grade that a candidate achieves.

Joanna Brown
Head of Biology



BUSINESS

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code: 9BS0

Through studying Business, boys will:

- develop an understanding of a range of core business concepts
- learn to apply core business concepts to business contexts on a local, national and global scale
- develop a strategic view of business opportunities and issues
- build commercial awareness

Business requires a reasonable level of numeracy. The most important quality of a successful Business student is an eagerness to understand why and how real-world businesses survive, thrive and sometimes fail. Boys should be able to analyse both extended pieces of writing and numerical data and apply both to short-answer questions and essays.

There are no specific GCSE requirements for the study of Business in the Sixth Form.

Course structure

A-Level Business is a linear course, with all assessment occurring at the end of the two years. The assessment is made up of three papers.

Paper One: Marketing, People and Global Business

(2 hours, data-response and extended-writing questions, 35% of A-Level)

Boys learn how businesses identify opportunities and explore how businesses focus on developing a competitive advantage through interacting with customers. They develop an understanding of how businesses need to adapt their marketing to operate in a dynamic business environment. Boys also explore how businesses recruit, train, organise and motivate employees, as well as the role of enterprising individuals and leaders. They investigate businesses that trade on a global scale and explore their reasons for doing so. Finally, they develop an understanding of the competitive global environment and consider the ethical and moral dimensions of global business activities.

Paper Two: Business Activities, Decisions and Strategies

(2 hours, data-response and extended-writing questions, 35% of A-Level)

Boys develop an understanding of raising and managing finance and measuring business performance. They learn the importance of using resources efficiently in a business to ensure that goods or services can be delivered effectively, efficiently and to a high standard. They also consider the external influences that have an impact on businesses, including economic and legal factors. Boys learn to take a strategic view of business opportunities and issues. They consider the effects of change and how businesses mitigate risk and uncertainty. Boys will learn how to evaluate corporate objectives and analyse how businesses grow.

Paper Three: Investigating Business

(2 hours, data-response and extended-writing questions, 30% of A-Level)

This paper requires boys to apply their knowledge of all aspects of the course outlined in Papers One and Two and tests their ability to produce extended responses drawing on a pre-released case study.

Kate Meathrel
Head of Business



CHEMISTRY

Exam board: OCR Chemistry A
Exam code: H432

Those considering a science-based degree must take Mathematics and either Physics or Biology at A-Level. Further Mathematics is expected as standard for entry to the best universities; it increases the chance of acceptance in most cases and certainly improves ultimate success. Mathematics underpins the core of all physical-science courses. There is a preference for Physics at some institutions and Oxbridge colleges, although Biology can be equally acceptable for some courses. Natural Science and Materials Science are examples of courses that offer variants of the more traditional routes.

Many institutions offer excellent career insight and progression with industrial placements, usually in a four-year Master's degree or 'sandwich placement'. Since chemical reactions lie at the heart of understanding how living systems function, an A-Level in Chemistry is essential for the study of Medicine, Veterinary Science and other related degrees.

Chemistry is the study of the elements and their compounds; everything we see, touch or taste is composed of chemicals – all our body parts from the DNA in our cells to the enzymes that catalyse the vital reactions that keep us alive. Throughout history, quality of life has improved through synthesised chemicals such as fertilisers, medicines to protect us from disease, polymers to clothe us, and fuels that keep us warm and transport us. Where chemistry has caused problems, it is chemistry that will help solve them, for example the hole in the ozone layer and plastic pollution. Computers, phones and televisions would not exist but for the materials inside them, developed and manufactured by chemists.

IGCSE requirements: Chemistry grade 9 and Mathematics grade 9

Boys must be mathematically competent to cope with the content of the linear A-Level course. The course will suit anyone with a strong interest in how the material world functions and how chemists are able to manipulate materials for the benefit of mankind.

Throughout the two-year course, there will be regular tests and assessments to enable boys to monitor their understanding of the theoretical components. Assessment of practical work is examined through detailed questions in the written exams to give context to the theory work. Candidates must also log their experimental and practical skills in a dated laboratory notebook, which is subject to scrutiny by the examination board. The practical accreditation is reported separately from the grade.

The OCR Chemistry A course at A-Level is split into six modules.

Module One – Practical Skills
Candidates must complete a wide range of practical experiments during the course. This module outlines how the skills are developed throughout the whole two-year course. They are assessed in two ways. Questions in all written papers examine candidates' understanding of practical skills, while they must also achieve a 'practical endorsement' on their final A-Level certificate to demonstrate a level of competency in a range of skills.

Module Two – Foundations of Chemistry
Much of the basic material that underpins all further study of this subject, including new ideas in atomic structure, electrons, bonding and redox, is covered here.

Module Three – Periodic Table and Energy
Here, the core ideas met at IGCSE are developed and extended. This includes enthalpy changes, reaction rates and equilibria, together with the chemistry of groups 2 and 7 and periodicity.

Module Four – Core Organic Chemistry
This major area of chemistry receives a much higher profile than it did at IGCSE. The subject is introduced through a study of hydrocarbons, leading to an expansion of knowledge into alcohols and haloalkanes. At this point, we introduce ideas about infra-red (IR) spectroscopy and mass spectrometry as tools to analyse molecular structure.

Module Five – Physical Chemistry and Transition Elements
Building on some ideas of reaction rates and equilibria from Module Three, they are placed on a more quantitative foundation. We also introduce the concept of pH as a measure of the concentration of H+(aq), buffer solutions and electrode potentials (important when considering new energy sources such as fuel cells). The module finishes with a study of the chemistry of the metals in the centre of the periodic table.

Module Six – Organic Chemistry and Analysis
Content from Module Four continues to be developed. New homologous series include compounds of benzene (aromatic chemistry), carbonyl compounds, carboxylic acids, nitrogen compounds, polymers and organic synthesis. Finally, the important technique of nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy is explored, together with its role in the elucidation of the structure of organic molecules.

There are three written papers, all taken at the end of the two-year course.

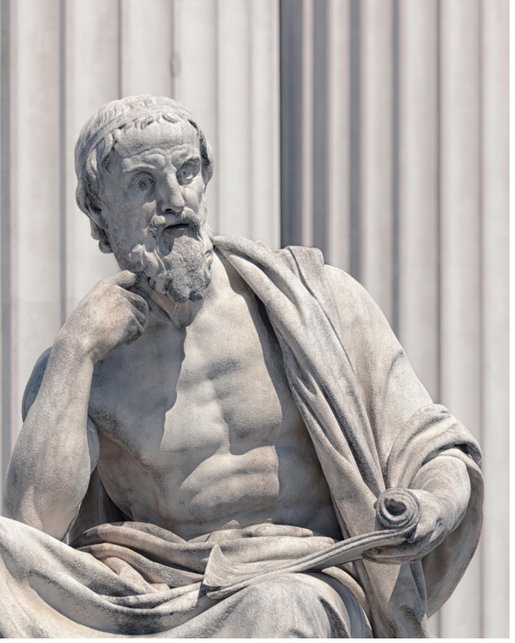
Paper One – Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry
(100 marks, 2 hours 15 minutes, 37% of A-Level)
This paper covers the content of Modules One, Two, Three and Five. There are 15 multiple-choice questions, and 85 marks will come from structured questions and extended-response questions.

Paper Two – Synthesis and analytical techniques
(100 marks, 2 hours 15 minutes, 37% of A-Level)
This covers material from Modules One, Two, Four and Six. The format of the paper is the same as Paper One.

Paper Three – all the modules studied
(70 marks, 1 hour 30 minutes, 26% of A-Level)
The paper only has structured questions and extended-response questions, covering all the theory and practical skills.

Christian Penhale
Head of Chemistry





CLASSICAL GREEK

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H444

The study of Classical Greek is the study for life. Classical Greek represents a serious mental rigour and discipline that is an excellent training for real life in any subject. Its study helps boys to enter and explore the ancient Greek world that has shaped contemporary life and our society. Boys' engagement with seminal works of great literature and antiquities gives them direct access to ancient ways of living in and viewing the world, and an appreciation of the languages, cultures, works of literature and traditions that are derived from those societies.

Boys hone their language skills with the aim of reading unadapted prose and verse literary texts from a wide range of authors including Homer, Plato, Herodotus, Thucydides and Euripides. Boys will broaden their understanding of literary, historical and cultural features of the Athenian world, and acquire the literary skills that enable them to pay close attention to literary techniques, styles and genres.

GCSE requirement: Greek grade 8

Course details

Paper One
Unseen translation (33%)
Boys will translate one passage of unseen Greek from Xenophon and one passage of unseen Greek verse (taken from Euripides) into English.

Paper Two
Prose composition or comprehension (17%)
Boys will either answer comprehension and grammar questions on an unseen passage of Greek prose (usually taken from the genre of political or forensic oratory) or translate a short passage of English prose into Classical Greek. The composition is the challenging option, but it provides great intellectual satisfaction and preparation for this discipline has often proved very popular.

Paper Three
Prose literature (25%)
Boys will study two Greek prose set texts. They will also study additional literature in translation in order to understand the context from which the set texts have been taken.

The set texts for 2028 are taken from Plato's *Crito* or Herodotus Book 7 and 8.

For examination in 2028, the unseen prose passage will be from Xenophon.

Paper Four
Verse literature (25%)
Boys will study two Greek verse set texts. They will also study additional literature in translation in order to understand the context from which the set texts have been taken.

For 2028, the set texts will be from Homer *Odyssey 16* and *22* or Sophocles *Electra*.

For examination in 2028, the unseen verse passage will be taken from Euripides.

Each year, the Classics Department organises study tours abroad to Greece, Italy and other countries of Classical interest. Boys are strongly encouraged to go on these visits.

Steven Kennedy
Head of Classics

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Exam board: Cambridge International (CAIE)
Exam code: 9618

The Cambridge International Computer Science course is designed to equip boys with a deep understanding of computational thinking and programming, enabling them to develop solutions to real-world problems. The course builds their critical-thinking, problem-solving and analytical skills while fostering creativity and innovation. Boys will explore the principles of computer science, including data analysis, algorithms and software development. They will also gain practical experience in programming, systems design and the use of computational tools to solve complex problems.

(I) GCSE requirements: Mathematics grade 8

Why choose Computer Science?

This rigorous and engaging course provides boys with the computational thinking skills and technical expertise needed to excel in further study and careers in the rapidly advancing field of computer science, artificial intelligence, data science, cybersecurity and software engineering. By learning to think like a computer scientist, they will be well-equipped to contribute to the rapidly evolving digital world. A-Level Computer Science is a linear course, with all assessment occurring at the end of two years. The assessment is made up of four papers.

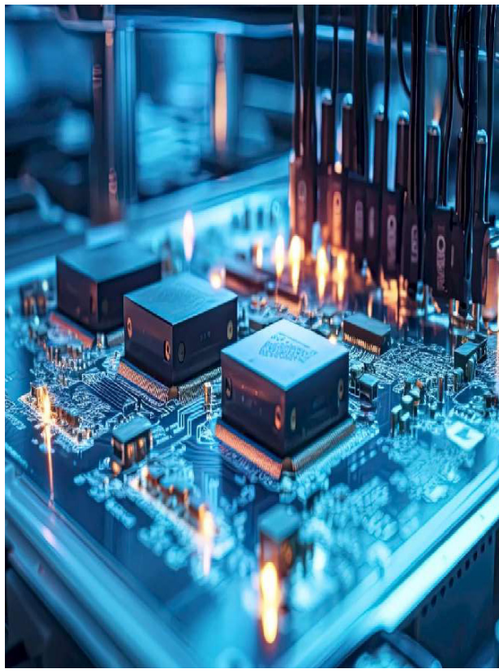
Paper One
Theory Fundamentals
(1 hour 30 minutes, written paper, 25% of the mark)
This paper focuses on the theoretical foundations of computer science:
- data representation, logic gates, and Boolean algebra
- computer organization and architecture
- software, operating systems and utilities
- the social, ethical and environmental impact of computing

Paper Two
Fundamental Problem-Solving and Programming
(2 hours, written paper, 25% of the mark)
This paper focuses on computational problem-solving and programming skills. Boys will:
- develop algorithms using pseudocode and programming languages
- demonstrate programming concepts such as recursion, iteration, error handling, and data structures
- solve problems involving practical applications of computational thinking

Paper Three
Paper 3: Advanced Theory
(1 hour 30 minutes, written paper, 25% of the mark)
Building on foundational concepts, this paper explores advanced topics in computer science such as:
- databases and relational database design
- networking principles and security
- artificial intelligence and machine learning concepts
- advanced ethical and societal issues in computing

Paper Four
Paper 3: Practical Programming and Problem-Solving Project
(2 hours 30 minutes, practical, 25% of the mark)
This paper assesses boys' ability to design, develop, and test software solutions. Boys will:
- solve advanced computational problems using programming languages such as Python or Java
- demonstrate their ability to write, debug and optimise code
- apply modular design principles and use appropriate algorithms and data structures

Chris Crowe
Head of Digital Learning and Computer Science
Head of Astronomy





DESIGN TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H404

The Design Engineering course is structured to strengthen boys' critical-thinking and problem-solving skills within a creative environment, enabling them to develop and make prototypes and products that solve real-world problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants, aspirations and values.

They will also learn how to use and embed digital technology creatively within their designs, while using a range of modern and smart materials, robotics, 3D printing and industrial machinery.

(I)GCSE requirements: Mathematics grade 8

Course structure

Paper 1 Technical Theory

(1 hour 30 minutes, written paper, 26.7% of mark)
This paper comprises four sets of questions that predominantly cover technical principles within Design Engineering. Boys will be required to:

- analyse existing products
- demonstrate applied mathematical skills
- demonstrate their technical knowledge of materials, product functionality, manufacturing processes and techniques
- demonstrate their understanding of wider social, moral and environmental issues that affect on the design and manufacturing industries

This component will be assessed at the end of the course in a written examination worth 50% of the overall qualification.

Paper 2 Problem Solving

(1 hour 45 minutes, written paper, 23.3% of mark)
This component has a series of longer answer questions that require learners to demonstrate their problem-solving and critical-evaluation skills. Boys will be required to:

- apply their knowledge, understanding and skills of designing and manufacturing prototypes and products
- demonstrate their higher thinking skills to solve problems and evaluate situations and suitability of design solutions.

Coursework: Iterative Design Project

50% of mark
The Iterative Design Project requires boys to undertake a substantial design, make and evaluate project centred on the iterative processes of explore, create and evaluate. Learners identify a design opportunity or problem from a context of their own choice, and create a portfolio of evidence in real time through the project to demonstrate their competence.

Tom Knight
Head of Design Technology & Engineering

DRAMA AND THEATRE

Exam board: AQA
Exam code: 7262

Drama and Theatre A-Level develops boys' practical and analytical skills in performance, and enhances appreciation and understanding of theatre from critical and applied perspectives. The subject gives boys the opportunity to develop and refine their communication and practical skills, to undertake in-depth research and analysis, and to pursue a high level of critical and creative reflection. There is no requirement to have studied Drama for GCSE in order to pursue the subject at A-Level. The course is accepted by all universities and, in recent years, boys have gone on to study for Drama-related degrees at top universities including Oxford, Bristol, Durham, Exeter and Manchester. Boys have also gained places at leading actor-training institutions in the UK and America.

Harrow's thriving dramatic tradition and well-resourced Ryan Theatre mean that boys have the opportunity to develop their practical work to a very high level. Theatre trips are a regular feature of the course, and the School's location also enables boys to take advantage of innovative, high-quality performance work in and around London. Over the past seven years, most boys taking the subject achieved A*-A grades overall.

Course content

The A-Level is a two-year, fully linear course; practical assessments take place across the two years, and the written paper is taken at the end of the course.

Boys will:
- study and stage extracts from at least five plays, as critics and practitioners
- go on regular theatre trips and write about the productions seen
- devise an original piece of theatre and document the process
- study the methods of influential theatre practitioners

Boys will be assessed:
- through their own work as practitioners – performers, directors or designers (30%)
- by demonstrating their collaborative and creative skills in class and through their reflective writing on the process of theatre making (30%)
- through writing about plays they study and see in a formal examination (40%)

Boys might consider taking A-Level Drama and Theatre if:
- they have enjoyed their experiences of drama – as an actor, technician, writer or director – and want to develop their craft further
- they enjoy seeing theatre and discussing it in detail
- they enjoy lessons that are active and group focused
- they want to make their own practical work, as well as learning about what other people have created
- they see themselves applying for a university course or career that will require inter-personal, group-work or presentation skills



Gaynor Jervis
Director of Drama

ECONOMICS

Exam board: AQA
Exam code: 7136

Economics is the study of how societies allocate scarce resources in the face of unlimited human wants. Through studying Economics, boys will develop an understanding of current issues such as unemployment, cost of living, inequality, healthcare and education and learn how to evaluate potential solutions.

A good economist needs to be able to use economic theory to help to explain the world around them and solve problems faced by individuals, industry and nations. It is important to be able to analyse economic data and interpret graphs and tables to identify trends. This requires a sharp mind and an ability to think logically and to write good-quality English. For those boys considering an Economics degree, Mathematics A-Level is required. The best students of Economics follow economic news on a regular basis and are interested in the world around them.

IGCSE requirements: Mathematics grade 7 and English Language grade 7



> “The best students of Economics follow economic news on a regular basis and are interested in the world around them.”

Course structure

A-Level Economics is a linear course, with all assessment occurring at the end of two years. The assessment is made up of three papers:

Paper One: Markets and Market Failure
(2 hours, data-response and essay questions, 33% of A-Level)
Microeconomics looks at the behaviour of individuals and how the interplay of supply and demand determines prices and quantities in specific markets. The operation and failings of the price mechanism are used to analyse the behaviour of consumers and firms. The actions of firms in different industries are explored in greater depth through the models of market structure from monopoly to more competitive structures. Boys also gain an understanding of the labour market and the factors that influence wage rates and the distribution of income and wealth. Developments in UK markets and government microeconomic policy are explored in their global and EU contexts.

Paper Two: National and International Economy
(2 hours, data-response and essay questions, 33% of A-Level)
Macroeconomic models are used to explain the behaviour of the national economy and to explore issues such as consumption, investment, inflation and unemployment. Boys will gain an understanding of recent economic developments and will use their knowledge to assess government and central bank policy, as well as the role of financial markets and the banking system. Aspects of the international economy such as trade, exchange rates and membership of the Euro are studied in the context of both EU and global events.

Paper Three: Economic Principles and Issues
(2 hours, multiple-choice and case-study questions, 33% of A-Level)
This synoptic paper requires boys to apply their knowledge of all aspects of the course outlined in Papers One and Two and tests their ability to produce extended responses drawing on a previously unseen case study.

David Morgan
Head of Economics

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H472

English Literature at A-Level is an intellectually lively and challenging discipline that can be combined successfully with all subjects. This two-year course will appeal to those who take pleasure in reading a wide variety of literature, who enjoy expressing their opinions and developing independent ideas, who would be stimulated by a subject that draws on their other academic interests and who want to keep their options open for further study. English Literature is a popular qualification for a wide range of courses in higher education and is highly regarded by employers in many competitive fields.

The course develops skills that are useful in all careers: the understanding of how to read critically and discerningly, and the ability to write and speak accurately, persuasively and with confidence in one’s own judgments. Ideally, candidates should have a good IGCSE in the subject but, even with a modest grade, they will have a reasonable chance of securing a respectable A-Level grade, given adequate commitment over the two-year course.

English seeks to foster creative talent as well as academic success, and boys are encouraged to enter a range of competitions throughout the year and to submit work for the creative-writing magazine. The L P Hartley Society for creative writing fosters the talents of those boys who are serious about writing. The Sheridan Society invites writers and lecturers to the School, organises trips and other reading-related events, and also encourages Sixth Form boys to give talks on topics of their choice.

Boys often perceive the grade boundary for an A* to be more difficult to achieve than it is. While it is, of course, challenging, it is also the case that over 40% of boys have achieved an A* in the subject over the last three years and the department had an 83% A*/A rate in 2025.

> “This is a popular qualification for a wide range of courses in higher education and is highly regarded by employers in many fields.”

Course details

The aim of the A-Level specification is to encourage candidates to:

- read widely, ambitiously and independently, exploring ways in which different texts relate to each other and to the literary tradition
- develop and effectively apply their skills of analysis and criticism
- explore the historical, social and cultural contexts of the texts they are studying, considering their implications for how we read and understand those
- respond to and engage with others’ interpretations of texts, reading a wide range of literary theory and criticism

Candidates will be required to show knowledge and understanding of a minimum of eight literary texts, including at least two examples of prose, poetry and drama, across the course as a whole. They will have the opportunity to focus on areas of individual interest.

Component One: Shakespeare and Pre-1900 Poetry and Drama
(2 hours, 40% of mark)

- Shakespeare plays include *Hamlet*, *King Lear, Othello, Richard III*, *The Tempest* and *The Taming of the Shrew*
- Poetry includes Chaucer’s *Merchant’s Prologue and Tale,* Milton’s *Paradise Lost* Books 9 and 10, Tennyson’s *Maud*, Coleridge’s *Selected Poems* and Rossetti’s *Selected Poems*
- Drama includes *Edward II* (Marlowe), *She Stoops to Conquer* (Goldsmith), *The Duchess of Malfi* (Webster), *A Doll’s House* (Ibsen) and *An Ideal Husband* (Wilde)
- The exam will consist of two written tasks on the Shakespeare play, one of which will involve close reading, and a comparative essay on poetry and drama

Component Two: Comparative and Contextual Study
(2 hours, 40% of mark)

- Candidates will be examined on at least two texts in a specific topic area. Topics include American Literature 1880–1940, The Gothic, Dystopia, Women in Literature, The Immigrant Experience.
- The exam will consist of a close-reading task looking at an unseen passage and a comparative essay on two set texts from the chosen topic.

Component Three: Literature Post-1900
(3000-word coursework folder, 20% of mark)

- Candidates will study three texts for two essays; the texts will include one prose text, one poetry text and one drama text. All texts will be post-1900 and at least one will have been published or performed after 2000.
- One essay will be a close reading of a passage and the other a comparative essay.

Alison O’Neill
Head of English



GEOGRAPHY

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H481

Geography at A-Level encompasses key elements of social and life sciences, focusing on the complex interaction of processes that shape our world. The OCR A-Level specification is complex, broad and relevant to 21st-century issues. There is ample space for discussion, reflection and independent research that will encourage boys to become critical and reflective leaners, able to articulate opinions and provide evidenced arguments in a range of situations.

The wide-ranging nature of the specification makes Geography a perfect complementary A-Level to both the arts and the sciences, as well as providing an excellent preparation for boys wishing to progress to degree-level study of the subject.

The application of knowledge learnt in the form room to the real world is a core element of geographical enquiry. Boys studying A-Level Geography will build on the fieldwork carried out at GCSE through an enhanced focus on independent research and the production of an investigative geographical report. Boys will spend four days in the Summer term conducting fieldwork across multiple sites in London including Kings Cross, the Olympic Park, Great Missenden and Amersham to support this element of non-examined assessment. In addition, learners will be assessed through three examined papers at the end of the Upper Sixth year.

Course details

Component One: Physical Systems
(22% of A-Level)
Through the study of physical systems, boys will develop an understanding and appreciation of landscape systems, contextualised through either coastal landscapes, dryland landscapes or glaciated landscapes, and Earth's life support systems, which encompasses the water and carbon cycles vital to our planet.

Component Two: Human Interactions
(22% of A-Level)
Boys will explore human interactions through the study of Global Connections, with a choice between focusing on the systems of trade or migration and the governance of human rights or sovereignty on a global scale, and Changing Spaces; Making Places, which gives learners an insight into the nature of places and the fluidity of their meanings and representations. Within the question papers for Physical Systems (One) and Human Interactions (Two) there will be a combination of short-answer questions that carry a low tariff, medium-length questions of six to ten marks and higher tariff extended-response questions of 16 marks.

Component Three: Geographical Debates
(36% of A-Level)
Geographical Debates allow boys to explore in depth two from a choice of five of the most challenging, dynamic and fascinating issues of the 21st century. With choices between such wide-ranging topic areas as climate change, disease, food security, oceans and tectonic hazards, there are debates to appeal to all, with the implications on people and the environment being at the heart of this component. Within the question paper for Geographical Debates (Three), there will be a combination of short-answer questions of three marks, medium-length questions of six marks, synoptic questions of 12 marks and extended-response questions of 33 marks.

Component Four: Investigative Geography
(20% of A-Level)
The Investigative Geography component gives boys the freedom to undertake an independent investigation linked to any aspect of the specification. This component is designed to encourage boys to deepen their knowledge and understanding of their chosen topic while developing a number of geographical and study skills relevant to higher education or the world of work.

Piers Lemoine
Head of Geography

HISTORY

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H505

History is one of the central humanities, embracing the study and understanding of all aspects of past human experience: individual and collective; political, social, cultural, economic and religious; the public and the domestic; the material and the intellectual; the sacred and the profane. The sources, primary and secondary, range from the written word and statistical data to the visual arts. Beyond intrinsic academic interest, History provides training in critical analysis, literary expression and the evaluation of widely contrasting evidence. This is a rigorous and demanding A-Level, but also an extremely rewarding one.

Unit One
(25% of A-Level)
Comprises a substantial and coherent period of British history, for example Alfred the Great and the Making of England 871–1016, the Later Tudors 1547–1603, or the Early Stuarts and the Origins of the English Civil War 1603–60. It is examined through a combination of traditional essay questions and source-based questions, which require boys to interpret and evaluate historical evidence.

Unit Two
(15% of A-Level)
A coherent period of non-British history, for example Charlemagne 768–814, the American Revolution 1740–96, or the French Revolution and the rule of Napoleon 1774–1815. It is examined through traditional essay questions.

Unit Three
(40% of A-Level)
A thematic study over a period of at least 100 years, and also three in-depth studies of events, individuals or issues that are key points within that theme, for example English Government and the Church 1066–1216, Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors 1485–1603, The Ascendancy of the Ottoman Empire 1453–1606, or Britain and Ireland 1791–1921. Boys learn how to treat the whole period thematically but also to use their detailed knowledge of the depth-study topics to evaluate different interpretations of key events.

Unit Four
(20% of A-Level)
A 3000–4000-word coursework essay on a topic of their choice, which is marked at Harrow and moderated by OCR.

Rob Potter
Head of History



HISTORY OF ART

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code: 9HT0

In a world increasingly saturated by images, History of Art – with its emphasis on visual literacy – has never been more important. Artworks serve as 'fossils of economic life' and the subject incorporates the study of ideology, examining objects as the product of specific economic, political, artistic, social and religious structures.

The A-Level course provides a rigorous introduction to the subject, offering a broad contextual overview of the art historical canon from 500 BCE to present day while focusing on particular historical moments, themes and methodological approaches. It also incorporates an unseen element whereby boys are encouraged to hone the core competency of visual analysis to evaluate and interpret images.

First-hand experience of art is key, and Harrow is perfectly placed for regular trips into London and its many internationally renowned museums, commercial galleries and art fairs. Equally important are trips further afield that have included Florence, Venice, Paris and the East and West Coasts of America.

The subject encourages vital transferable skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, time management and effective written and oral communication. While the subject naturally favours boys with an interest in research and writing, the subject requires no prior knowledge nor study of Art, and complements a wide range of other subjects including the sciences. Successful candidates are rigorous, enquiring and critical.

Universities welcome applications from History of Art students wishing to study Art History, Architecture, Law, English, History, Philosophy, Theology and many other subjects. History of Art is offered by all Russell Group universities including Oxford and Cambridge.



Paper One: Visual Analysis and Themes

- Visual Analysis: in the first third of the paper, students analyse and interpret three unseen photographs of a painting, a sculpture and a building, deploying specialist terminology.
- Themes: the remaining two thirds of the paper are dedicated to two thematic topics:
  - Identities in art and architecture
  - War in art and architecture

Boys will study artworks from beyond the Western canon of art to make both historical and geographic links. In addition to the selected artworks (spanning painting, sculpture and architecture), boys will also study secondary sources.

Paper Two: Periods

Boys will focus on specific historical moments to see how contemporary beliefs and ideas are reflected in the visual arts. Boys will study two periods for this paper:

- Invention and illusion: the Renaissance in Italy (1420–1520)
- Brave new world: Modernism in Europe (1900–39)

Juliet Bailey
Head of History of Art

> “History of Art is the study of wealth and power.”



LATIN

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H443

Classical subjects have always been central to the study of the humanities. Latin is a vibrant, intellectually stimulating and rigorous discipline that works well in combination with almost any other A-Levels. It provides a solid, arguably even essential, foundation for any humanities degree. As well as providing the key to an unsurpassed treasury of literature, history and philosophy, Latin has the very practical and, ultimately, highly employable benefit of producing thinkers, enquirers, creators and problem solvers, skills that are greatly valued by university admissions tutors and graduate employers alike. Boys who excelled in and enjoyed Latin GCSE will have all the skills to make a successful start to the study of Latin at A-Level.

The two-year course in Latin caters both for those who enjoy nuance of expression as well as those who relish the code-breaking logic of an inflected language. It will give them an opportunity to express their thoughts on an enormously influential corpus of Latin literature. Boys will learn how to think logically and analytically while deepening their understanding of their own culture.

The Classics Department takes a dynamic approach to A-Level study, regularly offering Oxbridge open days, seminars, theatre and museum trips and study tours abroad. Sixth Formers will be able to take advantage of the excellent book collection in the Deno Leventis Library, a space that is also used for seminars and text readings. For Lower Sixth Latin lessons, we are joined by English and Italian students from St Dominic's Sixth Form College. There is a vibrant culture of scholarship within the department, and several beaks are engaged in their own academic research projects.

As a result, the Classical Society is energetic and innovative and meets regularly to hear boys, beaks and external speakers present on areas of personal interest. There are numerous academic prizes in the Classics Department, among which are the Oxenham Latin Reading Competitions, several Cambridge and Oxford Prize Essay competitions to enter, and the jewel in the crown, the Plumptre Scholarship; this prize is only offered to Sixth Form classicists and gives them the chance to compete in a series of prestigious academic prizes for Latin translation and composition, which are adjudicated by an Oxbridge don.

GCSE requirement: Latin grade 8

Course details

The A-Level in Latin aims for candidates to:

- acquire the language and literary skills to read texts in the original language
- apply analytical and evaluative skills to original texts in Latin
- develop an interest in and enthusiasm for the literary, historical and cultural features of the ancient world
- make an informed personal response to literature;
- develop a sensitive and analytical approach to language generally
- develop the research and analytical skills to become independent learners

Paper One

Unseen translation (33%)

Boys will translate one passage of unseen Latin prose (taken from Livy) and one passage of unseen Latin verse (taken from Ovid) into English.

Paper Two

Prose composition or comprehension (17%)

Boys will either answer comprehension and grammar questions on an unseen passage of Latin prose (taken from Livy) or translate a short passage of English prose into Latin. The composition is an enjoyable option, as it provides great intellectual satisfaction, and preparation for this discipline has proved very popular.

Paper Three

Prose literature (25%)

Boys will study two Latin prose set texts. They will also study additional literature in translation in order to understand the context from which the set texts have been taken. The set text for 2028 will be Cicero *pro Roscio*, Nepos *Life of Hannibal* and Tacitus *Annals XIV*.

Paper Four

Verse literature (25%)

Boys will study two selections of Latin verse for their set text. They will also study additional literature in translation in order to understand the context from which the set texts have been taken. The set text for 2028 will be Virgil *Aeneid IV*.

MATHEMATICS/ FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code Mathematics: 9MA0
Exam code Further Mathematics: 9FM0

Mathematics is a vital part of all areas of modern life and the A-Level course provides a sound background for any boy wishing to pursue Mathematics or a Mathematics-based degree.

IGCSE requirement for A-Level Mathematics: Mathematics grade 8 (although a grade 9 is preferred)

IGCSE requirement for A-Level Further Mathematics: Mathematics grade 9 (boys must also have an additional qualification either in Additional Mathematics or Level 2 Further Mathematics)

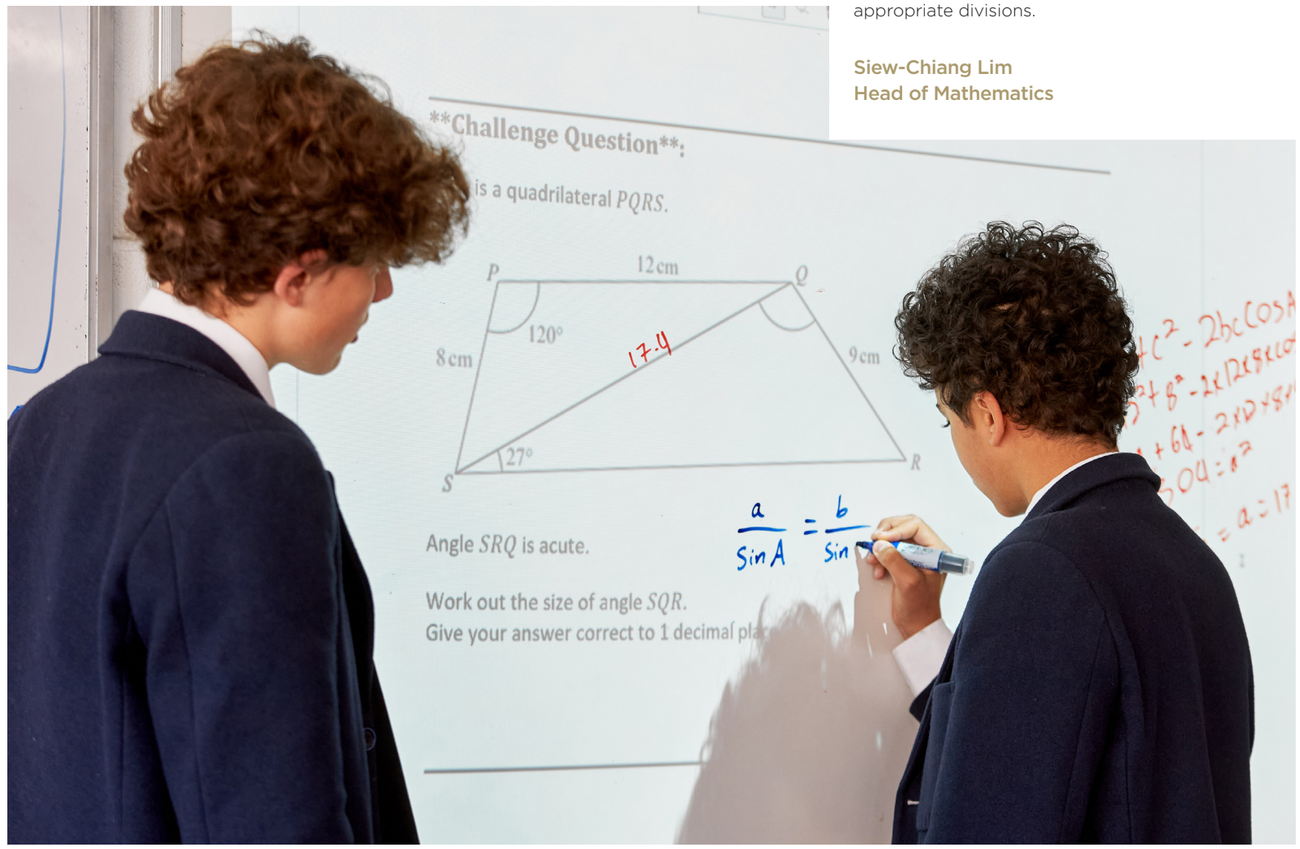
Course details

For Further Mathematics, boys take another four or five examinations, two compulsory units and two or three optional ones. The exact options that will be offered will depend on the division. Both courses are fully linear, and all examinations are taken at the end of the Upper Sixth year.

Candidates who are at present in the top Mathematics division in the Fifth Form should consider themselves strong candidates, with a good possibility of pursuing a Further Mathematics course. Boys in the second division who have done well at the Additional Mathematics studied in the Fifth Form can also consider studying Further Mathematics. The Further Mathematics course is ideal (in some cases crucial) for anyone considering a degree in a science, Engineering, Computing or Economics. If a boy who opts for Further Mathematics is eventually not able to complete the full double A-Level, there is an option to return to single Mathematics at any point over the two-year course.

New boys entering the Sixth Form who wish to study Further Mathematics should contact the Head of Subject and ensure that they have studied extended mathematical content before entry to the Sixth Form at Harrow. They will then be placed in appropriate divisions.

Siew-Chiang Lim
Head of Mathematics



MODERN LANGUAGES

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code Mandarin Chinese: 9CN0
Exam code French: 9FR0
Exam code German: 9GN0
Exam code Italian: 9IN0
Exam code Japanese: 9JA0
Exam code Russian: 9RU0
Exam code Spanish: 9SP0

Studying languages in the Sixth Form is excellent preparation for boys considering studying modern languages at university, but equally worthwhile for those with other aspirations because languages are perfect complementary subjects. Modern languages combine particularly well with Classics, English and History. They are also very useful to study alongside Economics and Mathematics for those considering university and career options in business or finance. A combination with the sciences can also be favourable: major European pharmaceutical companies such as Bayer and Novartis are based in the UK as well as on the Continent, and language skills are sought after among their prospective employees. Many FTSE 100 companies stress that language skills give applicants a distinct advantage. But modern languages A-Levels are not only highly regarded by UK employers and universities; for boys intending to apply to the US, a modern language A-Level can set a candidate apart from the rest. At many US universities, students are required to take courses outside their specialism, and languages are perfect for that. For those who continue beyond A-Levels, a degree in a modern language is excellent preparation for a career in the diplomatic and security services, as well as a strong foundation for a legal career and a whole range of other professions.

All modern languages in the Sixth Form follow the Edexcel A-Level syllabus, with terminal assessments in all four skills of listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The structure of the courses is the same for all languages, except for Japanese, which is listed separately below. The Mandarin Chinese A-Level is best suited for the very brightest boys and heritage speakers. Others interested in studying Mandarin Chinese are encouraged to sit the HSK, China's official proficiency test, for which we prepare the boys on the timetable in a parallel division.

For full details of the courses and their specifications visit qualifications.pearson.com.

Boys will normally be prepared for these examinations by two beaks, with a further period each week in smaller groups with one of our Language Assistants.

Boys intending to study modern languages in the Sixth Form are strongly advised to organise study trips or a language course over the course of the Lower Sixth year or in the summer holiday, to help them develop their linguistic abilities in a native-speaker environment. There is a department travel prize in honour of a former languages beak that can be awarded to one or possibly two boys to help with this. There is also a Modern Languages Research Prize for independent research done in the summer between the Lower and the Upper Sixth year.

IGCSE/GCSE requirement: grade 7 in the relevant language

Course structure

Paper One

Listening, reading and translation (2 hours, written paper, 40% of mark)

Candidates complete a series of reading and listening exercises from a variety of types of authentic texts and listening material, as well as a translation from the target language into English. They are assessed on their ability to understand gist and main ideas, interpret complex language, identify explicitly and implicitly stated ideas, draw inferences, synthesise information, and identify vocabulary and structures by applying close-reading skills.

Paper Two

Written response to works and translation (2 hours 40 minutes, 30% of mark)

Candidates translate an unseen passage from English into the target language and complete two essays in the target language on either two literary texts or one literary text and one film. Candidates should produce responses that show critical appreciation of features such as key concepts and issues, characterisation, form, technique of presentation, for example the effect of narrative voice in prose text or the effect of camera work in film, and social and cultural setting. In their writing, they should present viewpoints, develop arguments, draw conclusions, and analyse and evaluate the texts they have studied. A full list of the prescribed literary texts and films can be found in the specifications on the Edexcel website. Recent texts and films taught in the department include Sartre: *Les mains sales;* Solzhenitsyn: *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich;* Benigni: *La vita è bella;* and Salles: *Diarios de motocicleta.*

Paper Three

Speaking (approx. 18 minutes, internally conducted and externally assessed, 30% of mark)

There are two parts to the test. In the first part, candidates present and discuss ideas and issues arising from a stimulus card with a choice of two topics. Candidates' interaction, their knowledge of the target-language society and culture, and their accuracy and range of language are assessed. In the second part, candidates present and then discuss independent research they have conducted on a topic relating to the cultural and social context of the language studied. It is possible for centres to choose for larger cohorts to be examined by an external examiner appointed by Pearson Edexcel.



Japanese

Exam code: 9JA0

Paper One

Translation into English, reading comprehension and writing (research question) (2 hours 30 minutes, written paper, 40% of mark)

There are three parts to the test. In the first part, candidates translate an unseen passage from Japanese into English. The second part is a reading assessment based on a variety of text types and genres. Candidates must respond to a series of comprehension questions. The third part is based on independent research selected and carried out by the candidate. Candidates read a text and then answer a question, incorporating information and ideas from both the text and their research findings. This research essay takes the place of an oral which occurs in most other A-Levels. There is no oral examination for A-Level Japanese.

Paper Two

Translation into Japanese and written response to works (2 hours 40 minutes, written paper, 30% of mark)

This paper includes a translation exercise and two essays on either two literary texts or one literary text and one film.

Paper Three

Listening, reading and writing (2 hours 15 minutes, written paper, 30% of mark)

There are two parts to the test. In the first part, candidates complete a listening comprehension test. In the second part, they summarise a transcript and a text that are based on the same sub-theme. Candidates then evaluate the points of view in both sources, stating which views they agree with and why.

Sander Berg
Head of Modern Languages



MUSIC

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code: 9MU01

The Edexcel course leads on naturally from GCSE and has the advantage that many of the musical activities undertaken by Harrow musicians will count towards their examination. However, the course is very broad and much more than simply an extension of instrumental study. The A-Level develops skills in analysis and close listening, harmony and counterpoint, and free and stylistic composition. An extremely wide range of music is studied and boys develop the confidence and ability to engage in a mature and intelligent way with unfamiliar works and styles. As a serious and rigorous subject that is highly regarded by top universities, A-Level Music helps to develop not only musical awareness but also other core academic skills such as essay writing and independent research. The subject combines well with both humanities and sciences in this regard. Although an A-Level in Music demonstrates a wide range of abilities to admissions tutors across all subjects, many boys discover while studying Music that they would like to pursue it further at university. In recent years, Harrovians have been awarded choral and organ scholarships to prestigious Oxbridge colleges and achieved outstanding first-class degrees in Music.

> "In recent years Harrovians have been awarded choral and organ scholarships to prestigious Oxbridge colleges and achieved outstanding first-class degrees in Music."

Course details

Component One
Performing (30%)
Candidates perform as soloists and/or as part of an ensemble for a minimum of eight minutes. This is recorded and sent off for assessment by the Edexcel examiners. To be confident of achieving full marks in this module, performances should be of grade 8 level.

Component Two
Composing (30%)
Candidates develop their composition skills and create a four-minute piece in response to a chosen brief (20%). Pupils also complete a shorter technique-based exercise such as a Bach chorale (10%).

Component Three
Appraising Music (40%)
This unit focuses on listening and musical analysis. Candidates study 13 set works, identifying important musical features and exploring social and historical contexts. The examination contains varied questions on a selection of the set works, a dictation exercise and two essays, which require candidates to write confidently about an unfamiliar work and to discuss one of the set works with extensive reference to wider listening. The six areas of study into which the set works fall are:

- Vocal Music
- Instrumental Music
- Music for Film
- Popular Music and Jazz
- Fusions
- New Directions

William Church
Head of Academic Music

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code: 9MT0

Requirements: no formal qualification in Music is necessary for this course, although a keen interest and basic knowledge of music, sound, science and general technology is required. Musical creativity is essential for the composition paper.

> "Candidates study the development of technology and popular music in the 20th century along with practical modules in engineering, producing, analysing and composing."

Course content

The Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Music Technology consists of two externally examined papers and two non-examined assessment components. Students must submit their non-examined assessment (NEA) and complete the examinations in May/June in the year of certification.

Component One: Recording
Non-examined assessment: externally assessed (20%)
Production tools and techniques to capture, edit, process and mix an audio recording.

Assessment overview
One recording, chosen from a list of ten songs provided by Edexcel, consisting of a minimum of five compulsory instruments and two additional instruments.

Component Two: Technology-based composition
Non-examined assessment: externally assessed (20%)
Creating, editing, manipulating and structuring sounds to produce a technology-based composition.

Assessment overview
One technology-based composition chosen from three briefs set by Edexcel.

Component Three: Listening and analysing
Written examination (1 hour 30 minutes, 25%)
Knowledge and understanding of recording and production techniques and principles in the context of a series of unfamiliar commercial recordings supplied by Edexcel.

Assessment overview
Section A: Listening and analysing (40 marks) – four questions, each based on unfamiliar commercial recordings supplied by Edexcel (10 marks each).

Section B: Extended written responses (35 marks) – two essay questions. One comparison question, which uses two unfamiliar commercial recordings from the CD (15 marks). The second essay uses the final unfamiliar commercial recording on the CD (20 marks).

Component Four: Producing and analysing
(2 hours 15 minutes plus 10 minutes' setting up time, written/practical examination, 35%)
Knowledge and understanding of editing, mixing and production techniques, to be applied to unfamiliar materials provided by Edexcel in the examination.

Assessment overview
Section A: Producing and analysing (85 marks) – five questions related to the audio and MIDI materials provided that include both written responses and practical tasks.

Section B: Extended written response (20 marks) – one essay focusing on a specific mixing scenario, signal path, effect or music technology hardware unit.

Sean McWilliam
Head of Music Technology



> A boy with an enthusiasm for photography will find the course stretches his horizons and introduces him to the work of professional practitioners and the history of photography."

PHOTOGRAPHY

Exam board: EDEXCEL
Exam code: 9PY01

Photography is all about artistic expression and communicating personal ideas about the world around us. It can be used to record, document and present examples of everyday life in ordinary and extraordinary circumstances. The A-Level is divided into two disciplines: film-based photography and digital photography. The course will start in the Lower Sixth year by looking into the traditional black-and-white photographic processes. This will then develop into digital photography as part of the Upper Sixth coursework component.

The aims, assessment objectives and assessment criteria are common to all Art and Design courses: candidates for Photography may spend less time in the studio, but will be expected to spend more time in the field taking photographs.

Each assessment objective is worth 25% and there are four objectives:

- Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding.
- Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining ideas as work develops.
- Record in visual and/or other forms ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, demonstrating an ability to reflect on work and progress.
- Present a personal, informed and meaningful response demonstrating critical understanding, realising intentions and, where appropriate, making connections between visual, oral or other elements.

There are two components to the A-Level: coursework and exams. Sketchbooks are used to record the exploration and development of a boy's ideas and may account for 60% or more of the total mark for both modules.

The Upper Sixth year demands a greater level of competence and will challenge boys to understand creative problem solving.

Component One

Coursework: Personal investigation

This component is weighted at 60% of the total qualification and is internally marked and externally moderated. Boys will develop their assessed responses from themes developed from personal starting points.

As part of this component, boys will process their own black-and-white films and print photographs in the darkroom, using the traditional process. The idea is to produce images that make the ordinary look extraordinary. Digital photography is also used to bring colour into the personal investigation, experimenting with different camera techniques to produce a wide variety of interesting work. Work in sketchbooks will be set as prep.

In the Upper Sixth, the aim is to develop boys' ability to resolve successfully the problems that emerge as an inevitable part of the process of creating photographic work. This will challenge their independent creativity, and they will also look closely at the work of other photographers. This component will include a personal study, which requires boys to research, evaluate, analyse and establish coherent and sustainable links between their understanding of their own emerging photographic practice and that of historical and contemporary references. The study will be a formal dissertation of no more than 3000 words.

Component Two

Exam: Externally set assignment

This component is weighted at 40% of the total qualification and is internally marked and externally moderated. The exam is based on a theme chosen by the examination board – a previous theme was Simple or Complex – and the boys have a term in which they must research and shoot their ideas. They have a 15-hour examination in which they must complete a sketchbook and final piece or pieces. This is a real test of organisation and planning.

A boy with an enthusiasm for photography will find the course stretches his horizons, introduces him to the work of professional practitioners and the history of photography, and develops in him the critical faculty to evaluate his own work and that of others. The course would suit anyone at Harrow, not just the boys already decided on a Photography or Art and Design course at university. The Photography course gives boys an Art and Design qualification at A-Level, developing excellent research skills that are highly regarded by top universities.

Darren Bell
Head of Photography

PHYSICS

Exam board: OCR Physics A
Exam code: H556

GCSE requirement: Physics grade 7 and Mathematics grade 7

If boys wish to study Physics or Engineering at university they must take Mathematics at least to A-Level. Further Mathematics will give access to degrees at the best universities, as well as improving their chances of making a success of their studies there.

Physics is very much the subject of the age. It has the reputation of being difficult because of its unique conceptual challenges combined with its mathematical nature.

It requires a particular, often counter-intuitive way of thinking that can be difficult to acquire but which, once mastered, has innumerable benefits in the long run, such as enhanced problem-solving skills. This is the main reason why physicists are so highly sought after in the workplace in fields as diverse as engineering, finance, education, IT, communications and government research.

The Physics and Astronomy Department at Harrow offers a uniquely broad range of additional academic opportunities for boys studying A-Level Physics. We run a series of undergraduate-level engineering projects for up to 25 of our Lower Sixth boys every year, targeted particularly at those who are considering reading Engineering at university (Engineering is now one of the most popular university courses among Harrovians). All Lower Sixth physicists follow a coding course, gaining invaluable computing experience before embarking on a university science course, where such a skill is essential. We also offer numerous other research project opportunities, including in Astrophysics with access to our state-of-the-art Rayleigh Observatory.

Course content

The course consists of six modules.

Module One seeks to develop practical skills in Physics. These skills are assessed in a written examination at the end of the course rather than through coursework. They also lay the foundations for the extensive practical work that is undertaken, leading to a practical endorsement at the end of the two years.

Module Two deals with foundations in Physics, such as mathematical techniques, units and measures, and data analysis.

Module Three looks at mechanics, including motion, forces, work and energy, and materials.

Module Four is concerned with electrons, waves and photons, covering such diverse topics as electricity quantum phenomena.

Module Five explores the Newtonian world (momentum, oscillations, gravitational fields and thermal physics) and astrophysics.

Module Six takes us into the exciting worlds of particle physics and medical physics.

James Bedford
Head of Physics





POLITICS

Exam board: Edexcel
Exam code: 9PL0

The aim of this course is to encourage interest in and enthusiasm for the study of politics, and to enable boys to develop an insight into some of the political beliefs that are central to an understanding of the modern world. The course begins with a detailed study of Western political philosophy and is orientated around the themes of political power and political discourse – in other words the ability to take political actions and the conversation around politics respectively. The course then launches into a comparative study of British and American politics. No previous study or knowledge of politics is required, just a good work ethic and a recognition that the subject will involve plenty of reading, note taking and essay writing.

GCSE requirement: grade 7 in a humanities subject

> "No previous study or knowledge of politics is required."

Component One: UK Politics and Core Political Ideas
This unit introduces boys to the key channels of communication between government and the people (political parties, elections, pressure groups etc.). It also explores the ideological framework in which politics operates by studying the key ideas associated with socialism, conservatism and liberalism.

Component Two: UK Government and Optional Political Ideas
This unit covers the major governmental processes in the UK by looking at the structure and operations of Parliament, the judiciary, the prime minister and the UK's constitutional arrangements. Moreover, boys will explore nationalism as an alternative ideological perspective to balance those studied in Component One.

Component Three: Comparative Politics
This unit explores United States politics. Boys will gain a deeper understanding of the United States' political system, in direct comparison with the British system. The United States has historically been seen as the leading nation of the Free World and boys will explore the way in which American government and constitutional theory negotiate concepts of civil liberties, democratic participation and the organising of a just world.

There is no coursework in either the Lower Sixth or the Upper Sixth.

Politics is particularly compatible with History, Theology and Philosophy, other humanities, or social sciences such as Economics and Geography. It would also combine perfectly well with Mathematics, languages and scientific subjects. In terms of preparation for higher education, an A-Level in Politics would be of particular interest to boys considering further study in a university-level humanities course and serve as a useful introduction to a university Politics degree, including Politics, Philosophy and Economics (PPE) at Oxford, or Human, Social and Political Science (HSPS) at Cambridge. It is particularly useful for boys considering careers in law, finance or politics.

Ryan Blank
Head of Politics

SPORTS SCIENCE

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H555

The A-Level Sports Science specification content is divided into four components. Each component is further sub-divided into topic areas. Components One to Three are assessed by written examination papers.

Component Four is a non-examined assessment (NEA), internally assessed and externally moderated. The written papers are designed in manageable parts rather than long papers, thus helping candidates to manage the course.

Component One: Physiological Factors Affecting Performance

This group of topics focuses on the key systems of the human body involved in movement and physical activity. The boys will develop their knowledge and understanding of the changes within these body systems before exercise, during exercise of differing intensities, and during recovery. Application of this theoretical knowledge will enable boys to understand how changes in physiological states can influence performance in physical activities and sport. Boys will be expected to be able to interpret data and graphs relating to changes in these body systems.

> "Boys will gain an understanding of the scientific and socio-cultural factors that underpin sport and physical activity, and will be able to demonstrate their ability as either performer or coach."

Component Two: Psychological Factors Affecting Performance

This component focuses on the psychological factors affecting physical activities and sports, including models and theories that affect learning and performance in physical activities; how different methods of training and feedback work and why their effectiveness differs from person to person; and group dynamics and the effects of leadership and stress on performers. Through the study of this component, boys will gain a deeper understanding of the underlying psychological factors that influence performance in physical activity and sport.

Component Three: Socio-cultural and Contemporary Issues

This component focuses on the sociological and contemporary factors that influence and affect physical activity and sport for both the audience and the performer, and how sport affects society. It includes the emergence and evolution of modern sport, and how social and cultural factors shaped the characteristics of sports and pastimes in pre-industrial and post-industrial Britain. The impact of the modern Olympic Games will be understood, as well as the impact on society of hosting global sporting events. Ever-evolving modern technology and its influence on sport performers and spectators will be understood, and practical examples will be used to show the effect of modern technology.

Component Four: Performance Within Physical Education

Boys will be required to undertake two parts within this component.

Part One
Performance/coaching of a sport or activity from the approved DfE list.

Part Two
The Evaluation and Analysis of Performance for Improvement (EAPI) of a sport or activity from the approved DfE list. This does not have to be the same sport or activity that was undertaken in part one, although it can be. Boys will identify and justify the major area of weakness within the performance to make priorities for improvement, and will propose a long-term (two to three months) development plan to improve the area of performance identified. This component is an internally assessed and externally moderated NEA.

Andrew Jarvis
Head of Academic PE

THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY

Exam board: OCR
Exam code: H573 A

The course develops the ability to think analytically and critically. Religious Studies at A-Level has changed enormously over the last few years and Theology & Philosophy is now one of the most intellectually stimulating and rigorous subjects available. Boys are expected to consider theological, philosophical and ethical topics that form an integral part in the day-to-day thinking and lives of a large proportion of the world's population. Boys will develop skills of confident critical evaluation and analysis, which they will practise in discussions and in essay writing. Boys do not need any personal belief to study the subject – just an interest in the questions involved. This is a great humanities A-Level for those applying to the top universities due to its focus on critical thinking; it is highly regarded by universities for admission to study arts or humanities and social science degree courses. The ethics units also combine well with science A-Levels to prepare boys for business, medical and science degrees.

Paper One

Written examination (2 hours) on Philosophy of Religion
The content for this paper explores some of the main ancient and contemporary philosophical issues and questions about religion, such as belief in God or the conviction that life has both meaning and purpose. The course starts with an exploration of ancient Greek philosophy, including Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. The content for this paper will also engage with arguments and debates on religious and non-religious views of life, which focus on some key areas of controversy that shape the modern world, including the problems of evil and suffering. In addition, it will look at the nature and influence of religious experience, philosophical language, science and the works of scholars who have contributed to these debates.

Paper Two

Written examination (2 hours) on Religion and Ethics
The content for this paper is focused on exploring both common ground and controversy in dealing with issues that arise in the areas of morality and religion in the context of the modern world. There will also be a study of some of the underlying ideas and concepts behind these issues, as well as questions about how ethical and religious ideas and solutions may be applied in practice in contemporary social, political and personal situations. The paper also covers issues such as business and sexual ethics.

Paper Three

Written examination (2 hours) on Developments in Christian Thought
The content for this paper focuses on the interconnections of religious beliefs, values and teachings, and how they vary historically and in the contemporary world. As part of this study, specific sources of wisdom, authority and sacred texts are studied and examined. This component allows the boys to explore the significant social and historical developments in theology, including the contemporary challenges of secularisation, pluralism, eschatology and gender politics, as well as a more general discussion about the relationship between religion and society.

John McAleer
Head of Theology & Philosophy

> "Boys are expected to consider philosophical, theological and ethical topics from more than one point of view and to express themselves coherently in essays."



PREFERRED SIXTH FORM SUBJECTS

This table is a rough guide to the Sixth Form subject choices preferred for some types of degree at British universities. Each university and degree course sets its own admission standards, so it is not possible to be prescriptive: the current university prospectuses are the best source of guidance. *HEAP 2026: University Degree Course Offers* by Brian Heap is also a helpful resource.

For many science degrees, the third or fourth subject may be a contrasting one such as a language or humanity without compromising the essential requirements. Indeed, many universities welcome this additional breadth. As shown in the table below, most science degrees do require Mathematics.

UNIVERSITY DEGREE	PREFERRED SUBJECTS
Agricultural Science	Two sciences, especially Chemistry and Biology
Architecture	Mathematics, Physics and Art
Biological Sciences	Biology and Chemistry
Chemical Sciences	Chemistry, Mathematics and either Physics or Biology
Computer Science	Mathematics and Physics
Economics	Mathematics
Engineering	Mathematics and Physics, sometimes Design Technology & Engineering
Geological Sciences	Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics
Materials Science	Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry
Mathematics	Mathematics, Further Mathematics and Physics
Medicine and Medical Sciences	Biology and Chemistry; Maths and/or Physics desirable
Modern Languages	At least one language
Psychology	One or two sciences and Mathematics
Veterinary Medicine	Chemistry and Biology

SUBJECTS OFFERED AT HARROW IN THE SIXTH FORM

Boys start the Lower Sixth studying four subjects, although some Further Mathematicians may study five. They will have an opportunity to drop one A-Level after the February half-term break in consultation with their House Master. A-Level choices will be collated under the supervision of House Masters and Tutors.

Boys should choose a total of FOUR subjects. Boys should aim to choose one subject from each of the four groups shown in the table of options below. If a boy's preferred selection does not fall within these groups, he should write to Mr Church, Academic and Universities Director. When constructing the timetable, the School will endeavour to accommodate any combination of subjects but cannot guarantee that it will always be possible. Nevertheless, it is often possible to accommodate bespoke combinations, especially when they are requested by the initial January deadline.

Occasionally, unforeseen changes in circumstance may result in changes to the precise list of subjects offered. Such changes will always be communicated to boys and parents at the earliest opportunity. It should not be assumed that a combination of subjects that is possible according to the table below will necessarily still be available at a later stage (for example after GCSE results are published in August). This is because subjects may be moved from one group to another in order to accommodate the requirements of the boys in light of the preferences expressed in spring. For this reason, boys are encouraged to make as informed a choice as possible about their preferred A-Level options in the January of the Fifth Form.

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D
Ancient History	Biology	Biology	Art
Art	Computer Science	Business	Biology
Chemistry	Design Technology & Engineering	English	Business
Design Technology & Engineering	Drama	Further Maths	Chemistry
Economics	Economics	History of Art	Economics
English	French	History	English
French	Geography	Maths	History
Geography	Greek (Ancient)	Music Technology	Latin
German	History	Sports Science	Maths
Japanese	Italian	Theology & Philosophy	Music
Politics	Latin		Physics
Russian	Physics		Photography
Spanish	Politics		Sports Science
Theology & Philosophy	Photography		Theology & Philosophy

Boys wishing to study Further Mathematics must choose Mathematics in group C. They should then choose **at least two** other subjects from the other three groups. It is possible for boys taking Further Mathematics to take three other subjects, one each from groups A, B and D.

The deadline for submitting subject choices is 9pm on Wednesday 28 January 2026.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ARE SOME A-LEVELS CONSIDERED MORE APPROPRIATE THAN OTHERS FOR COMPETITIVE UNIVERSITIES?

The most competitive universities are quite clear about subjects they prefer. For those who wish to keep their options open, the University of Cambridge recommends taking A-Levels in subjects that go well together, choosing subjects you are passionate about and that interest you the most. For those inclined towards the arts, social sciences or humanities, Cambridge recommends taking two of: English, a language, History and Mathematics, alongside others that suit your interests and academic strengths. For those considering a Maths or Science course, Cambridge recommends taking at least three of: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and Further Mathematics undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/apply/before/choosing-high-school-subjects.

The Russell Group, which represents 24 leading UK universities, has a digital platform called 'Informed Choices' informedchoices.ac.uk/ to help guide students. This gives detailed advice that boys might want to use to complement this booklet. Other competitive universities like UCL and LSE list 'preferred' A-Level subjects on their websites. It is important to bear in mind that while some subjects might be 'non-preferred' for certain courses, they may be 'preferred' for others. It is thus important to research carefully what universities expect. The Universities Team, along with Heads of Subject and House Masters, can advise boys which Sixth Form courses are right for them and their ambitions.

WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF A-LEVELS?

Art, Photography, and Design Technology & Engineering require boys to do practical work outside timetabled lessons. Modern languages require boys to take oral lessons outside the timetable.

DO SOME SUBJECTS HAVE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

Yes, some A-Level subjects should only be tackled at Harrow by boys who achieve certain minimum grades at (I)GCSE. This is because our experience shows that boys who do not achieve these grades will be unsuccessful at A-Level. Please see the accompanying notes on the subject pages throughout this document. Boys hoping to study Mathematics at A-Level should achieve a minimum of grade 8 at IGCSE, while boys wishing to study Further Mathematics should have Mathematics grade 9 (boys must also have an additional qualification either in Additional Mathematics or Level 2 Further Mathematics) at IGCSE. In order to take a modern language, boys need to earn at least a grade 7 at IGCSE. Boys should also have at least a grade 7 in Mathematics and English Language at IGCSE if they want to take Economics.

HOW MANY A-LEVELS SHOULD BOYS TAKE?

All Harrovians start with a full timetable of four subjects while some Further Mathematicians may start with five A-Levels. Boys will have the opportunity to drop a fourth A-Level after the February half-term break in consultation with their House Master. The most competitive US universities expect boys to continue with four A-Levels, while some UK applicants also continue with four A-Levels. **However, the vast majority of UCAS offers require three A-Levels and many boys are best served by taking three A-Levels rather than four in order to maximise their outcomes.**

HOW MUCH TEACHING TIME IS THERE IN EACH SUBJECT?

Boys will have around five hours' teaching time per week for each of their subjects (eight 40-minute periods), usually split between two Masters. Boys studying Further Mathematics will have additional time for Mathematics each week. The Electives will be taught over three periods per week.

WHAT OTHER TESTS ARE THERE IN THE SIXTH FORM?

An increasing number of UK universities are using entrance tests as part of their admissions process. An overview of these can be found at ucas.com/applying/before-you-apply/what-and-where-to-study/entry-requirements/admissions-tests, with more detail on the individual university and course websites. All admissions tests are sat externally. Boys must register for their assessments and book their places themselves. The University of Oxford requires candidates to sit tests for a wide range of courses. The University of Cambridge also uses admissions tests for several courses (the ESAT and TMUA), as well as college-based tests for other courses. Those with an offer for Mathematics will likely have to sit the STEP. Other universities have recently adopted the ESAT and TMUA for various STEM and Economics courses, including UCL, Imperial College London, LSE, Durham and Warwick. UCL have also introduced their own academic reasoning test, the TARA. Many universities require applicants to sit the LNAT if they are applying for Law, and most universities require Medicine and Veterinary Medicine applicants to sit the UCAT. Some other universities and courses may have their own smaller admissions tests. Guidance and preparation is offered to boys who will need to sit admissions tests, starting in the summer term of their Lower Sixth year. Boys applying to American universities will need to take the SAT or ACT, whilst these assessments are also recognised by some European universities including Bocconi.

IS ADMISSION TO THE SIXTH FORM AUTOMATIC AFTER GCSES?

There is no formal hurdle for returning to the Sixth Form. Conversations about a boy's academic suitability for the Sixth Form should be discussed with his House Master during the Fifth Form year.

DO NEW BOYS JOIN IN THE SIXTH FORM?

Each year, a small number of new boys join in the Sixth Form. Competition for these spaces is incredibly fierce (ten applicants per place).

BEFORE ENTERING CHOICES WITH HOUSE MASTERS BY WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY, BOYS MUST:

- ✓ Check that their Sixth Form choices prepare them for the universities and university courses that most interest them
- ✓ Consider which subjects, at this stage, might be the best preparation for their intended career
- ✓ Discuss their choices with their parents, House Master and Tutor.
- ✓ Speak to the relevant Heads of Subject about the suitability of any new subjects that they have not studied before





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