PRIOR PARK SIXTH FORM

Sixth Form

COURSE BOOKLET

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Introduction

At Prior Park School we are proud of our Sixth Form, seeing it as a time of preparation for adult life and transition from school to university or the world of work.

It is a period of more personalised academic exploration and our revised curriculum offer provides ample opportunity for all students to develop their unique gifts and talents whilst growing in confidence and compassion.

We look to those who enter the Sixth Form next year to continue our traditions of study, service and ultimately success, within a friendly and supportive environment.



What Should I Study?

We are fortunate to be able to offer our students a broad range of subjects across two pathways, A Levels and our BTEC pathway. In most cases, students joining our Lower Sixth are required to select three full A Level subjects these broad and rigorous qualifications are highly regarded by universities, with an opportunity to select a fourth qualification such as the EPQ. Alternatively, students may opt to take our alternative BTEC curriculum pathway, selecting one or two specialists work related courses, combining practical learning with subject and theory content alongside an A Level qualification.

We offer 17 taught A Level subjects, 3 BTECS and have students who take A Levels in their native language. It is important to note that achieving grades that reflect your innate ability is the most important requirement for accessing a university place that is appropriate for you. These grades are likely to be more forthcoming if you choose to study subjects in which you have genuine academic interest and motivation.

All the courses offered at Prior Park provide a solid foundation for university entry, but for some institutions, including Oxbridge and the Russell Group of leading universities, it is also necessary to have the right combination of courses to maximise a student's chance of securing an offer of a place. If prospective Sixth Form students have a clear career path in mind, they are advised to contact universities directly to check that their subject combinations are acceptable for the courses in which they are interested.



Some subjects are identified by the Russell Group as “facilitating subjects” because they are prerequisite subjects for certain degrees. For example, Mathematics and Physics and even Further Mathematics may be seen as ‘facilitating subjects’ to read Engineering. The Russell Group produce a very useful document about post-16 subject choices, ‘Informed Choices’, that we recommend you read. It makes it clear that whilst the facilitating subjects; English Literature, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and Further Mathematics, Geography, History and Languages (Modern and Classical) can be useful for keeping your options open, you must also consider your past performance in these subjects and more importantly if the A Level courses are suited to your strengths.

A strong feature of the Sixth Form has been the increasing popularity of the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). This qualification allows students to broaden their experiences in Sixth Form by undertaking a research project that they must design and carry out.

Help with subject choice can be sought from various individuals including Heads of Department, subject teachers and tutors. Applicants from outside Prior Park School are advised to use the careers services at their own school but we can arrange opportunities to talk with us about possible subject combinations once a student has accepted their offer of a place.

Please look carefully through this course booklet and use it in conjunction with attending the Sixth Form Open Evening to find out all that you can. Do not hesitate to ask questions. The Sixth Form is ultimately your opportunity to develop and refine your talents towards a rewarding future career and a fulfilling life.

Ms Danielle Rozario,
Deputy Head (Academic)

Art

EXAM BOARD

OCR

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Students should have achieved at least a Level 6 in GCSE Art.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Studying Fine Art is essentially about learning to pursue a personal creative journey and communicating that journey to others. During the first year of the course, students are introduced to a broad range of processes and materials, enabling them to develop their own visual language. They also gain insight into issues and concerns of historical and contemporary art forms and they learn to place their own artwork within a wider context. Art students learn critical, evaluation and presentation skills and are required to work with independence. As the course progresses, they produce an extensive body of work on a theme of personal interest.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

60% Personal Investigation (coursework project) undertaken over three terms. This includes an extensive portfolio of preparatory and experimental studies, one or more resolved pieces and an essay of 3000 words.

40% Set Task. This is a response to a starting point set by the examination board. It includes preparatory work undertaken over one term and culminates in a final piece produced in examination conditions over 15 hours, spread over three days.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

History, Psychology, Philosophy, Theology, Music, Maths, Geography, ICT and Photography.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Traditional career options followed by A Level Art students include the visual art industries, graphic design, illustration, animation, film/ theatre design/costume production, fashion textiles, advertising, typography, fine art, history of art, curatorship and museology. However, business communities increasingly look to Fine Arts graduates to inject creative thinking skills into marketing and management strategy. Forward-thinking universities also value A Level Art for the emphasis it places on independence, metacognition and self-direction.



Biology

EXAM BOARD

Cambridge International A Level (9700)

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 7 in IGCSE Biology or Level 7:7 in IGCSE Co-ordinated Science

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The international A-level Biology course aims at giving students a high-level understanding of living organisms. Over the two-year course, students will cover topics ranging from the interaction between organisms within ecosystems to understanding the biology of cells and the mis-regulation which can lead to disease. Within the course, fundamental principles are studied and complemented with modern day research advances responsible for driving forward the frontiers of knowledge of biology. The topics studied are Cell structure, Biological molecules, Enzymes, Cell membranes and transport, The mitotic cell cycle, Nucleic acids and protein synthesis, Transport in plants, Transport in mammals, Gas exchange, Infectious diseases, Immunity, Energy and respiration, Photosynthesis, Homeostasis, Control and coordination, Inheritance, Selection and evolution, Classification, biodiversity and conservation, Genetic technology.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

There are 5 exams in total taken over two years.

3 exams at the end of year 12 based on AS content: a multiple-choice paper, a theory paper and a practical exam.

2 exams at the end of year 13: a theory paper on all content and a paper with questions based on the experimental skills of planning, analysis and evaluation.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Biology typically complements Chemistry, Geography, Psychology and Sports Studies. It is a subject which can be simply studied out of interest, and it is a well-regarded A-level qualification for non-Science university applications as well.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Biomedical Sciences, Medical Sciences, Dentistry, Veterinary Services, Zoology, Botany, Microbiology, Genetics, Marine, Freshwater and Terrestrial Ecology, Environmental Biology, Physiotherapy, Sports Injury, Anthropology and Psychology.

BTEC International Level 3: Business

EXAM BOARD	Edexcel
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	Level 4 in GCSE English.
WHAT DO WE STUDY?	As a student of BTEC Business, you will develop transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, research and analysis. These skills are valued in both higher education and the workplace. You will develop the ability to apply learning to new contexts, acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills that will be recognised and valued. Through practical application, you will show an understanding of how businesses survive, are organised and compete in the business environment. You will also be able to put together a marketing campaign, gain personal and business finance skills and understand effective recruitment and selection processes. Your knowledge and experience will be developed through study of real-life organisations.
ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE	100% Coursework
COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS	Business may be taken with any combination of subjects at A Level.
CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES	Many students go on to study a BA/BSc Hons degree in a business related subject or into Higher Apprenticeships. Career opportunities include, accountants; marketing or recruitment specialists; financial advisors or management positions in a variety of areas and industries.

BTEC International Level 3: Business

EXAM BOARD	Edexcel
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	Level 4 in GCSE English.
WHAT DO WE STUDY?	As a student of BTEC Business, you will develop transferable skills such as communication, teamwork, research and analysis. These skills are valued in both higher education and the workplace. You will develop the ability to apply learning to new contexts, acquiring knowledge, understanding and skills that will be recognised and valued. Through practical application, you will show an understanding of how businesses survive, are organised and compete in the business environment. You will also be able to put together a marketing campaign, gain personal and business finance skills and understand effective recruitment and selection processes. Your knowledge and experience will be developed through study of real-life organisations.
ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE	100% Coursework
COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS	Business may be taken with any combination of subjects at A Level.
CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES	Many students go on to study a BA/BSc Hons degree in a business related subject or into Higher Apprenticeships. Career opportunities include, accountants; marketing or recruitment specialists; financial advisors or management positions in a variety of areas and industries.

BTEC International Level 3: Creative Media

EXAM BOARD

Pearson

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 4 in GCSE English.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The BTEC Creative Media course spans a broad range of specialisms and purposes over 2 years, with all student practitioners being fully enabled to explore the creative industries in the world around us. From Photography and videography, branding, and product design to website design, and social media analytics, to marketing, Ecommerce, and business management.

Our BTEC course is equivalent to two A-levels qualifications. Students will learn more than just how to use their creativity and thinking skills, they will learn how to take advantage of those business opportunities that arise within them.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

100% Coursework

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Photography and Drama

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

This course has been designed for learners who wish to pursue a career in the creative industries via higher education, and or to access graduate entry employment.

This BTEC can lead you down a variety of pathways, from setting up your own online or physical creative business, and or assisting other industries and companies to becoming a professional photographer and or videographer. It could also help pursue a career in social media and marketing.

BTEC International Level 3: Applied Science

EXAM BOARD

Pearson

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Grade 4 or 4:4 in IGCSE sciences.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

There are mandatory and optional units. Students study 11 units in total. The seven mandatory units come from two categories: Principles and Applications of Science, Investigative Project Skills.

Four optional units are chosen from: Functional Physiology of Human Body Systems, Human Regulation and Reproduction, Biological Molecules and Metabolic Pathways, Genetics and Genetic Engineering, Diseases and Infections, Applications of Inorganic Chemistry, Electrical Circuits and their Applications, Astronomy and Space Science, Microbiology and Microbiological Techniques, Applications of Physical Chemistry, Applications of Organic Chemistry, Medical Physics Applications, Materials Science, Pollution and Waste Management, Water Quality, Animal Conservation, Ecosystems, Sustainable Energy.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

The qualification is assessed using a combination of internal assessments, which are set and marked by teachers, and Pearson Set Assignments, which are set by Pearson and marked by teachers.

- Mandatory units have a combination of internal and Pearson Set Assignments.
- All optional units are internally assessed

Learners could be given opportunities to:

- write up the findings of their own research
- use case studies to explore complex or unfamiliar situations
- carry out projects for which they have choice over the direction and outcomes
- demonstrate practical and technical skills using appropriate tools/ processes, etc

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

This qualification is designed to support learners who want to study science-based qualifications as the main element alongside another area of complementary or contrasting study as part of a two-year, full-time study programme.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

The qualification would support progression to higher education if taken as part of a programme of study that included other BTEC International Level 3 qualifications or International A Levels. This course will provide knowledge and skills desirable for many degree level courses such as, biological sciences, paramedical courses, nursing, physiotherapy, materials science, ICT, forensic science, chemical technologies, and engineering. It is also a valid qualification for a variety of employments sectors including working as a science technician, systems engineer, horticulture, service sector and teaching and education.

Chemistry

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel International A Level from 2018 (YCH11)

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 7 in IGCSE Chemistry or Level 7:7 in IGCSE Co-ordinated Sciences

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The course encourages students to; Develop essential knowledge and understanding of the concepts of Chemistry and the skills needed for their use in new and changing situations; Develop an understanding of the link between theory and experiment; Sustain and develop their enjoyment and interest in Chemistry and bring together knowledge of ways in which different areas of Chemistry relate to each other.

During lessons topics from IGCSE Chemistry are studied in greater depth and we get a chance to use a wider range of chemicals and equipment making practical's more interesting and challenging. The course is split into three general areas: physical chemistry, inorganic chemistry and organic chemistry. During the course, a way of thinking is developed which can help in everyday situations and can also increase your awareness of chemistry in our everyday life

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

There are 5 exams in total taken over two years.

3 exams at the end of year 12 based on AS content: a multiple-choice paper, a theory paper and a practical exam.

2 exams at the end of year 13: a theory paper on all content and a paper with questions based on the experimental skills of planning, analysis and evaluation.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Biology, Physics and Mathematics.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

A Level Chemistry is a required qualification in many university courses (e.g. medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, pharmacy and chemical engineering).

However, as with all science subjects, the skills that are acquired in this course make A Level Chemistry a highly regarded qualification, whatever course of study is chosen in the future

Computer Science

EXAM BOARD

AQA

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE Level 6 or above in Mathematics Basic knowledge of Python programming. If the student has no prior knowledge of programming, a short course will need to be undertaken prior to the start of A Level (provided by the school).

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Advances in computing are transforming the way we work and Computer Science offers a varied and challenging course that aims to develop computing skills that are transferable and extremely valued in many job prospects. The AQA specification provides an evolutionary approach which builds on strong foundations in problem-solving and programming that focuses on the knowledge, understanding and skills students need to progress to higher education and thrive in the workplace. This course will expand on the fundamentals of problem-solving and provide a variety of experiences in different programming environments.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Paper 1: The first paper tests a student's ability to programme, as well as their theoretical knowledge of Computer Science that includes data structures, algorithms and theory of computation. 40% of A Level

Paper 2: This paper tests a student's ability to answer questions which include content from data representation, computer systems, computer architecture, consequences of computing, networking, databases, big data and functional programming. 40% of A Level

Non-Exam Assessment: The coursework assesses a student's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve or investigate a practical problem, such as building a game or program that solves the needs of a shop. 20% of the A Level.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Computer Science can be applied to a wide variety of different subjects, however, logical thinking and problem-solving is a large part of the course and so mathematics would be an appropriate accompaniment.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Advances in technology mean that every career will make some use of computing; there is a decreasing number of paths that don't require, at the very least, a basic knowledge of Computer Science. This course offers a fantastic opportunity to move forward into the modern world of technology and provides a wide range of opportunities that continues to grow and expand.

Drama and Theatre

EXAM BOARD

AQA

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

This qualification emphasises practical creativity alongside research and theoretical understanding. Students learn through experience, seeing Theatre and making Theatre for themselves. They are introduced to a wide range of theatrical styles and contexts as they explore plays practically, devise and work on performances.

The course refines students' collaborative skills, their analytical thinking and their approach to research. Students grow in confidence and maturity as they successfully realise their own ideas. They learn to evaluate objectively and develop a sound appreciation of the influences that cultural and social contexts can have on decision making.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

60% Coursework

40% Exam

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

BTEC Creative Media

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Drama A Level offers students many skills they need to go on to higher education, whether that is to study a course in Drama and Theatre or another subject.

An A Level in Drama and Theatre is also highly valued as students develop skills that are not just essential for Drama but also applicable to a wide range of higher education subjects and in the workplace. Whatever the future holds, students of A Level Drama and Theatre emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills preparing them for their next steps in life.



Economics

EXAM BOARD

Cambridge International

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE Level 7 in Maths and a Level 6 in English Language/History/ Geography/Business/Theology.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Economics offers a fresh perspective on the world in which we live. Pupils will investigate the role that resources play in everyday life, building up a scientific understanding of the market in microeconomics, whilst exploring wider economic issues such as interest rates, inflation and other indicators in macroeconomics.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Two AS papers at the end of year 12 (one multiple choice paper of one hour, 30 marks; one data response and essay of 2 hours, 60 marks), and two A-level papers at the end of year 13 (one multiple choice paper of one hour 15 minutes, 30 marks and one data response and essay of 2 hours, 60 marks).

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Maths, Geography, History, Business, Theology, Psychology, Modern Languages and the Sciences.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Economics has become an increasingly popular subject nationally, especially at undergraduate level but degrees don't have to be in pure Economics. Students may opt to study PPE, Land Economy, Econometrics, Environmental Economics, Actuarial Sciences, International Relations, Business, Management, Economic Development, Marketing or Finance & Accounting.

Economists work in manufacturing, transport, communications, banking, insurance and investment industries, as well as in government agencies, consulting and charitable organisations. Employers value economic graduates' understanding of decision making, their research and analytical skills, and ability to view problems in their national and international context.

English Literature

EXAM BOARD

OCR

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 6 in GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The OCR specification encourages candidates to read widely and independently, to explore literary texts for their own intrinsic interest and significance and to set them within their literary, cultural and historical contexts. We will study radical, innovative texts alongside major canonical works, giving students a sense of the diversity of literature in English. As well as developing analytical skills, students will learn how to write extended essays and to carry out research: skills which underpin many degree courses and are highly valued by universities

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Unit 1: Shakespeare and Poetry pre-1900 2hr 30minute examination (40%)
Texts currently studied for this unit are Hamlet and Ibsen's A Doll's House along with Chaucer's The Merchant's Tale.

Unit 2: Comparative and Contextual Study, The Gothic 2hr 30 minute examination (40%)
Texts currently studied are Angela Carter's The Bloody Chamber and Bram Stoker's Dracula

These prose texts will be studied as part of the wider tradition of Gothic literature which will give students the opportunity to explore a rich variety of different texts. Students will also consider each text in relation to its historical context, as well as looking at key stylistic features and thematic preoccupations.

Unit 3: Coursework component: Literature post-1900 (20%)

The coursework folder contains two essays. The first piece is either an extended critical analysis of a poem or a recreative task and the second is based on two texts – a play and a novel. The current texts chosen for this unit are poems by Philip Larkin, A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams and Atonement by Ian McEwan.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

English combines particularly well with History, Drama, Theology, Latin and Modern Language A Levels.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

The ability to analyse literature is a key skill required for Modern Languages degrees. The ability to conduct independent research and to evaluate and analyse are also very useful transferable skills, opening up opportunities in a diverse range of fields, including law, journalism, politics, media and education.

French

EXAM BOARD

AQA

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 6 at GCSE in French.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

French in the Sixth Form is a dynamic, varied and challenging subject which requires students to develop a broad range of transferable, highly marketable skills. The AQA specification is designed to be extremely accessible to young people living in a globalised society. The A Level course focuses on aspects of society in French speaking countries along with political, intellectual and artistic culture.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Paper 1: Listening, Reading, Writing
The first paper requires the students to respond to texts and spoken passages. This counts for 50% of the A Level and lasts two and a half hours.

Paper 2: Writing
The second paper sees students writing two essays on either two books or a book and a film. It lasts two hours and is worth 20% of the final grade.

Paper 3: Speaking
The speaking element of the examination comprises of a presentation followed by a discussion based upon its subject matter. Prior to the examination the student will complete a research project that will allow them to investigate a subject matter of their choice. this exam is worth 30% of the final grade.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

French may be taken with any combination of subjects at A Level.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Language graduates traditionally have one of the highest employment rates of all subject areas. While many of our students go on to study pure language degrees, there is increasing demand for graduates of all disciplines to be proficient in languages. Not only this, but our students will be working in multinational companies, either in the UK or abroad. Hence most universities now offer a wide range of courses such as Engineering, Business, Politics, Law and Economics combined with French and the opportunity of a work placement abroad.

Geography

EXAM BOARD

Cambridge International

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE Level 6 and above in Geography. Students should also have higher grade passes in English Language, Maths and Sciences. If you have not studied GCSE Geography, speak to someone in the department, and they will guide you on the possibility of studying A Level Geography.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

We aim to produce lateral thinkers who are curious about the world around them. As Geographers, we study the complex interactions between people and the environment. Our units of study provide a coherent grounding in Physical and Human geography topics. These include physical topics such as; Hydrology and fluvial geomorphology; atmosphere and climate change; Earth processes and mass movements; tropical environments; and hazards. The human topics we cover are; population and migration; Water resources and management; Urban areas and management. You will then study two units from: Climate change impacts and governance; Environmental issues and management; Trade, aid and tourism; Disease and geography.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

For the AS Level, you will take Paper 1 and Paper 2.
For the full A Level, you will take Paper 1 and Paper 2, as well as Paper 3 and Paper 4.

Paper 1: Physical Geography - 90 minutes - 60 marks

Paper 2: Human Geography - 90 minutes - 60 marks

Paper 3: Global environments - 90 minutes - 60 marks

Paper 4: Global themes - 90 minutes - 60 marks

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Maths, Economics, History, Business, Theology, Psychology, Modern Languages and the Sciences.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

The direction your career takes would depend on your interest in physical or human geography. A geography degree enables you to embark on a career in a range of fields, including those in the education, commerce, industry, transport, tourism and public sectors. You'll also have many transferable skills, attracting employers from the business, law and finance sectors.

A recent survey of Geography graduates carried out by the RGS shows that 41% went into management and administration, 26% further training, including PGCE and higher degrees, 11% financial sector, 11% retail, 10% other professions, including media.

History

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE Level 6 or above is required to study History, due to the demanding nature of the course. Those who have not taken GCSE History require a strong set of GCSE results across the board.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

With analysis and research essential for A Level History, key skills will be developed that are subject transferable, but that are also necessities for most university courses. A developed understanding of both continuity and change in a wide range of areas (politics, economics, society, religion, global issues) have direct relevance to the modern world, enabling students to become better citizens, with a greater sense of how our twenty-first century society functions.

This specification supports historical studies that should promote an understanding of change and development over time (Paper 1: Britain 1625-1701 and Paper 3: Britain 1763-1914) plus an understanding of change over a short period studied in depth (Paper 2: Russia 1880-1924). The fourth element is an historical enquiry which tests understanding of change over 100 years through an independently researched coursework task.

This specification supports historical studies that promote an understanding of change and development over time (Paper 1: Britain 1625-1701 and Paper 3: Britain 1763-1914 OR The Witch craze in Britain, Europe and North America, c1580-c1750.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

History A Level is a two-year linear course with all assessment taking place in the second year. There are three written exams (one for each of the taught units) combining essays and skills-based assessments involving contemporary sources and modern interpretations. The historical investigation requires students to write an extended essay of 3500-4000 words, which is completed in the second year of the A Level course.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

History may be taken with any other subjects.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Possible university courses include Archaeology and Anthropology, Classical Archaeology and Ancient History, History of Art, Classics, History and a combined History degree. History graduates go on to follow careers in fields such as law, investment banking and consultancies, advertising, accountancy, the Civil Service, publishing, journalism and the media, global charity work, museums, librarianship and archive work and teaching.

Mathematics

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE or iGCSE Grade 6 or higher in Mathematics

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

A Level Mathematics builds from GCSE level Mathematics (number, algebra, graphs and trigonometry) and develops calculus and its applications.

It emphasises how mathematical ideas are interconnected, teaches students how to make sense of data, to understand the physical world and to solve problems in a variety of contexts, including social sciences and business. It prepares students for further study and employment in a wide range of disciplines involving the use of mathematics.

Students learn to reason logically, solve challenging problems and represent situations mathematically, understanding the relationship between problems in context and mathematical models that may be applied to solve them.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Three exams at the end of the second year of study. These exams will focus on pure mathematics, statistics and mechanics.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Any subject but especially Sciences, Economics, Business, Psychology and DT.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

A-level mathematics can lead to a myriad of courses in both further and higher education. Obvious careers include accountancy, banking, engineering, medicine, computing and scientific statistical research. However, there are many other diverse areas where mathematical skills are recognised as invaluable and essential. If you are planning to study a mathematics based course at university, we recommend that you should also choose A-Level Further Mathematics.



Mathematics (Further)

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE or iGCSE Grade 7 or higher in Mathematics

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

As well as building on Algebra and Calculus introduced in A Level Mathematics, the A Level Further Mathematics Core content introduces Complex Numbers and Matrices, fundamental mathematical ideas with wide applications in Mathematics, Engineering, Physical Sciences and Computing.

Mathematics is such a vast subject it is impossible to cover it all in one A Level. A Level Further Mathematics builds on some of the concepts met in A Level Mathematics and is able to extend these in to other areas.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Three exams at the end of the second year of study. These exams will focus on Core Mathematics and a variety of optional topics.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Any subject but especially Sciences, Economics, Business, Psychology and DT.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

For any degree with a numerate component, A Level Further Mathematics is highly valued as are the analytical and logical strengths of the A Level mathematician. Many 'double mathematicians' taking both Mathematics and Further Mathematics at A Level are all-rounders with evidence of a broad base of skills and competencies, and certainly, for a course with a high mathematical content at a competitive university, the evidence is that the double maths option is highly regarded and stands students in good stead.

BTEC International Level 3 Music

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE Grade 6 or above in Music

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Two pathways available for learners to focus on either music or music production
Students are given the opportunity to rehearse and refine performances on their chosen instrument or voice, developing technical control, expression and interpretative skills. They make use of a range of musical elements, techniques and resources to develop their own musical ideas and turn these into completed compositions. Students may compose their pieces using music technology software such as GarageBand, Logic Pro or Sibelius.

Through the study of music across a variety of styles and genres, including the analysis of set works, students develop their listening and appraising skills. They learn to engage critically and creatively with music; deepening their understanding of the place of music in different cultures and contexts.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Component 1: Performing as an Ensemble or Studio Recording

Component 2: Creating Musical Material - as a performer or a producer

Component 3: Using Musical Styles or Live Sound

Component 4: Planning a Career in the Industry

100% coursework

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Music is a very well-respected academic qualification, which can be undertaken alongside any other subject.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Students who wish to study music at A level will have the opportunity to broaden their musical experiences and interests, pursue their passion and develop a life-long enjoyment for music. The course builds a solid foundation for further study of music at undergraduate level and can lead to careers in performance, composition and the production of music. Students who study music at A level are also well placed to pursue degrees in law, media, publishing, teaching, management and many other courses. Whatever future their ambitions, the qualities and skills mastered throughout the course are well suited to a broad range of careers in the 21st century workplace.



Photography

EXAM BOARD

OCR

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Ideally, students should have achieved a Level 6 in GCSE Art or another Art and Design discipline. Students without this should be able to demonstrate an interest in an area of Art and Design through some examples of work.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Photography at A Level is essentially art-making using lens-based media and students are encouraged to develop curiosity for the medium and its creative potential. At the beginning of the course, students are introduced to a variety of digital and darkroom processes. Equally as important as the technical side of photography is the creative approach taken by students, the way they document their experimentation and how thoughtfully they analyse it. As the course progresses, students select an area of personal interest and work with independence to produce an extensive body of work.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

60% Personal Investigation (coursework project) undertaken over three terms. This includes an extensive portfolio of photoshoots, analysis and experimentation together with one or more resolved pieces and an essay of 3000 words.

40% Set Task. This is a response to a starting point set by the examination board. It includes preparatory work undertaken over one term and culminates in a final outcome produced in examination conditions over 15 hours, spread over three days.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

History, Psychology, Philosophy, Theology, Music, Maths, Geography, ICT and Art.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Career options followed by A Level Photography students include television and the film industry, journalism, graphic design, web design, gaming design, illustration, animation, theatre design/ costume production, fashion, advertising and typography.

Physical Education

EXAM BOARD

Edexcel

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE or iGCSE Grade 6 or higher in Physical Education and Biology

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Topic 1: Applied Anatomy & Physiology
Understanding anatomical/structural and physiological/functional roles performed in the identified systems of the body.

Topic 2: Exercise Physiology & Applied Movement Analysis
Understanding the importance of diet and nutrition pre-, during and post-physical activity.

Topic 3: Skill Acquisition
Students are required to show an understanding of the nature and development of skills in sport.

Topic 4: Sport Psychology
Understanding the role that sports psychology has in facilitating optimal sporting performance of an individual athlete, sports teams and individuals in the teams.

Topic 5: Sport & Society
Understanding the dynamic relationship between sport and society.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Component 1: Scientific Principles of Physical Education
Written examination: 40% of the qualification - 140 marks

Component 2: Psychological & Social Principles of Physical Education
Written examination: 30% of the qualification - 100 marks

Component 3: Practical Performance
Non-examined assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 15% of the qualification - 40 marks

Component 4: Performance Analysis & Performance Development Programme
Non-examined assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated 15% of the qualification - 40 marks

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Biology, Physics and Psychology

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Higher Education courses in Sports Science, Sports Studies, Physical Education and Teaching, Physiotherapy, Sports Psychology, Exercise Physiology, Elite performance in Sport . Career opportunities in the Armed Forces, the leisure industry, business management, medical fields and coaching.


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Physics

EXAM BOARD

OCR

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 7 in GCSE Physics or Level 7:7 in Science, Level 7 in GCSE Maths.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Module 1: Development of practical skills in Physics
12 practical investigations looking at all aspects of experimental physics.

Module 2: Foundations of Physics
Physical quantities and vector quantities in two dimensions.

Module 3: Forces & Motion
Velocity, acceleration, force, work, energy and power.

Module 4: Electrons, Waves & Photons
Charge, energy and current and quantum physics.

Module 5: Newtonian World & Astrophysics
Newton's view of the universe; thermal physics, circular motion and oscillations. We also look at gravitational fields, astrophysics and cosmology.

Module 6: Particles & Medical Physics
Capacitators, electric fields and electromagnetism (including magnetic fields and induction). Nuclear physics and particle physics.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Paper 1: Modelling Physics (37%) Modules 1, 2, 3 & 5

Paper 2: Exploring Physics (37%) Modules 1, 2, 4 & 6

Paper 3: Unified Physics (26%) All Modules

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

We strongly recommend studying A Level Maths alongside Physics.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Physics is regarded as a rigorous A Level that demonstrated intellectual skill and a logical, disciplined mind. Many degrees require or think highly of Physics, such as Engineering, Physics, Medicine & Dentistry, Maths, Chemistry, Biology and Natural Sciences.

Successful students of Physics going on to enjoy high acceptance rates into career areas such as accountancy, medical-imaging, finance and wealth management, software development and coding, intelligence analysis, materials development. Physics graduates are routinely targeted by recruitment films for large city banks.

Psychology

EXAM BOARD

Cambridge International

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

GCSE Level 6 in English Language

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Fundamentally, Psychology is about people and what makes us who we are. It appeals to all interested in the question of what may lie behind our thoughts, feelings and behaviour. The course offers students the opportunity to consider the origins, nature and development of key psychological debates. Students will examine human behaviour and experience from a variety of perspectives while developing the essential skills of analysis, independent thinking and research. Lessons typically follow the seminar model. Students are encouraged to become involved in discussion and to undertake their own investigations as they learn to think like a psychologist.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

The Cambridge Psychology syllabus is split into AS level - with two exams taken at the end of Y12 and A Level - with two further exams at the end of Y13. AS Level focuses on 12 research studies from four different areas of psychology – Social, Biological, Cognitive and Learning. AS looks at psychological studies involving animals and children, as well as studies into sleep, memory and aggression. In Y13, two specialist options are chosen from Clinical, Health, Organisational or Consumer psychology and the exams are focused on these. Both years also have Research Methods as an underlying topic.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Psychology goes well with any subject which is undoubtedly part of its appeal, but Biology, English and Economics have proven to be particularly popular accompaniments in recent student cohorts. Psychology compliments both science and humanities. It is a useful subject to study along with another subject specialism but it is extremely worthwhile as a standalone degree course as well.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

A diverse range of career options exist. Marketing, PR, education and clinical work in hospitals give a flavour of the huge variety of employment options.

Spanish

EXAM BOARD

AQA

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 6 at GCSE in Spanish

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The Spanish program offered in the Sixth Form is a vibrant and multifaceted subject that calls upon students to cultivate a diverse set of versatile and highly sought-after skills. The AQA curriculum is thoughtfully tailored to cater to the needs of young individuals navigating a rapidly globalising world. Our A Level course delves into various facets of society within Spanish-speaking nations, encompassing political, intellectual, and artistic culture.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Paper 1: Listening, Reading, Writing
The first paper requires the students to respond to texts and spoken passages.
This counts for 50% of the A Level and lasts two and a half hours.

Paper 2: Writing
The second paper sees students writing two essays on either two books or a book and a film.
It lasts two hours and is worth 20% of the final grade.

Paper 3: Speaking
The speaking element of the examination comprises of a presentation followed by a discussion based upon its subject matter. Prior to the examination the student will complete a research project that will allow them to investigate a subject matter of their choice.
This exam is worth 30% of the final grade

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Spanish may be taken with any combination of subjects at A Level.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

Graduates with language proficiency traditionally enjoy some of the highest employment rates across all academic fields. While a significant portion of our students choose to pursue dedicated language degrees, the contemporary job market increasingly values language skills across all disciplines. This heightened demand is not limited to language-centric roles; it extends to graduates in various fields, given the globalized nature of today's workforce.

Furthermore, our students are preparing for careers in multinational companies, whether within the United Kingdom or on the international stage. Consequently, most universities now offer an extensive array of programs that blend subjects such as Engineering, Business, Politics, Law, and Economics with the added advantage of Spanish language proficiency. These programs often include the opportunity for valuable international work placements, further enhancing students' practical skills and global outlook.

Theology, Philosophy and Ethics

EXAM BOARD

OCR

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Level 6 or above in both English and Religious Studies GCSE.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

Philosophy of Religion - students study pivotal ideas in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. They consider the nature of the human being, considering if the mind and body should be thought of as separate substances and examine the traditional arguments for God (teleological, cosmological and ontological). Pupils also scrutinise the validity of religious experience; the logical coherence of a God with maximal qualities and the utility of religious language. They judge the extent to which a benevolent God can be thought to co-exist alongside evil and suffering.

Religion & Ethics - Students learn the structure of normative ethical theories including utilitarianism, Kantian ethics and situation topics. They apply these to contemporary issues of importance (such as euthanasia) and consider debates surrounding the idea of conscience. Students debate sexual ethics and analyse how far ethical terms such as 'good' can be judged to be meaningful.

The Development of Christianity - In this component, learners have the opportunity to review Christian concepts of human nature in the context of the purpose of life, the self and immortality. Learners will explore the relationship between faith and reason; historical and theological understandings of the person of Jesus Christ and how changing roles of men and women have inspired feminist theology. Finally, this component explores the challenges posed by secularism, and a range of responses to this.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

Students are assessed with three two hour written papers, each one of which accounts for 33.3% of their total A Level grade.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

Psychology, Sociology, History, Mathematics and English.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

An A Level in religious studies prepares students well for further study in Philosophy, Anthropology, History, Theology and Linguistics. Career opportunities are equally varied. Students often progress into journalism, work with NGO's, politics and law.

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

EXAM BOARD

AQA

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

It is expected that pupils of all abilities can succeed in attaining an EPQ but the demanding nature of the qualification means that applications are carefully scrutinised. In particular, students are expected to have good organisational skills, an ability to meet deadlines and should have good written English skills.

WHAT DO WE STUDY?

The EPQ is a process driven qualification with approximately two thirds of the marks awarded for planning, use of resources, time management and self-evaluation. Delivery of the EPQ will involve 30 hours of taught skills sessions, as well as supervision and assessment of the student's progress. It will involve extended autonomous work by the student of approximately 90 hours.

The EPQ offers opportunities for students to:

- Develop and extend from an area of personal interest of activity outside the main programme of study.
- Improve their own learning and performance as critical, reflective and independent learners.
- Apply decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Extend their planning research, critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, evaluation and presentation skills.

ASSESSMENT STRUCTURE

There are three parts to the assessment of the EPQ:

- A project product. Generally a written report of 5000 words (or an artefact with accompanying report of at least 1000 words.
- A 15 minute presentation for a non-specialist audience with a further 10 minutes of live questions from the audience.
- A research diary with evidence of the development project.

Final submission of all assessment evidence will be in June of the L6 final year.

COMPLIMENTARY SUBJECTS

All subjects will benefit from the independent learning skills taught over the course of the EPQ but students who have to write extended essays as part of their A Level courses may find it particularly beneficial.

CAREER AND UNIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES

The EPQ can be useful for all university courses. Many universities will discuss projects at the interview and in some cases universities have offered students lower UCAS offers based on EPQ projects of A and A* standard. Strong skills in planning, time management, research and effective communication are highly regarded in most careers.

When choosing your A Level Subjects

- Do what you love
- Do what you are good at
- Do what you need for the future
- Do what you think you will find interesting and will keep you motivated for two years

If you need any further guidance please talk to our Head of Sixth Form Mr Comber, or your subject teachers.

