NEW SCHOOL ROME



THE NEW SCHOOL ROME

A LEVEL

INFORMATION PACK

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Introduction

The A Level (Advanced Level) pathway is a rigorous, selective and internationally recognised upper secondary education system for students aged 16–18. Developed in the United Kingdom over 75 years ago, A Level curricula and examinations have continued to adapt to the demands of modern societies and a global economy. They are widely regarded as the 'gold standard' of pre-university education, offering academic depth, subject specialisation and strong preparation for higher education worldwide.

At The New School Rome, A Levels represent more than a curriculum: they form a carefully structured educational journey designed to support students in developing intellectual independence, advanced study skills and a clear sense of purpose for their future. Within a supportive and international learning environment, students are encouraged to think critically, work autonomously and take increasing responsibility for their academic choices.

The New School Rome is the only school in Rome authorised to enter students for the Italian Language and Culture examination (Esame di Lingua e Cultura Italiana). When combined with additional A Level qualifications, this examination is officially recognised by the Italian Ministry of Education as equivalent to the Italian Maturità. Successful completion of this pathway enables students to apply for Italian public universities as an alternative to the Italian upper secondary school diploma, while maintaining full access to international higher education opportunities.

What are A Levels?

A Levels are subject-based British academic qualifications, usually taken over the final two years of secondary school (Years 12 and 13). Each A Level is a standalone qualification in a single subject and is assessed externally by British examination boards.

Unlike broader, generalist education systems, A Levels allow students to:

- **Focus on a small number of subjects (typically 3 or 4).**
- **Study these subjects in significant depth.**
- **Develop analytical, research and academic writing skills comparable to first-year university levels.**

Structure of the two-year programme:

- **Year 12**: Advanced introduction to each subject. In many subjects, students sit AS Level examinations, representing the first half of the full A Level.

- **Year 13**: Further development and consolidation of knowledge and skills, leading to final A Level examinations.

Final grades are awarded individually for each subject and range from: A* (highest grade); A, B, C, D; E (minimum pass grade).

Many A Level courses include learning outside the classroom. Here we have the English A Level students on a study trip to London where they participated in workshops and experienced 3 theatrical performances over a weekend



Why choose A Levels?

Choosing A Levels means committing to an academically demanding but highly rewarding educational pathway that prepares students exceptionally well for university study and beyond.

Key advantages of the A Level system:

- **Informed specialisation**: students focus on subjects they enjoy and excel in, leading to greater motivation, engagement and academic success.

- **Depth of learning**: subjects are explored in depth, encouraging critical thinking, evaluation and application of knowledge rather than surface learning.

- **University-style learning**: A Levels develop essential academic skills, including:
  - structured and analytical writing
  - interpretation of texts, data and sources
  - independent research
  - time management and self-organisation

- **International recognition**: A Levels are recognised and valued by leading universities in the UK, Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and across the whole of Europe.

- **Competitive advantage**: Universities often view A Level students as particularly well prepared, especially for competitive courses such as Medicine, Engineering, Economics and International Relations due to the depth of knowledge and skills that are developed through the courses.

Recognition of A Levels in Italy

A Levels are officially recognised by the Italian Ministry of Education when applying to universities in Italy

- A minimum of three A Level passes are required for entry.
- Universities may require specific subjects for each course.

Indicative grade conversion to the Italian 100 point scale are as follows.

- A*A*A* = 100/100.
- AAA ≈ 92/100.
- EEE = 60/100

When combined with the Esame di Lingua e Cultura Italiana only 2 A Levels are required from grade A* to E for entry to Italian universities.



Study expectations and workload

The A Level programme requires consistent commitment, maturity and strong organisational skills. It is designed for students who are ready to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

Weekly workload

For each A Level subject, students should expect:

- Approximately 5 hours of structured lessons with subject specialists.
- Approximately 5 hours per week of independent study, including: reading, wider research practice and consolidation tasks, and preparation for assessments and examinations.

Independent learning

- Students are encouraged to:
  - Plan and manage their study time effectively.
  - Meet deadlines independently.
  - Prepare for assessments without constant supervision.

- The school supports this approach through:
  - Dedicated study periods.
  - Designated Sixth Form study spaces.
  - Direct access to subject teachers for academic support.

This model closely mirrors university learning and supports a smooth transition into higher education.

University guidance and support



University guidance begins in Year 12 and continues throughout the Sixth Form into Year 13. Students receive structured and personalised support, including:

- Individual guidance on course and university selection.
- Use of the Unifrog platform for research and planning.
- Full support with UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) applications for UK universities.
- Guidance on personal statements and interview preparation.

An increasing number of our students are looking at Higher Educations around the world. When students indicate a wish to study in a new country our tutors conduct thorough research on the application process and support our students through every step of the journey.

A Level subject offer

The New School Rome offers a broad and carefully curated range of A Level subjects which provide pathways into every university course around the world.

Current A Level subjects

- Art
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
- Economics
- English Literature
- French
- Geography
- History
- Italian
- Mathematics
- Further Mathematics
- Physics
- Politics
- Spanish

The following pages provide an overview of the AS and A Level courses available at The New School Rome.

Art & Design (Fine Art)

A Level Fine Art course encourages an adventurous and inquisitive approach to art and design, fostering skills for creative expression. Students will gain insight into both historical and contemporary art, cultivating the ability to respond personally to a variety of ideas. Emphasis is placed on developing practical knowledge of art and design materials, techniques, and technology, while also honing skills in investigation, analysis, and experimentation.

The focus is on the process of idea and work development, utilizing a work journal akin to a sketchbook. Throughout the course, you will delve into art, craft, and design studies, building the capacity to investigate, analyse, and experiment.

The practical skills acquired will allow you to express ideas effectively through visual language, providing a foundation for various future endeavours. Additionally, the course promotes the development of communication, information technology, self-improvement, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.

Course Details

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: Linear

- **Assessment:**
  - **Unit 1:** 2 units of coursework (60%)
  - **Unit 2:** 6 Week portfolio & 10 hour exam (40%)

Biology

The A Level Biology course offers an in-depth study of living organisms, their structures, functions, and interactions. Students will explore key topics such as cell biology, genetics, ecology, evolution, and physiology. Practical laboratory work is an integral part of the course, enhancing students' understanding of biological processes.

In the first year, students study simple biochemistry, the heart and circulation, gas exchange, cell structure and membranes, simple genetics, reproduction, plant biology and biodiversity and practical laboratory skills. In the second year, students study photosynthesis, ecosystems, microbiology, disease, immunity, forensics, respiration, muscles, response and coordination, homoeostasis and gene technology and practical laboratory skills.

With a strong emphasis on scientific investigation and critical thinking, the course prepares students for further studies in medicine, environmental science, biotechnology, and other life science-related fields.

Course Details

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1 Molecules, Diet, Transport and Health (20%)
Unit 2 Cells, Development, Biodiversity and Conservation (20%)
Unit 3 Practical Skills in Biology I (10%)
Unit 4 Energy, Environment, Microbiology and Immunity (20%)
Unit 5 Respiration, Internal Environment, Coordination and Gene Technology (20%)
Unit 6 Practical Skills in Biology II (10%)

Chemistry

Have you ever wondered why materials feel the way they do? Why some things react and others don't? How medicines work? What's really inside an atom? How can I contribute to saving the planet? These questions - and many others - will be answered in a two year journey through inorganic, organic and physical chemistry. The course encompasses a rigorous and in-depth study of chemical principles while developing the practical and analytical skills essential for success in higher education.

At AS Level, students study the core principles of chemistry including atomic structure, bonding and moles, molecular shape, intermolecular forces, organic and green chemistry, alongside practical laboratory skills.

At A Level, the course progresses to advanced topics such as reaction rates, chemical equilibria, transition metals, organic nitrogen chemistry and further practical investigation.

Course Details

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Moles, bonding and atomic structure (20%)
Unit 2: Shape, forces, organic &green chemistry (20%)
Unit 3: Chemistry laboratory skills I (10%)
Unit 4: Rates, equilibria and further organic chemistry (20%)
Unit 5: Transition metals & organic nitrogen chemistry (20%)
Unit 6: Chemistry laboratory skills II (10%)

Computer Science

The A Level Computer Science course at the New School Rome equips students with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the rapidly evolving field of computing. Students will explore topics such as programming, data structures, algorithms, computer systems, networks, and cybersecurity. In addition, the course delves into software development, computational thinking, and problem-solving techniques.

With hands-on experience in coding languages such as Python and Java, students will develop the expertise needed to design and implement efficient software solutions. The course also emphasizes project-based learning, allowing students to create and refine their own software projects. A Level Computer Science not only prepares students for further study in STEM fields but also opens doors to careers in technology, engineering, and beyond, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and innovation.

Course details

Exam board: Cambridge
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Theory Fundamentals: Computer science theory
Unit 2: Fundamental Problem-solving and Programming Skills: Computational thinking, algorithm design, and programming.
Unit 3: Advanced Theory: Complex topics such as artificial intelligence (AI), virtual machines, Boolean algebra, and advanced networking protocols.
Unit 4: Practical: A hands-on coding exam. Students are required to solve problems and write code in a high-level programming language. There is no "theory" in this paper; it is entirely focused on the application of programming paradigms and file processing.

Economics

The A Level Economics course offers an in-depth study of how societies, businesses, and individuals allocate resources and make decisions. Students will explore key economic concepts, fostering an adventurous and inquisitive approach to understanding global systems. Tthe curriculum is designed to develop intellectual independence and critical thinking through the application of theory to real-world scenarios.

In the first year, students focus on the core foundations of the subject, gaining an advanced introduction to how markets function and the various measures used to track economic performance. In the second year, the curriculum shifts toward further development and consolidation of knowledge, exploring more complex topics such as business behaviour and the impact of the global economy. Practical investigation and the interpretation of data are integral parts of the course, enhancing students' understanding of financial and social structures.

With a strong emphasis on structured and analytical writing, the course prepares students for competitive university pathways in fields such as Economics, Finance, and International Relations. The analytical skills acquired allow students to express ideas effectively and respond personally to various global challenges, providing a versatile foundation for higher education and future professional endeavours.

Course details

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

- Unit 1: Markets in Action.
- Unit 2: Macroeconomic performance and policy.
- Unit 3: Business behaviour.
- Unit 4: Developments in the global economy.

English Literature

The International A Level in English Literature offers students the opportunity to engage with a wide array of influential texts, spanning from the canonical works of the past to contemporary literature. The course encourages an adventurous and inquisitive approach to reading, challenging students to look beyond the narrative to understand the historical, social, and cultural contexts that shape a writer's voice. The curriculum is designed to foster intellectual independence, requiring students to develop sophisticated arguments and a personal critical style. Students will develop their ability to communicate with precision and to think critically about the world through the lens of literature

In the first year, students focus on the core foundations of literary analysis through the study of poetry and drama. This includes a detailed exploration of a post-1900 drama text and a diverse range of modern poetry, alongside the study of a classic prose work. In the second year, the course expands into more complex thematic territories, including the study of Shakespeare and pre-1900 poetry. Students are encouraged to develop a comparative approach, exploring how different writers respond to similar themes across different eras and genres.

Course Details
Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Post-2000 Poetry and Drama
Unit 2: Pre and Post 1900 Drama
Unit 3: Comparative Prose and Unseen poetry
Unit 4: Shakespeare and Pre-1900 Poetry

French

This modular course is designed to inspire students, enabling them to use French Language independently and encouraging a deeper understanding of French language and culture. We use culturally sensitive and authentic texts throughout the qualification. It caters for a range of student interests, with support for those who see languages as a skill to enhance career or travel prospects. This qualification will equip students with transferable skills such as autonomy, resourcefulness, creativity, critical and analytical thinking, and linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility that will enable them to proceed to further study or to employment.

Students deepen their understanding of French-speaking societies while developing confidence and accuracy in written and spoken communication.

The course provides a strong foundation for further study in French, Modern Languages and related disciplines, and supports future careers in European studies, international relations, diplomacy, business and communication.

Course details

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Listening, reading and translation
Unit 2: Written response to works and translation
Unit 3: Speaking

Geography

The International A Level Geography course offers a fascinating and in-depth study of the world around us, bridging the social and physical sciences. Students will explore the dynamic relationship between people and their environment, investigating the causes and consequences of global challenges. Much like other pathways at The New School Rome, the curriculum is designed to develop intellectual independence and critical thinking through the application of geographical theory to contemporary real-world case studies.

In the first year, students focus on the core foundations of the subject through an advanced introduction to both physical and human environments. This includes the study of Global Challenges, focusing on world at risk and the impacts of climate change, as well as Geographical Investigations, where students develop their ability to handle data and conduct practical research. In the second year, the course expands into more complex global issues, including the study of diverse places, superpower geographies, and health, human rights, and intervention.

Course Details

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Global Challenges (World at Risk; Climate Change)
Unit 2: Geographical Investigations (Crowded Coasts; Urban Problems)
Unit 3: Contested Planet (Energy Security; Water Conflicts; Superpowers)
Unit 4: Researching Geography (Option-based research e.g., Tectonic Hazards or Food Security)

History

The History course encourages students to develop a strong interest in the past while acquiring a sophisticated understanding of historical processes, identities and diversity. Students learn to ask meaningful questions, analyse evidence critically and recognise that historical judgements are often provisional and open to interpretation.

Through the study of diverse and challenging topics, students develop highly transferable skills, including research, analysis, evaluation, empathy and effective communication. These skills are highly valued by universities and employers alike.

Have you ever wondered how the likes of Mussolini and Stalin got into power? How did America and China develop into the most powerful nations on earth? Why did the Holocaust happen? These are just a few of the questions A Level History asks. Students will cover a vast chronological and geographic range of history and the chance to study it from multiple lenses and angles: socially, culturally, politically and economically.

Students will be assessed through a combination of extended essays, the reading and interpreting of historiography and primary source analysis. History students develop a broad, well rounded and critical mindset.

Course details

Exam board: Cambridge
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Document Question
Unit 2: Outline Study
Unit 3: Interpretations question - The Holocaust
Unit 4: Depth study - Mussolini's Italy, Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany

Italian

The AS and A Level Italian course develops advanced language proficiency and deep cultural understanding through Italian current affairs, twentieth-century history and a broad range of literary texts. Students refine their written skills across four forms of short essays: literary analysis, argumentative writing, current affairs and creative writing. Assessment rewards accuracy, analytical depth and effective communication.

Students following this course who have a 'mother tongue' level of Italian may choose to sit the Italian Language and Culture examination (Lingua e Cultura Italiana), which consists of a written paper and an oral examination conducted in the presence of an examiner from the Italian Ministry of Education. This qualification is officially recognised by the Italian State and provides a route into Italian public universities for courses delivered in Italian.

The course remains relevant and engaging to non-native students who wish to develop language skills and gain knowledge and understanding of Italian culture, including topics such as lifestyle, travel, education, and technology.

Course details

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Listening, reading and translation
Unit 2: Written response to works and translation
Unit 3: Speaking

Mathematics

The A Level Mathematics course develops logical reasoning, problem-solving ability, and mathematical fluency, while encouraging confidence, independence, and enjoyment of the subject. Students explore how mathematical ideas connect across different areas of study and how mathematics can be applied to real-world situations.

In the first year, students focus on an advanced introduction to the subject, covering algebra and functions, coordinate geometry, sequences and series, trigonometry, exponentials and logarithms, calculus, and mechanics. In the second year, these topics are extended further alongside advanced mechanics, vectors, and numerical methods, leading to a consolidation of knowledge and complex application.

A Level Mathematics is highly valued by universities and employers and supports progression to a wide range of degree courses, including Mathematics, Engineering, Physics, Economics, Computer Science, Medicine, Finance, and the Social Sciences. For students aiming to apply to highly competitive universities, particularly for courses such as Engineering, Economics, Mathematics, or Physics.

Course Details

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Pure Mathematics 1
Unit 2: Pure Mathematics 2
Unit 3: Statistics 1
Unit 4: Pure Mathematics 3
Unit 5: Pure Mathematics 4
Unit 6: Mechanics 1

Further Mathematics

Further Mathematics is designed for students with a strong aptitude for the subject who wish to explore mathematical concepts in even greater depth. It is taken alongside A Level Mathematics and is a separate qualification that broadens and deepens the mathematical tools available to students. The course encourages an adventurous and inquisitive approach, challenging students to develop advanced problem-solving skills and rigorous logical thinking.

In the first year, students are introduced to new areas of pure mathematics such as complex numbers and matrix algebra, which provide the foundations for many areas of science and engineering. In the second year, the curriculum extends into more sophisticated topics, including hyperbolic functions, advanced differential equations, and further coordinate systems. These advanced pure units are complemented by applied options that allow students to specialise in mechanics, statistics, or decision mathematics, depending on their future academic interests.

Further Mathematics is highly regarded, and often required, by the world's most prestigious universities for degree courses in Mathematics, Physics, and Engineering.

Course Details
Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Further Pure Mathematics 1 (FP1)
Unit 2: Further Pure Mathematics 2 (FP2) or 3 (FP3)
Units 3–6: A flexible combination of four further units chosen from: Further Pure Mathematics 2 or 3 (if not already taken) / Mechanics 1, 2, or 3 / Satistics 1, 2, or 3 / Decision Mathematics 1

Physics

A Level Physics offers an exciting journey into the fundamental principles that govern the universe. Covering topics such as forces, energy, electricity, quantum mechanics, and astrophysics, the course blends theory with practical experiments to give a deep understanding of how the world works. Whether you're curious about the tiniest particles or the vastness of space, Physics will sharpen your problem-solving,analytical, and critical thinking skills. These are qualities highly valued by universities and employers.

The course is ideal for those passionate about exploring scientific concepts and who want to pursue careers in engineering, medicine, research, or technology. With engaging lessons and hands-on experiments, studying A Level Physics will not only broaden your knowledge but also spark your curiosity about the universe around you.

Course details

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Mechanics and Materials
Unit 2: Waves and Electricity
Unit 3: Practical Skills in Physics
Unit 4: Further Mechanics, Fields and Particles
Unit 5: Thermodynamics, Radiation, Oscillations and Cosmology
Unit 6: Practical Skills in Physics II

Politics

Politics is the study of power. Students will learn where power lies within the British and American Political systems and how to influence the decisions of governments. Students will investigate the condition and legitimacy of democracy, their own role and participation in decision making and the rights and responsibilities of citizens. Students will investigate the role of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government and explore a wide range of political ideologies including Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism and Anarchism.

Within the course there is considerable scope for students to personalise and direct their own learning, particularly in regards to the in depth study of political ideologies.

Students will develop skills of analysis and evaluation and effective communication through the discussion of competing political theories and an ability to both build and deconstruct a political argument.

No prior knowledge of politics is necessary to succeed on the course. However a healthy interest in current affairs and a passion to ask questions about why governments make the decisions they do, will help you to engage with the material enormously.

Course Details

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: Linear

Unit 1: UK Politics and Core Political Ideas
Unit 2: UK Government and Non-core Political Ideass
Unit 3: Government and Politics of the USA

Spanish

This modular course is designed to inspire students, enabling them to use Spanish Language independently and encouraging a deeper understanding of Spanish language and culture. We use culturally sensitive and authentic texts throughout the qualification. It caters for a range of student interests, with support for those who see languages as a skill to enhance career or travel prospects. This qualification will equip students with transferable skills such as autonomy, resourcefulness, creativity, critical and analytical thinking, and linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility that will enable them to proceed to further study or to employment.

Students deepen their understanding of French-speaking societies while developing confidence and accuracy in written and spoken communication.

The course provides a strong foundation for further study in Spanish, Modern Languages and related disciplines, and supports future careers in European studies, international relations, diplomacy, business and communication.

Course details

Exam board: Pearson Edexcel
A Level type: International

Unit 1: Listening, reading and translation
Unit 2: Written response to works and translation
Unit 3: Speaking

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an optional additional qualification, equivalent to an AS Level. It is highly valued by universities.

The EPQ is an independent research or production project that allows students to explore a topic of personal, academic or creative interest in depth.

P**rojects may take a variety of forms, including**

- A research essay.
- A practical artefact.
- A creative outcome.
- An interdisciplinary investigation.

Universities value the EPQ as it demonstrates

- Academic independence.
- Advanced research skills.
- Critical evaluation and reflection.
- Long-term project planning and execution

Many universities explicitly recognise the EPQ during the admissions process and may reduce entry requirements for strong EPQ candidates.

How is it assessed?

- Project planning and managment - 20%
- Research skills and use of resources – 20%
- Realisation of project plan - 40%
- Review and evaluation - 20%

Key Points at a Glance

- A Levels are a rigorous academic pathway that provides solid preparation for university studies across the world
- Students usually study four subjects in Year 12 and continue with three A Levels (required by universities) in Year 13.
- All combinations of A Levels are supported however we provide guidance on complimentary subjects. To study A Level Physics, students must also choose A level Mathematics
- Entry requirements for A Levels vary. Grade 6 at GCSE is the standard requirement for most A Level subject. However to study Mathematics a GCSE grade 7 is required and to study Further Mathematics a GCSE grade 8 or 9 is required.
- The EPQ project is a strong supplementary qualification for those seeking to apply to elite univsersities.
- Applications to UK universities account for 65% of our student applications.
- We support applications across Europe and North America every year and can support all global applications upon request.
- Unifrog helps students connect subject choices with university courses and future careers.
- Guidance and support begins in the high school and continue throughout the Sixth Form.

If you would like to know more about how to choose your subjects and university, please download our "Student Guidance" document from our website.

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See our community in action.

Contact us here to register for an **Open Day** or to arrange a **personalized tour**.

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https://www.newschoolrome.com/

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New School Rome