



SIXTH FORM COURSE BOOKLET 2026 - 2027

RESPECT ASPIRE ACHIEVE

HOW TO APPLY

You can apply by clicking on this link:

<https://swanlea.applicaa.com/019970ca-68e0-7ced-b515-add21161419f>

Please click to see our admissions policy: <https://swanlea.co.uk/admissions-policy>

Timeline:

- Deadline for all applications Friday 20th February 2026.
- Interviews take place between Monday 22nd February – Friday 9th March 2026.

Entry Requirements

A Level subjects: Students must have at least 5 GCSE passes at Grade 5 and above, including English and Maths. They must also meet the subject criteria as shown below in the A Level subjects we offer.

Vocational Level 3: Students must have at least 5 GCSE passes at Grade 4 and above, including English OR Maths. Students who have either English OR Maths at level 3, not below, have to retake that subject and pass it in Year 12.



BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN BUSINESS

Why study it?

This is an engaging and practical qualification for students who are interested in how businesses operate and succeed in a competitive world. Designed in collaboration with employers and higher-education providers, the course develops real-world business knowledge and applied skills that are highly valued in further study and employment. The qualification encourages you to think like a business professional and understand how organisations respond to change, competition and customer needs.

Entry requirements

- English Grade 4+ or Maths Grade 4+

What will I learn?

During the course, you will study four mandatory units that introduce you to key areas of business activity. You will explore how businesses are structured and how they operate within local, national and global environments. Marketing plays a central role in the qualification, where you will learn how businesses research markets, develop products and design promotional campaigns to attract customers. You will also develop an understanding of personal and business finance, learning how to manage budgets, interpret financial documents and make informed financial decisions.

Throughout the course, you will apply your learning to real business scenarios, developing analytical, communication and decision-making skills that are essential in the business world.

Getting prepared

To prepare for this course, it is helpful to have a good standard of English and Mathematics, as written communication, data interpretation and numerical skills are important throughout the qualification. You do not need to have studied Business before, but an interest in current affairs, organisations and how money is managed will be beneficial. Being organised, meeting deadlines and engaging independently with research tasks will help you succeed, as the course includes internally assessed units that require sustained effort and commitment. Keeping up to date with business news will also strengthen your understanding of real-world contexts.

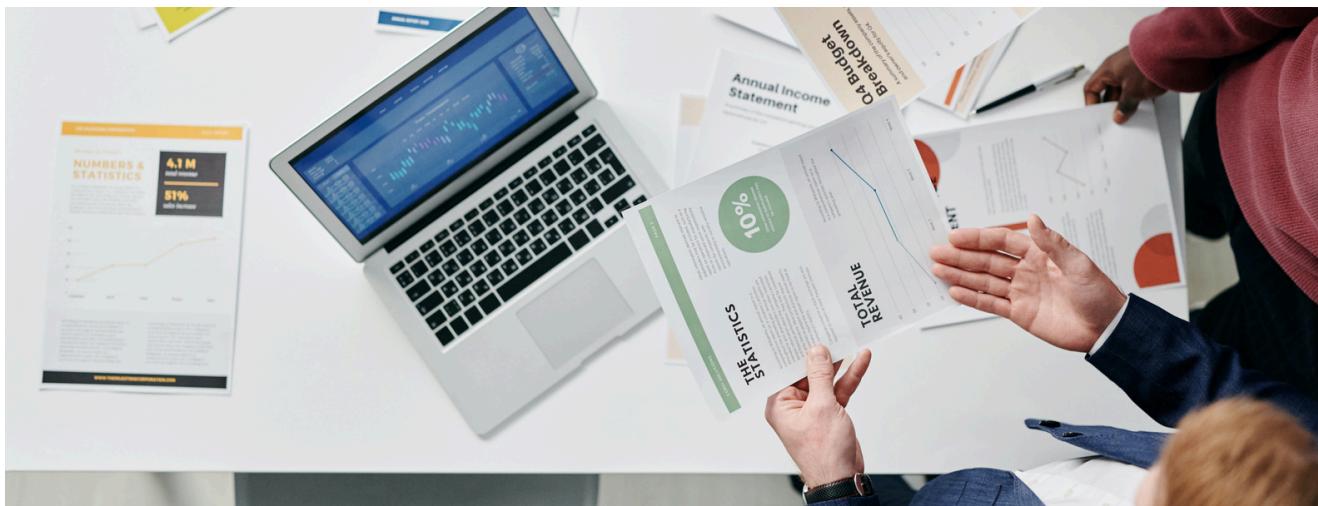
BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN BUSINESS

Future opportunities

The BTEC Extended Certificate in Business provides a strong foundation for a wide range of progression routes. It supports entry to university courses such as Business Management, Marketing, Finance, Accounting, Economics, Human Resource Management and related degrees, as it carries UCAS points equivalent to an A Level. The qualification also develops transferable skills that are valued by employers, making it useful preparation for apprenticeships and entry-level roles in areas such as administration, retail management, marketing, finance and customer service. The broad nature of the course means it keeps your options open, whether you plan to continue into higher education or move directly into the workplace.

Recommended reading

- The official Pearson BTEC Business specification and sample assessment materials, available on the Pearson/Edexcel website, to understand course content and assessment methods.
- BBC Bitesize Business resources, which provide clear explanations of key concepts such as marketing, finance and business structures.
- Tutor2u Business website, offering case studies, definitions and examples that support learning across the qualification.
- Business news sources such as the Financial Times (Student Edition) or The Guardian Business, to help apply theory to real-world business situations.



BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN COMPUTING

Why study it?

This is a forward-looking and engaging qualification for students who are passionate about technology and digital systems. It is designed in consultation with universities and industry experts to give you applied knowledge and practical skills that reflect real-world computing contexts. This course offers a blend of academic understanding and hands-on experience, making it an excellent choice whether you plan to go on to higher education or want to develop strong technical capabilities valued by employers. Studying this qualification alongside other Level 3 subjects allows you to tailor your post-16 programme to your interests and aspirations in the fast-moving digital sector.

Entry requirements

English Grade 4+ or Maths Grade 4+

What will I learn?

You will explore four mandatory units that build a solid foundation in computing concepts and practices. You'll start by developing your understanding of programming fundamentals and software development techniques, learning how to design and implement code to solve problems. You will then study computer network security and encryption, gaining insight into the nature of digital threats and how technologies and regulations can help protect information. The course also covers human-computer interaction, where you'll learn about user experience and interface design principles, and culminates in practical programming work that applies your theoretical knowledge to real projects. Alongside technical content, you will build transferable skills such as problem-solving, communication and critical thinking, all of which are highly valued in further study and future careers.

Getting prepared

To make the most of this course, you'll benefit from having a solid foundation in GCSE Mathematics and English. While there is no requirement for prior computing experience, familiarity with basic computing concepts, logical thinking and a willingness to engage with both theoretical and practical work will help you start confidently. During the course, you should be ready to work independently outside lessons, practise coding and problem-solving regularly, and approach assignments with curiosity and attention to detail. Making use of standard computing tools and having consistent access to a computer will support your learning and project work.

BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN COMPUTING

Future opportunities

Completing the BTEC Extended Certificate in Computing opens up a wide range of progression pathways. Because it is equivalent to an A Level, it supports applications to universities for degrees in computing-related subjects such as Computer Science, Software Engineering, Cyber Security, Artificial Intelligence, Network Engineering and other digital disciplines. Even beyond purely computing degrees, the skills you develop are relevant to courses that incorporate digital and analytical thinking. The qualification also provides UCAS points, helping you meet entry requirements for higher education, and can be a stepping stone towards technical apprenticeships or entry-level roles in the digital sector.

Recommended reading

- The official Pearson Computing specification and sample assessment materials, available on the Pearson qualifications website, to understand unit content and assessment expectations.
- Introductory programming guides such as Python Crash Course by Eric Matthes, which help build confidence in coding and problem-solving skills.
- Online learning platforms such as Codecademy or freeCodeCamp, which provide interactive practice in programming and computational thinking.
- Articles and resources from reputable technology websites such as BBC Bitesize Computing or the National Cyber Security Centre, to broaden understanding of current digital and security issues.



BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Why study it?

This is an excellent choice for students who are passionate about understanding how children grow, learn and thrive in their early years. Designed in consultation with educators and industry experts, this qualification blends academic understanding with practical insight into the early childhood sector, providing a strong foundation for those interested in careers working with children aged 0–8 years. This qualification not only equips you with essential knowledge about child development but also supports the development of transferable skills such as communication, reflection and professional practice, making it ideal for further study or employment in related fields.

Entry requirements

- English Grade 4+ or Maths Grade 4+ and Science Grade 4-4+

What will I learn?

You will begin by exploring children's development from birth up to eight years, learning about the major theories, developmental milestones and factors that influence growth. You will then study how to keep children safe, including health, safety, safeguarding responsibilities and understanding how to respond appropriately in challenging situations. Another core area focuses on the importance of play and learning, where you will examine different play types and how play activities support development at various stages. Finally, you will engage in research and reflective practice, learning how research influences policy and practice in early childhood settings and how to reflect on your own experiences within professional environments. Throughout the course you will develop both theoretical understanding and practical skills that are valued in higher education and the early years workforce.

Getting prepared

To make the most of this course, it is helpful to have a good foundation in GCSE English and Mathematics, as strong communication and numeracy skills will support your written work and assessments. While you do not need prior experience in childcare, an interest in working with children and a desire to learn about their development and wellbeing will help you engage with the subject. It is also strongly recommended that you take advantage of work placement opportunities offered through the course, as practical experience in real early years settings will enhance your understanding and help you apply classroom learning in a professional context. Being organised, reflective and proactive in seeking feedback will also prepare you to succeed in both internal assignments and external assessments.

BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Future opportunities

Completing the BTEC Extended Certificate in Early Childhood Development opens up a range of progression routes. Because it carries UCAS points equivalent to an A Level, this qualification supports applications to higher education courses such as Childhood and Early Years Studies, Primary Education, Child Psychology, Social Work and other related degrees. It also prepares you for vocational pathways such as teaching assistant roles, early years practitioner positions, support work in inclusive settings or further study such as apprenticeships in childcare and education. With the combination of theoretical knowledge and practical experience gained through placements, you will be well-placed to pursue careers or additional qualifications in the diverse and rewarding field of child development and care.

Recommended reading

- Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Early Childhood Development specification and sample assessment materials, available on the Pearson qualifications website to help you understand course content and assessment expectations.
- “Child Development” textbooks that cover theories of development, milestones and influences on learning, providing deeper insight into the core concepts of the course.
- Early years professional publications such as Early Years Educator magazines, which offer current practice insights, case studies and sector developments.
- Online resources from organisations such as the National Children’s Bureau or Early Education, which include research summaries and practical guidance for working with young children.
- Articles and guidance from the UK government’s Department for Education on early years frameworks and safeguarding standards, essential for understanding current professional requirements.



BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Why study it?

This is a highly relevant and applied qualification for students interested in careers or further study in the health and care sectors. Health and Social Care gives you a strong foundation of knowledge about how people grow, develop and are supported throughout their lives, while blending academic study with real-world contexts. This course is designed to help you understand key concepts in health, wellbeing and care practice, and to develop practical, analytical and interpersonal skills that are valued in both higher education and the workplace. Many learners choose it because it combines theory with applied learning through case studies, scenarios and sector-related assignments that reflect real professional practice.

Entry requirements

English Grade 4+ or Maths Grade 4+ and Science Grade 4-4+

What will I learn?

You will explore a range of topics that build your understanding of health, social care and human development. You will study Human Lifespan and Development, learning about physical, intellectual, emotional and social growth and the factors that influence health and wellbeing at different life stages. You will also cover Human Biology and Health, where you learn about the structure and function of the human body, normal physiological processes and how health conditions affect people's lives. Another core area focuses on the Principles of Health and Social Care Practice, examining values, legislation, ethical frameworks and communication skills that underpin quality care. In addition, you will study optional units that include Health, Policy and Wellbeing, Promoting Health Education or Safe Environments in Health and Social Care.

Getting prepared

To prepare for this course, you should have good GCSE English and Mathematics skills, as much of the learning is communicated through written work and data interpretation. While there is no requirement for prior specialist study in health or care, an interest in people, wellbeing and professional support roles will help you engage with the content. The course may include external assessments, internal assignments and opportunities to connect learning with real-world settings through case studies or placements, so being organised, independent and willing to apply theory to practice will help you succeed. Taking an active interest in current health and social care issues and seeking relevant work experience will also strengthen your understanding before you start.

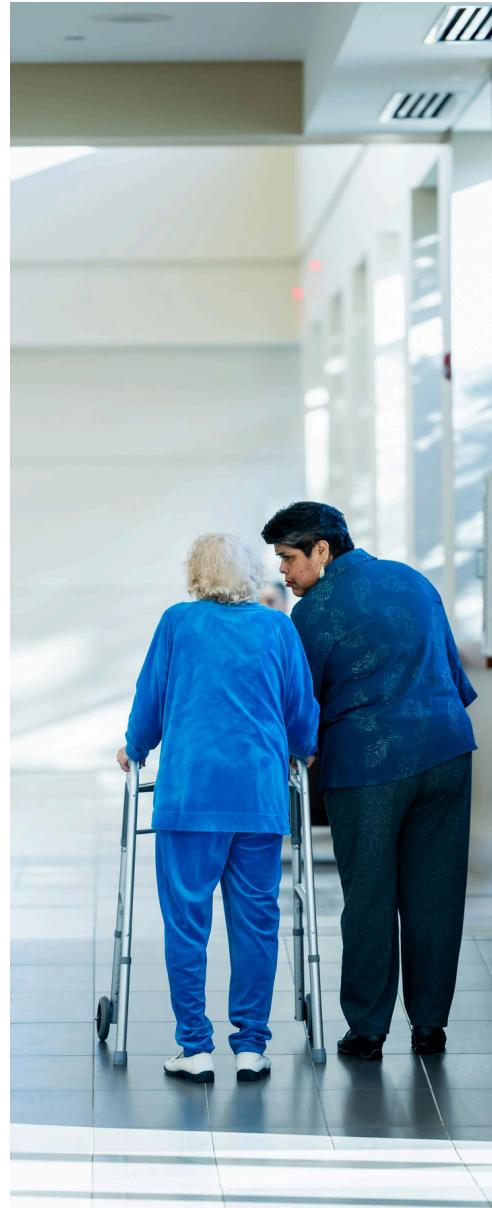
BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Future opportunities

Completing this Extended Certificate gives you a recognised Level 3 qualification with UCAS points equivalent to one A-Level, supporting progression to a wide range of higher-education courses such as Nursing, Social Work, Health Sciences, Public Health, Occupational Therapy and other care-related degrees. Many students use this qualification as a stepping stone to university study or higher-level apprenticeships, while others may pursue entry-level roles in sectors such as care support, community services or health administration. The combination of academic knowledge and practical insight prepares you for careers in a sector with strong demand for skilled, compassionate professionals.

Recommended reading

- Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Health and Social Care specification and sample assessment materials from the official Pearson qualifications website - essential for understanding unit content and assessment requirements.
- Level 3 Health and Social Care textbooks that cover human anatomy, development, care principles and wellbeing to support classroom learning and deepen key knowledge.
- NHS.uk and Public Health England online resources for up-to-date information about health conditions, services and public health guidance relevant to the sector.
- Tutor2u Health & Social Care resources, including revision guides and topic explanations, to help reinforce understanding and support assignment preparation.
- Publications from Skills for Care or the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), which provide insight into professional standards, current practice and workforce expectations in health and care services.



BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN ICT

Why study it?

This is a practical and vocationally focused qualification designed for students who want to understand how digital technologies are used in real world contexts. This course gives you a broad introduction to core IT concepts and the ways technology supports individuals and organisations in everyday life and business. It's ideal for learners who enjoy using and creating digital systems, want to develop both technical and transferable skills, and are considering further study or employment in an increasingly digital world. The course balances theory with applied learning so you build confidence with hardware, software, data and online systems while gaining experience with current tools and techniques.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 4+ in English Language or Maths

What will I learn?

You will study four key units that together build a solid foundation in information technology. You'll begin with Information Technology Systems, where you explore how IT systems are used in personal and professional settings and how they support effective working and communication. You will also study Creating Systems to Manage Information, which develops your ability to design, build and maintain systems that store and retrieve data efficiently. In Using Social Media in Business, you'll investigate how organisations use digital platforms to engage customers and support marketing objectives. Finally, the Website Development unit introduces you to the full process of planning, designing, building and reviewing a functional website. These units combine external assessments with coursework-style projects that allow you to demonstrate practical skills alongside theoretical understanding.

Getting prepared

To get the most out of this course, it's helpful to have a good standard of GCSE English and Mathematics as communication, analysis and numeracy skills are important throughout the qualification. While you don't need significant prior experience in computing or ICT, enthusiasm for technology and willingness to engage with software, digital systems and project work will help you feel confident from the start. Being organised, willing to work independently and able to manage coursework deadlines will support your progress, and exploring basic coding tools or website editors before starting can give you a head start. The course also builds transferable skills such as research, problem-solving and communication that will support your broader Level 3 studies.

BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN ICT

Future opportunities

Completing this Extended Certificate in ICT opens up a variety of progression routes. It carries UCAS points equivalent to an A-Level, which you can use to support applications to a wide range of higher-education courses, not only in IT-related degrees but also in business, digital media, computing and management programmes. The emphasis on practical IT skills and project work also prepares you well for apprenticeships or entry-level roles in areas such as digital support, user experience, web design, data management and e-commerce. Even if you choose a degree outside the immediate field of IT, the digital literacy, analytical thinking and problem-solving skills you develop are highly valued by employers across sectors.

Recommended reading

- Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Information Technology specification and sample assessment materials from the official Pearson qualifications website – to understand course structure and assessment.
- “Cambridge IT Skills” or general ICT textbooks that cover core topics such as systems, data, networking and web development.
- Online interactive platforms like Codecademy, W3Schools or Khan Academy for foundational practice with web languages (HTML/CSS) and basic scripts.
- Technology and digital trend websites such as BBC Technology or TechRadar to stay up-to-date with developments in technology and IT usage.
- Tutor2u IT and Computing resources, including revision notes and topic guides that help explain key ICT principles and support preparation for assessed units.



BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN MEDICAL SCIENCE

Why study it?

This is an applied and engaging qualification for students who want to understand the health, social care and wellbeing sectors while developing practical and academic skills relevant to real-world care environments. This course is designed to be taken alongside A Levels and other Level 3 qualifications, giving you a broad base of knowledge about health, human development and professional practice. It blends academic study with applied learning to help you prepare for future study or work in sectors that make a difference to people's lives.

Entry requirements

English Grade 4+ or Maths Grade 4+ and Science Grade 4-4+

What will I learn?

You will explore a core set of topics that build your understanding of how health and care services support individuals across the lifespan. You will study Human Lifespan and Development, looking at how people grow and change physically, socially and emotionally and how a wide range of factors influence health and wellbeing. You will also learn Human Biology and Health, which introduces key body systems, normal physiological functioning and the impact of common disorders on health. A third mandatory unit focuses on the Principles of Health and Social Care Practice, covering the values, legislation and ethical principles that underpin quality care and support. In addition, an optional unit that might include topics such as Promoting Health Education or Safe Environments in Health and Social Care, means the course is tailored to the interests of the cohort. Across all units you will build essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, empathy, teamwork and analysis.

Getting prepared

To thrive on this course, it is helpful to have a good level of GCSE English and Mathematics and Science. The content draws on basic biology and your communication skills. While no prior health and social care qualification is required, genuine interest in working with people, a willingness to learn both theory and practice, and a readiness to engage with case studies and reflective assignments will support your success. You should be prepared to manage your time well, complete coursework to deadlines and, where possible, take advantage of work experience opportunities to gain direct insight into health and care settings.

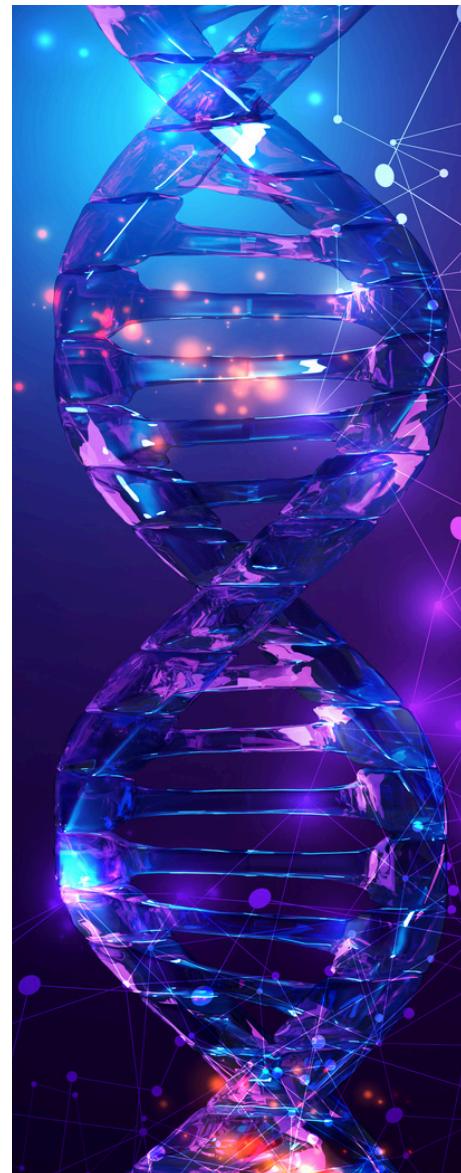
BTEC EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN MEDICAL SCIENCE

Future opportunities

Completing this extended certificate opens up a variety of progression routes. Because it carries UCAS points equivalent to an A Level, it can support applications to higher-education courses such as Nursing, Social Work, Health Sciences, Public Health, Occupational Therapy and other degrees that lead into care-related careers. The qualification also provides a strong foundation for apprenticeships and entry-level roles in health and social care, including support work, care coordination, therapy assistance and roles in community services. The combination of academic knowledge, practical insight and transferable skills makes you well-prepared for both further study and employment in a sector with wide-ranging opportunities.

Recommended reading

- Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Health and Social Care (AAQ) specification and sample assessment materials from the Pearson qualifications website – these outline unit content and assessment details.
- “Health and Social Care” student textbooks geared to Level 3 BTEC Nationals, which explain the key principles of care, human development and wellbeing in context.
- NHS.uk and Public Health England online resources, offering up-to-date information on health promotion, services and public-facing care information.
- Tutor2u Health and Social Care online resources for clear explanations of sector concepts, case studies and revision support.
- Articles and reports from reputable sector sources such as The King’s Fund, Skills for Care and the Social Care Institute for Excellence, which provide insight into current issues and best practice frameworks in care.



ART

Why study it?

A surge in demand for multimedia artists, animators, and illustrators—especially those who are computer and technology-savvy—is projected for the next few years, due to companies' demand for advertising in online and digital formats.

With this in mind, following a creative pathway could put you in a great position for many successful future careers.

Art and Design is a great companion course for practically any area of study. Whether you are majoring in the arts, a technical subject or science, encouraging your own creativity is always a bonus and can also help you generate great new ideas for your other subjects.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5 in Art & Design (or Portfolio submission with controlled assessment task verified by centre)
- GCSE grade 5 in English Language

What will I learn?

During your A Level course you'll find out about a whole range of different media, techniques and processes. From charcoal to computers, you just can't have enough ideas when it comes to expressing yourself. The course is big on hands-on experience too. It's the work you produce that counts.

Art and Design qualifications have a large workload. Students who take the subject must adapt as a matter of survival. While the heavy workload can be an initial shock, those who succeed emerge with the focus, organisational and time management skills that many other students dream of and hugely desired by Universities.

The emphasis in this course is learning by doing, so you'll be able to create imaginative personal work. For the first unit you will produce a self-directed portfolio of coursework selected by you and you will create ideas in response to a range of experiences, workshops and artists. For the second unit you will be given an externally-set assignment from AQA, which will require you to create ideas in response to one of the eight exciting starting points you will be given.

ART

Assessment

A Level Art:

- 15 hour final assessment.

Getting prepared

Visit some of the galleries and museums London has to offer for free over the Summer holidays. Experience Art and Design in all manner of different formats. Take photographs to document your holiday or even read some of the books on the recommended reading list.

Future opportunities

Those with a wide skill set have an advantage, in any career. Some people have a mathematical brain. Others have strengths in written language. Others excel in creative areas such as art and design. If you are lucky enough to excel in two or three of these areas, you are part of a much smaller subset of the population. Those who are multi-skilled are astronomically more useful, well-rounded, hireable and capable of excelling in a much wider range of professions. Unless you are aiming for a degree that requires particular specialism (university websites clearly outline recommended and required subjects), it can be beneficial to select a wide range of subjects.

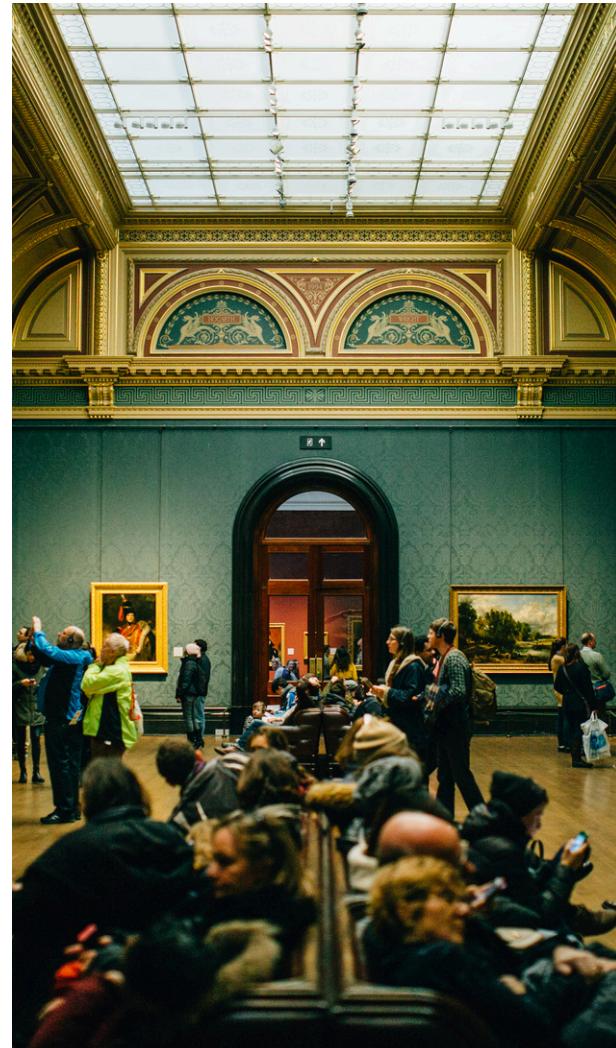
Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving skills, lateral thinking, complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing have an advantage. Many students go on to take higher education in art and design, then aim to join the world of advertising as graphic designers, architects, illustrators, typographers or become painters, sculptors, textile designers, fashion designers, photographers to name just a few.



ART

Recommended reading

- 'AQA Art & Design Student Handbook' published by Nelson Thornes
- 'The Andy Warhol Diaries' edited by Pat Hackett pub by Warner Books
- 'The American Leonardo: A Tale of 20th Century Obsession, Art and Money' by John Brewer
- 'The Shock of the New' by Robert Hughes
- Modern Painters -brilliant monthly magazine devoted to painting, only interviews with painters and exhibition reviews.
- Crafts Magazine- published every two months by the Crafts Council. For all aspects of the Applied Arts including interviews with Craftspeople, exhibition reviews, competitions to enter, job vacancies etc
- www.craftscouncil.org.uk
- The Photographers' Magazine
- Printmaking Today - published by Cello Press, four issues per year www.cello.press.
- All aspects of Printmaking covered with interviews, exhibition reviews, competitions etc



Galleries, Exhibition Spaces, Permanent Exhibitions

Larger galleries and Museum spaces, all with permanent exhibitions:

- The Tate Modern - Modern and Contemporary art
- The Tate Britain - British Art
- The Victoria and Albert Museum - Applied arts and design from around the world
- The National Portrait Gallery

Contemporary art galleries with changing exhibitions:

- The White Cube
- The Saatchi Gallery
- The Whitechapel Art Gallery
- The Crafts Council Gallery
- Cork Street Galleries- commercial art galleries on London's famous Cork Street

BIOLOGY

Why study it?

Why does your sister look like you? How do medicines work? What is DNA? Do clones exist? Who was Darwin? These are all questions that can be answered by studying Biology A level.

A Level Biology will give you an exciting insight into the contemporary world of biology. It covers the key concepts of biology and practical skills are integrated throughout the course. This combination of academic challenge and practical focus makes the prospect of studying A Level Biology A highly appealing. You will learn about the core concepts of biology and about the impact of biological research and how it links to everyday life. You will learn to apply your knowledge, investigate and solve problems in a range of contexts.

Entry requirements

- GCSE 7-7+ in Combined Science or 6+ in Biology
- GCSE grade 5 in Maths.

What will I learn?

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of practical skills in biology• Ecosystems• Biological molecules• Cell structure• Enzymes• Nucleotides and nucleic acids• Cell division, cell diversity and cellular• Biological membranes organisation• Exchange surfaces• Transport in animals• Transport in plants• Communicable diseases, disease• Biodiversity prevention and the immune system• Communication and homeostasis• Classification and evolution• Neuronal communication• Excretion as an example of homeostatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plant and animal responses control• Respiration• Hormonal communication• Patterns of inheritance• Photosynthesis• Cloning and biotechnology• Cellular control• Populations and sustainability• Manipulating genomes
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Emphasis throughout the course is on increasing knowledge, developing competence and confidence in practical skills and developing problem solving. You will learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how science contributes to the success of the economy and society.

BIOLOGY

Assessment

We follow the OCR syllabus A, emphasis throughout the course is on increasing knowledge, developing competence and confidence in practical skills and developing problem solving. You will learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how science contributes to the success of the economy and society.

Getting prepared

Read at least two books from the reading list below to widen your understanding for the context of the course.

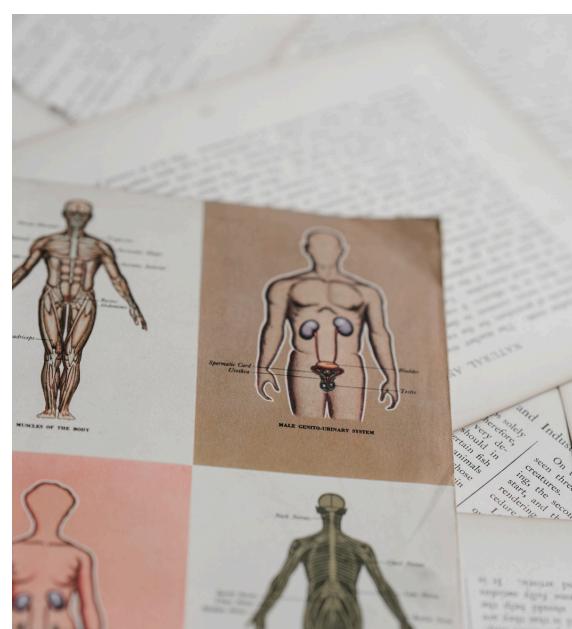
Future opportunities

A Level Biology is an excellent base for a university degree in healthcare, such as medicine, veterinary or dentistry, as well as biological sciences, biochemistry, molecular biology or forensic science. Biology can also complement sports science, psychology, sociology and many more.

A Level Biology can open up a range of career opportunities including: biological research, medical, environmental, forensics, sports and science communication. The transferable skills you will learn, such as problem solving, are also useful for many other areas, such as law.

Recommended reading

- Neanderthal Man: In Search of Lost Genomes by Svante Pääbo
- The Invisible History of the Human Race: How DNA and History Shape Our Identities and Our Futures by Christine Kenneally
- Arrival of the Fittest: Solving Evolution's Greatest Puzzle
- The Walking Whales: From Land to Water in Eight Million Years by J. G. M. "Hans" Thewissen
- Almost Like a Whale: The Origin of Species Updated by Steve Jones
- Genome by Matt Ridley



CHEMISTRY

Why study it?

Why does ice float? Why do people put salt on icy roads? Why do onions make you cry? How does aspirin stop pain in your body? Can you turn lead into gold? These are all questions you can answer by studying Chemistry A Level.

Chemistry A Level will also give you an exciting insight into the contemporary world of chemistry. It covers the key concepts of chemistry and practical skills are integrated throughout the course. This combination of academic challenge and practical focus makes studying A Level Chemistry highly valued as a subject. You will learn about chemistry in a range of different contexts, the impact it has on industry and many aspects of everyday life. You will learn to investigate and solve problems in a range of contexts.

Entry requirements

- GCSE 7-7+ in combined science or 6 in Chemistry
- GCSE grade 5+ in Maths.

What will I learn?

- Atoms, compounds, molecules and Enthalpy, entropy and free energy equations
- Redox and electrode potentials
- Amount of substance
- Transition elements
- Acid-base and redox reactions
- Organic chemistry
- Electrons, bonding and structure
- Polymers
- The periodic table and periodicity
- Organic synthesis
- Group 2 and the halogens
- Analytical techniques (IR and MS)
- Reaction rates and equilibrium
- Chromatography and spectroscopy (NMR) pH and buffers



CHEMISTRY

What will I learn?

Emphasis throughout the course is on developing knowledge, competence and confidence in practical skills and problem solving. You will learn how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society.

Assessment

We follow the OCR syllabus A, there is a total of 6 hours of examinations (2 x 2 hours 15 minutes and 1 x 1 hour 30 minutes) taken at the end of the course. The exams consist of a wide range of question types including multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions. There is also opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of both theory and practical skills through the examinations.

Getting prepared

Read at least two books from the reading list below to widen your understanding for the context of the course.

Future opportunities

A Level Chemistry is an excellent base for a university degree in healthcare such as medicine, pharmacy and dentistry as well as the biological sciences, physics, mathematics, pharmacology and analytical chemistry. Chemistry is also taken by many law applicants as it demonstrates and ability to cope with difficult concepts. Chemistry can also complement a number of arts subjects.

Chemistry opens doors to a range of career opportunities including chemical, manufacturing and pharmaceutical industries and in areas such as forensics, environmental protection and healthcare. The problem solving skills are useful for many other areas, too, such as finance.

Recommended reading

- Stuff Matters: Exploring the Marvelous Materials That Shape Our Man-Made World by Mark Miodownik
- Seven Elements that Changed the World: An Adventure of Ingenuity and Discovery by John Browne
- H2O: A Bibliography of Water by Philip Ball
- The Periodic Table by Primo Levi
- The Molecule that made the World by Nick Lane
- The Disappearing Spoon by Sam Kean

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Why study it?

OCR A Level Classical Civilisation is an academically rich and engaging subject that explores the literature, culture, history and beliefs of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. You do not need to study Latin or Greek to succeed, as all texts are studied in English, making the course accessible to students from a wide range of backgrounds. This subject encourages you to think critically about ancient societies and their influence on the modern world, developing strong analytical, essay-writing and evaluative skills. It is an excellent choice for students who enjoy literature, history, philosophy and cultural studies, and it combines well with both arts and humanities subjects.

Entry requirements

- Grade 5+ in History and Grade 5+ in English

What will I learn?

Throughout the course, you will study a range of classical topics set by OCR that focus on both literature and visual or cultural material. Typical areas of study include epic literature such as *The Odyssey* or *The Aeneid*, Greek tragedy, classical mythology, religion, art, architecture and the daily lives of people in the ancient world. You will analyse ancient texts, images and artefacts, learning how to interpret evidence and evaluate different scholarly viewpoints. The course develops your ability to construct well-argued essays, compare ideas across cultures and time periods, and understand how ancient beliefs and values shaped Greek and Roman societies. All assessment is by written examination at the end of the course.

Assessment

OCR A Level Classical Civilisation is assessed entirely through written examinations at the end of the course, with no coursework.

You will sit three exam papers, covering ancient literature, visual and material culture, and a thematic study of the classical world. Each exam requires you to write extended responses and essays, testing your ability to demonstrate knowledge, analyse sources and construct clear, well-supported arguments.

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Getting prepared

To prepare for OCR Classical Civilisation, it is helpful to have a strong GCSE English background, as the course involves extended reading and essay writing. A prior qualification in History, English or Religious Studies can be useful, but it is not essential. What matters most is curiosity about the ancient world and a willingness to read widely and think critically about texts and sources. Students should be prepared to engage with challenging ideas, practise analytical writing regularly and participate actively in discussion. Reading mythological stories or watching documentaries about ancient Greece and Rome before the course begins can help build confidence and interest.

Future opportunities

Classical Civilisation is highly regarded by universities because it develops advanced literacy, critical thinking and analytical skills. It supports progression to a wide range of degree subjects including History, English, Classics, Archaeology, Law, Philosophy, Politics, Journalism and Education. The skills developed through the course – such as constructing arguments, evaluating evidence and writing clearly – are also valued by employers in careers such as law, publishing, media, public service, heritage, teaching and communications. Studying Classical Civilisation keeps your options open and demonstrates academic rigour and intellectual curiosity.

Recommended reading

- OCR A Level Classical Civilisation Specification and sample assessment materials, available on the OCR website, to understand course content and exam expectations.
- *The Odyssey* by Homer (translated editions such as E. V. Rieu or Emily Wilson), which provides essential background for epic literature units.
- *The Aeneid* by Virgil (translated editions such as David West), commonly studied in Roman epic topics.
- Edith Hamilton's *Mythology*, a clear and accessible introduction to Greek and Roman myths and their cultural significance.
- Online resources such as BBC Bitesize Classical Civilisation and The British Museum website, which offer background articles, videos and images to support contextual understanding.



COMPUTER SCIENCE

Why study it?

- Do you use your computer at home for more than just surfing the net?
- Do you have the patience to work at a problem until you can solve it?
- Do you enjoy Maths?
- Are you curious about how computers really work

Almost every aspect of modern life is affected by computers from running our personal and social lives using the internet, mobile devices and home appliances, to complex programs that help businesses and public services run smoothly. Vast networked systems of computers control global communication, trade, finance and transportation, and much more besides.

Studying computer science will open a window for you to discover how computers work and enable you to design and determine what they do. You will need a good grasp of maths and be willing to learn the language of code.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 6 in Maths and English Language

What will I learn?

Computer systems

The Central Processing Unit (CPU) is essentially the nerve centre of a computer through which all information flows. You will examine how this works and how processors differ; for example desk top computers and mobile devices. You will find out how to identify different data types, work out how programs integrate through data exchange and develop your own software using sophisticated coding languages.

Algorithms and programming

In this unit you will become the doctor of problem solving by learning to recognise, analyse and break down 'problems' in order to create solutions that the computer will be able to understand. Here you will discover how invaluable algorithms are in helping you describe and resolve complex problems. Algorithms are step-by-step instructions that lead to a final outcome and they exist not only in a scientific context but all around us. Following a cake recipe is just a basic real life example of an algorithm. Algorithms are also responsible for an enormous range of complex activities from code breaking to financial market management, predicting behaviour, crime prevention and social networking.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

What will I learn?

Programming project component

Undoubtedly, the most enjoyable aspect of the course, coding or programming. Wow the world with an amazingly innovative program that will change life as we know it using all the problem solving techniques, skills and programming language fluency you have perfected over the course. Now is your chance to show how you can analyse problems, design and develop working solutions in the real world.

Assessment

Computer systems

A Level written exam: 2hr 30mins, 40% of overall result

Algorithms and programming

A Level written exam: 2hr 30mins, 40% of overall result.

Programming project component

A Level non-exam assessment: 70 marks. 20% of overall result.

Getting prepared

The best thing you could do to prepare yourself well for this subject is to focus on your GCSE Maths. This will develop your problem-solving skills which will be invaluable when you start this course. In addition, you could start exploring HTML programming and we recommend using www.w3schools.com as your main resource.

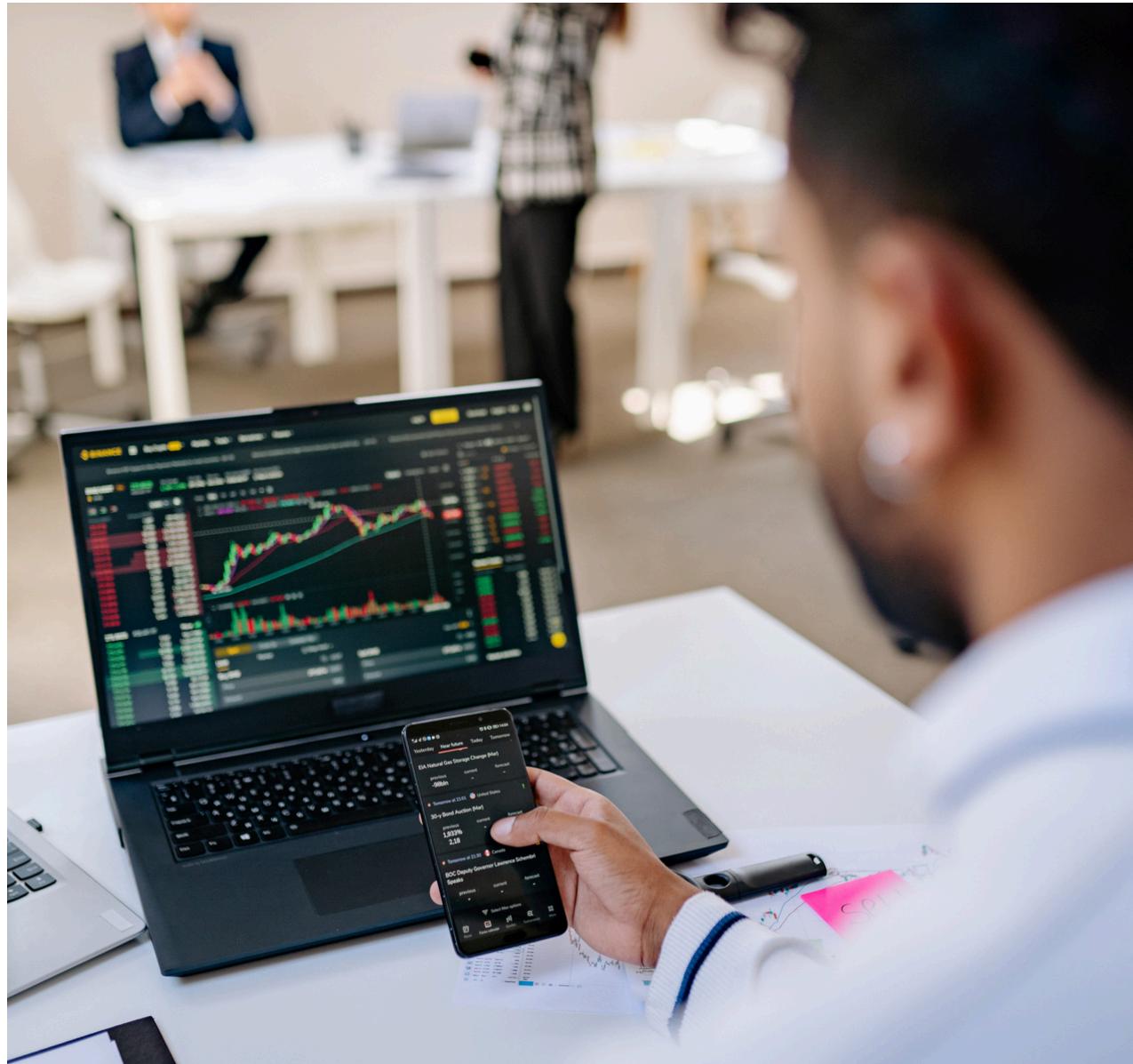
Future Opportunities

Our students will be able to confidently apply for ICT and computing courses at university. Following success at university many of them will be able to pursue future careers in areas such as ICT, Business Courses or apprenticeships; Multimedia Design or Business and IT management; Occupations involving IT such as Technical Support, Software development, IT Project Management, Network Manager, Multimedia Designers.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Recomended Reading?

- OCR AS and A Level Computer Science, PM Heathcote and RSU Heathcote (PG)
- ONLINE: ISBN: 978-1-910523-05-6)
- OCR Exam board - <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-computer-science-h046-h446-from-2015/>
- W3School - <http://www.w3schools.com/>



ECONOMICS

Why study it?

As consumers we want lots of goods and services, but there aren't enough resources for everyone to have everything they want. So what goods should we make, how should we make them and to whom should we give them? This is the central economic problem that economists want to solve. In Economics you have to form opinions and think about how to address some of the fundamental changes our societies face.

The department has a long history of delivering outstanding results. All of our students go on to business degrees and significant proportion have moved on to Russell group universities.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5 in English Language and Maths

What will I learn?

Microeconomics is the study of individuals and firms. You will learn how they make decisions about what to make, what to buy, and at what price. Why does it make sense for train companies to have really high peak time prices? Who should pay for the damage that pollution causes? Should cleaners earn the same amount as doctors, and if not, why not?

In macroeconomics you will look at the bigger picture. You will study what is happening behind the news headlines in the economy as a whole. You will probably have heard words like recession, austerity and inflation, but what do these words mean and why are they important? Should governments aim to make their countries richer, or aim to make their people happier? How do we tackle deep rooted poverty and the problem of unemployment?

Throughout the course you will notice links with other subjects: with science through data analysis, and with Maths when we consider graphs and basic equations. Economics can be very mathematical, but an ability to explain and analyse in excellent written English is near essential. A mathematical way of thinking helps when we use and interpret graphs and it is therefore important that you feel comfortable with that.

There are philosophical and ethical elements to the course: when you learn about economic growth you debate whether happiness is more important than wealth. You will often develop and draw on wider knowledge; for example when considering changes in food prices you will need to think about climate change, population growth and technical advances to understand the whole story.

ECONOMICS

Assessment

Economics is taught linearly and you would sit two internal exams in the summer at the end of year 12. Paper 1 is the Introduction to markets and market failure. Paper 2 is The UK economy – performance and policies. To attain the full A level, you would then sit three exams in the summer at the end of year 13. Paper 1 is Markets and business behaviour. Paper 2 is The national and global economy. Paper 3 is Microeconomics and macroeconomics. There are a mixture of shorter questions, data response and essay questions. There is no coursework in economics. The A level grade would be attained purely on the 3 papers you will sit in year 13.

Getting prepared

Watching the news and current affairs programmes is a great place to start. Read broadsheet newspapers and magazines like The Economist. Practice coming up with and explaining your own opinion. This is a fundamental skill in Economics.

Future opportunities

Our students will be able to confidently apply for Economics courses at university. Following success at university many of them will be able to pursue future careers in areas such as accountancy, banking and business management, investment banking, journalism, government agencies, teaching, overseas employment and more.

Recommended Reading

- 'The Undercover Economist' by Tim Hartford
- 'The Logic of Life' by Tim Hartford
- 'Superfreakonomics' by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner
- 'Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness' by Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein
- 'Predictably Irrational' by Dan Ariely



ENGLISH LITERATURE

Why study it?

English Literature A-level is highly regarded by all the top universities and a good grade at A-level in English Literature is seen as an accurate indicator of a student's academic ability. Its wide appeal and its status as a top A-level subject makes English Literature an ideal choice for any students who wish to study at one of the top Russell Group universities.

When studying English Literature at A-level, students will learn about a range of works through the ages from Greek tragedy to 21st century novels. The A-level offers opportunities to discuss and explore important political, philosophical and historical ideas.

Students will learn how to write academic essays and will continue to develop these skills during the course. Literature students are also required to write two coursework essays. These essays require the student to write and research their essays independently. Great skills for any future studies.

Entry requirements?

- GCSE grade 6 in English Language and Literature

What will I learn?

English Literature students at Swanlea will be studying texts within two broad genres: 'Elements of Tragedy' and 'Elements of Social and Protest writing'. In the first component, 'Elements of Tragedy', students will explore the nature of the tragic hero or heroine; their flaws; how they suffer and cause suffering; the role of fate; ideas of good and evil. In the second component, 'Elements of Social Political and Protest writing', students will look at issues of power and powerlessness; rebellion; gender and class struggle.

The coursework component of the A-level is designed to develop students' independence. Students are required to write two essays: one on poetry, and another on a novel. Students explore a selection of poems through a feminist lens and choose their novel to view through a post colonial lens.

This component allows students to work independently and sharpens and improves their academic writing skills.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Assessment

We follow the AQA B syllabus which is assessed through 80% examinations and 20% coursework.

Getting prepared

If you are thinking of taking English Literature, read some of the books on the recommended reading list. It is important that you enjoy reading books and read widely outside lessons.

Recommended reading

- 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist' by Mohsin Hamid
- 'The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time' by Mark Haddon
- 'The Bell Jar' by Sylvia Plath
- 'Jane Eyre' by Charlotte Bronte
- 'Heart of Darkness' by Joseph Conrad
- '1984' by George Orwell
- 'The Wasp Factory' by Iain Banks
- 'The Kite Runner' by Khaled Hosseini



GEOGRAPHY

Why study it?

Firstly Geography is a facilitating subject. This means it is accepted by all universities including Russell Group institutions such as Oxford, Cambridge and UCL. They value it as an academic qualification which compliments Maths, English and the Sciences.

But, Geography is more important than that:

“So many of the world’s current issues – at a global scale and locally - boil down to Geography, and need the geographers of the future to help us understand them. Global warming as it affects countries and regions, food and energy security, the degradation of land and soils from over-use and misuse, the spread of disease, the causes and consequences of migration, and the impacts of economic change on places and communities.”

Michael Palin CBE- Writer, Presenter and Explorer

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5 in Geography
- GCSE grade 5 in English Language and Maths

What will I learn?

A Level Geography will enable you to engage critically with real world issues and places, apply your own geographical knowledge, understanding and skills to make sense of the world around you, and to help prepare you to succeed in your chosen pathway.

The specification Swanlea delivers offers an issues-based approach to studying Geography, enabling you to explore and evaluate contemporary geographical questions and issues such as the consequences of globalisation, responses to tectonic hazards, human systems and geopolitics and sustainability.

The specification content gives you the opportunity to develop an in-depth understanding of physical and human Geography, the complexity of people and environment questions and issues, and to become a critical, reflective and independent learner. The skills will prepare you well for the rigour of degrees in any of the sciences, humanities or social sciences (sociology, psychology, government and politics).

GEOGRAPHY

Assessment

This specification has four equally weighted content components (25%), offering both compulsory and optional content, assessed through three external exams and one piece of internally assessed fieldwork.

- Paper 1- Physical Geography: 2 hours & 15mins- 30%
- Paper 2- Human Geography: 2 hours & 15mins- 30%
- Paper 3- Synoptic: 2 hours & 15mins- 20%
- Fieldwork- Independent Investigation- 20%

Getting prepared

Use the summer holidays to look back over your GCSE work as much of the A Level content relates to this. Take an interest in the news as Geography is in the news every day. Read a news website, BBC news for example. Go to nationalgeographic.com and read their online articles.

Future opportunities

GEOGRAPHY IS THE FUTURE.

The study of Geography stimulates an interest in and a sense of wonder about places. It helps you make sense of a complex and dynamically changing world. It explains where places are, how places and landscapes are formed, how people and their environment interact, and how a diverse range of economies, societies and environments are interconnected.

Geographical enquiry encourages questioning, investigation and critical thinking about issues affecting the world and people's lives, now and in the future.

Fieldwork is an essential element of this. You will learn to think spatially and use maps, visual images and new technologies, including geographical information systems (GIS), to obtain, present and analyse information. Geography inspires you to become global citizens by exploring your own place in the world, your values and responsibilities to other people, to the environment and to the sustainability of the planet.

GEOGRAPHY

Recommended reading

- 'How many People can the Earth support?' by Joel Cohen
- 'The White Tiger' by Aravind Adiga
- 'Climate Wars' by Gwynne Dyer
- 'No Logo' by Naomi Klein
- 'Prisoners of Geography' by Tim Marshall
- 'Worth Fighting For' by Tim Marshall



GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Why study it?

As a UK and world citizen, politics effects every aspect of our lives. From economic and political systems, political ideologies, international relations to democracy and parliament. Politics is a relevant program of study that equips you with strong written communication as well as the ability to build arguments and debate. You will learn about the UK political system and the political theories that underpin the world we live in. Finally, you will also examine and evaluate the key ideologies that underpin our political system - liberalism, socialism, conservatism and feminism.

In year 13 we examine the USA's political system with a particular focus on the US president, congress, voting behaviour and systems as well as their political parties, judiciary and constitution. We also evaluate the degree of democracy in the USA and there is a strongly comparative element to the course between the UK and the USA. We strongly encourage critical thinking, debate and discussions throughout the course. Applicants should note that this course is heavily essay based and therefore requires strong written skills and the motivation to read challenging text and political theory.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5 in English Language
- Preferably a GCSE in a Humanities subject

What will I learn?

In Year 12 you will learn about politics in the UK. Democracy and the people, how much freedom we have as individuals and the assertion of our human rights. You will evaluate the powers of the prime minister and parliament as well as the election process and constitution in the UK. You will explore the role of different pressure groups and examine key political parties and their policies. In addition to this you will investigate the role of the judiciary looking at key legal case studies. In Year 13 we examine different ideologies such as socialism, liberalism, multi-culturalism and anarchism. We critique these theories by comparing and contrasting different beliefs and views and how they apply in world politics. We encourage critical thinking, debate and discussions throughout the course. This is a subject that requires strong written skills.

Assessment

We study the Edexcel course which is 100% exam. You will sit 3 A level exams in Year 13.

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

Getting prepared

Watching the news and current affairs programmes is a great place to start. Read broadsheet newspapers and magazines like The Economist. Practise forming, explaining and justifying your own political opinion. This is a fundamental skill in Government and Politics.

Future opportunities

Many of our students have gone on to further study in courses such as Law and International Relations. Government and Politics also combines well with other subjects such as History and Economics at university level. It can lead to a diverse range of careers such as journalism, law, public relations, media, advertising and politics itself.

Recommended reading

- 'Contemporary British Politics' by B Coxall,
- L Robins and R Leach
- 'Government and Politics in Britain: an Introduction' by J Kingdom
- 'Politics Review', published by Philip Allan Updates four times in each annual volume (September, November, January and April) is the most widely used journal for students of AS and A-level Government and Politics. It contains a wealth of relevant articles, factual summaries and examination guidance and is available as a competitively priced student subscription.
- Many useful articles can also be found in more mainstream publications such as 'The Economist'.



HISTORY

Why study it?

Major events and key individuals continue to shape the world we live in. A world war begins, nuclear weapons are used for the first time, African Americans rise up and begin to fight for their rights in America, and women demand the vote across the world. Today we are faced with social, political and economic changes but how do we begin to make sense of this? How do people's attitudes and actions over time contribute to the society we live in, how can we understand the world we inhabit?

History is the study of the past but also the key to understanding contemporary events. It allows us to explore different perspectives and interpretations and to examine the causes and consequences of events. It equips us with the skills to analyse evidence and develop our own arguments. Because of the skills and knowledge acquired during the course, history is one of the most highly regarded subjects at A level.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5\6 in History
- GCSE grade 5 in English Language

What will I learn?

The course covers a range of British and world History allowing you to study both a breadth and depth of topics. This will include a specific focus on Russian History, the origins of the British Empire and the Tudor era. It also includes a coursework component which allows you to develop essential independent study skills which will prepare you for university.

Assessment

We follow the AQA syllabus which is assessed through 80% examinations and 20% Coursework. These exams will be essay based and so it is essential you have strong written communication.

HISTORY

Getting prepared

Read some of the books on the recommended reading list. Subscribe to History Today and make the effort to visit the free museums and exhibitions in London. Familiarise yourself with the AQA History syllabus units 1J and 2N.

Future opportunities

A level History offers you a strong foundation of academic study and a wealth of opportunities in further education and your future career. History is a facilitating subject. It is a highly regarded subject by universities and employers and allows you entrance into careers such as law, journalism, government, media, finance, teaching and a broad range of other professions.

Recommended reading

- 'The Scramble for Africa' by M. E. Chamberlain
- 'The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction' by A Jackson
- 'The Lion's Share: A History of British Imperialism 1850-2011' by B Porter.
- 'Communist Russia under Lenin and Stalin' by C Corin & T Fiehn
- 'Stalin's Russia, Teach Yourself' by D Evans



MATHS

Why study it?

Studying mathematics to an advanced level is a challenging but interesting and enjoyable experience. Students like its challenge, its clarity, and the fact that you know when you are right.

You should also be aware of the wide importance of mathematics, and the way in which it is advancing at a spectacular rate. Mathematics is about pattern and structure; it is about logical analysis, deduction and calculation. When patterns are found, often in widely different areas of science and technology, the mathematics of these patterns can be used to explain and control natural occurrences and situations. Mathematics has a pervasive influence on our everyday lives and contributes to the wealth of the country.

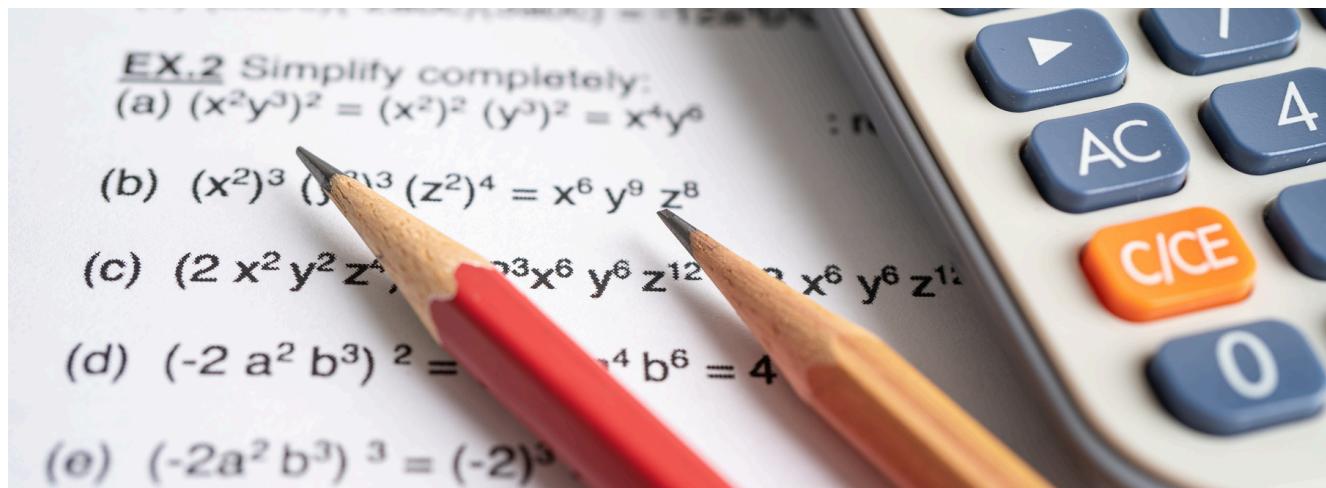
Entry requirements

- Grade 7 or above for GCSE Maths
- GCSE grade 5 in English Language

What will I learn?

You will learn construction and presentation of rigorous mathematical arguments through appropriate use of precise statements and logical deduction.

You will learn how to solve cubic equations in addition to quadratics, you study vectors in three dimensions rather than just two, you explore trigonometry beyond the familiar geometrical context. You will develop your knowledge of probability and statistics from GCSE, so that you can make defensible conclusions in the presence of uncertainty: if you flip a coin ten times and it shows tails every time, would you claim that the coin is biased? You will study a variety of topics including algebra and functions; coordinate geometry in the (x, y) plane; sequences and series; trigonometry; exponentials and logarithms; differentiation and integration.



MATHS

Assessment

There will be 3 papers sat at the end of 2 years. Each paper is equally weighted and is a 2 hour written exam.

Paper 1 and 2 will consist of Pure Maths whilst Paper 3 will consist of Statistics and Mechanics.

Getting prepared

Students studying A level Mathematics are expected to have covered and mastered all the material in the GCSE Mathematics Higher Tier. This is regarded as basic background knowledge and will not be tested by questions focused directly on it. However, it may be assessed within questions focused on other material from the relevant specification. Therefore it is essential that you are confident in working with Grade 7-9 Number & Algebra topics.

A secure grasp of GCSE material will give you a very strong foundation for A level study. Aim for a grade 8 or 9 at GCSE, always attempt the harder questions at the end of practice papers. Develop a confident and accurate understanding of Algebra as this is vital for all aspects of A level Mathematics. Do lots of extra practice questions.

Future opportunities

Those who qualify in mathematics are in the fortunate position of having a wide range of career choices. The ability:

- to use logical thought,
- to formulate a problem in a way which allows for computation and decision,
- to make deductions from assumption,
- to use advanced concepts,

are all enhanced by mathematics. For this reason mathematicians are increasingly in demand. With a mathematics degree, you can pursue a career in finance, statistics, engineering, computing, teaching, telecommunications, financial trading and multinational business to name a few. This flexibility is even more important today, with the current uncertain economic employment market.

The most recent employment surveys show graduates with a qualification in mathematics or computer science are at the top of the income list after graduation.

MATHS

Recommended reading

- Any book by: Marcus du Sautoy, Simon Singh and Ian Stewart
- 1089 and All That - David Acheson



PHYSICS

Why study it?

Why does the universe behave the way it does? How can an ultrasound create a picture? How fast would you have to travel to fool a speed camera? What force would be necessary to stop a formula one car? What are CERN looking for? These are all questions you can answer by studying Physics.

Physics A Level is one of the most universally accepted qualifications for progression to university. The course covers the basis of how things work, from the constituent parts of atoms to the extent of the universe. You will integrate the concepts studied with a range of practical experiments throughout each topic, giving the course both an academic and practical focus. You will learn to apply your knowledge of the key concepts to solve problems in a range of different context.

Entry requirements

- Grade 7-7+ in Combined Science or Grade 6+ in Physics and Maths Grade 6+ (It is compulsory you study A level Maths alongside A Level Physics)

What will I learn?

- Physical quantities and units
- Nature of quantities
- Forces in action
- Materials
- Charge and current
- Electrical circuits
- Quantum physics
- Circular motion
- Gravitational fields
- Capacitors
- Electromagnetism
- Medical imaging
- Making measurements and analysing data
- Motion
- Work, energy and power
- Momentum
- Energy, power and resistance
- Waves
- Thermal physics
- Oscillations
- Astrophysics and cosmology
- Electric fields
- Nuclear and particle physics

PHYSICS

Assessment

We follow the OCR syllabus A which is assessed through 100% examinations. These exams will contain a mixture of short answer and extended writing questions.

Getting prepared

Familiarise yourself with the OCR Physics –A syllabus. Review GCSE Physics, ensuring that you work through all of the ‘Physics only’ material that you may not have covered if you studied combined science. Brush up on your algebraic and trigonometric skills and read some of the books on the recommended reading list. Have a look at the Institute of Physics website and physics.org to get an understanding of recent developments in the field.

Future opportunities

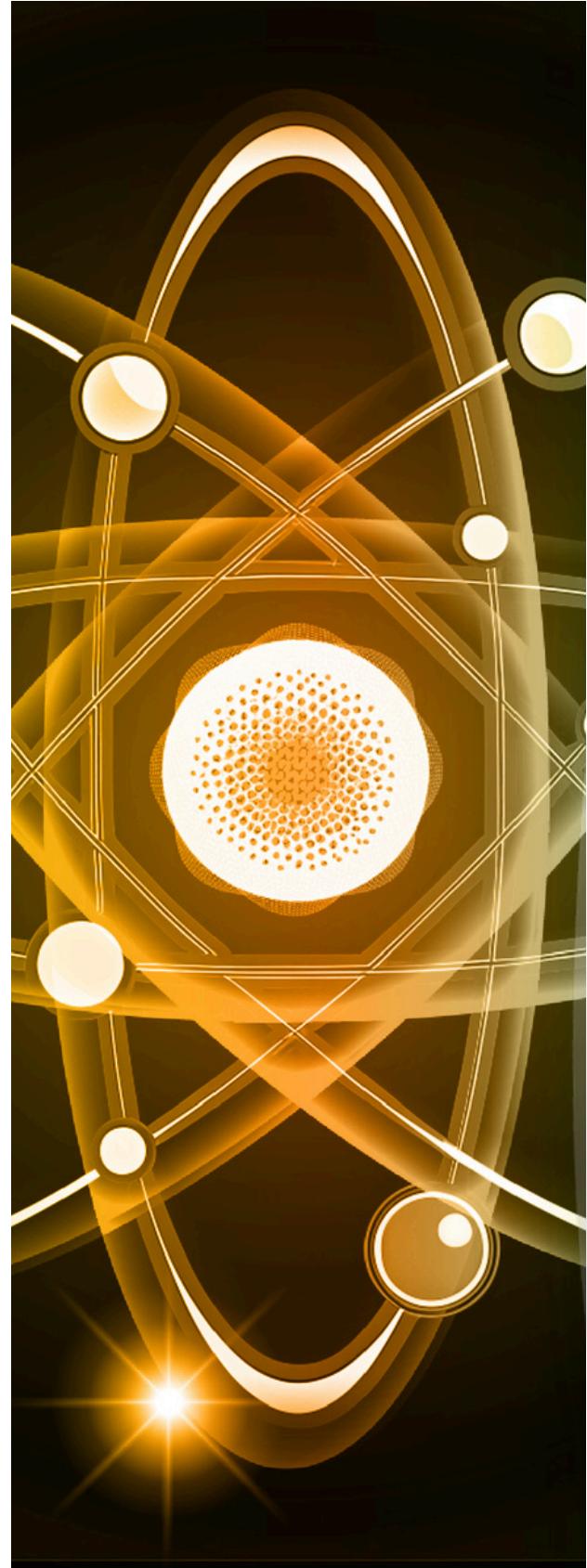
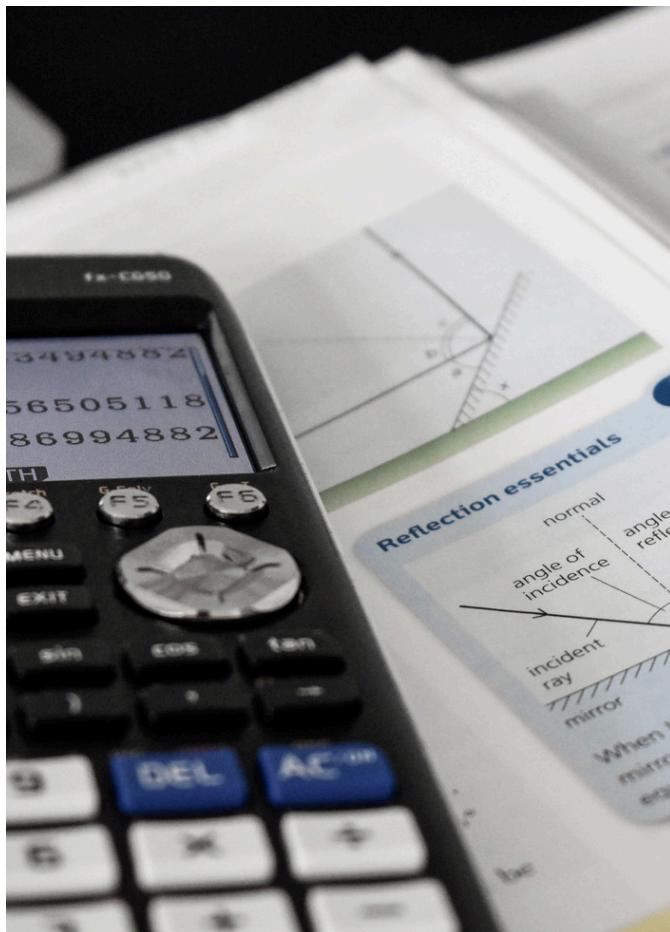
Physics opens doors to all STEM degrees, including Physics, Maths and Engineering. Physics A level can also bring opportunities in advanced apprenticeships in industry, at present these include aerospace, nuclear power generation and electrical power distribution. Physics A Level is highly regarded by financial and legal institutions for its rigorous, logical content.



PHYSICS

Recommended reading

- How Not to Be Wrong: The Power of Mathematical Thinking by Jordan Ellenberg
- Wizards, Aliens, and Starships: Physics and Math in Fantasy and Science Fiction by Charles L. Adler
- Alan Turing: The Enigma by Andrew Hodges
- The Perfect Theory: A Century of Geniuses and the Battle over General Relativity by Prof. Pedro G. Ferreira
- The Accidental Universe: The World You Thought You Knew by Alan Lightman
- The Science of Interstellar by Kip Thorne
- The Elegant Universe by Brian Green
- Surely You're Joking, Mr. Feynman! by Feynman



PSYCHOLOGY

Why study it?

In the 2012 film *Compliance*, ordinary and decent workers in a fast-food diner are persuaded by a policeman to subject a colleague – one of their friends – to increasingly cruel and degrading punishments. Is this a ludicrous film story, or a frighteningly plausible chain of events? Why is somebody in a room with a mirror less likely to pick up and pocket a £20 note lying on the floor than somebody in a room without a mirror? Why if four people stand on the pavement and look skywards do others join them and also look upwards, but if only one person does so then no one else joins in?

Psychology is the study of human mind and behaviour. A-Level Psychology will help you start to understand not only why we all behave so differently but also why so often we behave so predictably.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5 in English Language
- GCSE grade 5 in Mathematics

What will I learn?

The course covers a range of theories explaining behaviour. You will examine specific studies that have been completed to test whether these theories are sensible and useful, and the degree to which they help us understand behaviour.

One of the topics you will study, Memory, is an example of cognitive psychology. It includes two theories that explain how long and short term memory works: these mean that the evidence of eye witnesses might be flawed when used in a court room. Memory techniques can also be applied to your revision.

A developmental psychology topic, Attachment, is also studied: attachment is the process by which an infant forms a bond with a primary caregiver. The consequences of the success or failure of this relationship are studied in detail. Social Psychology covers some of the most famous research in Psychology: Milgram's study of obedience and Asch's line study, and how can influence the behaviour of individuals and, possibly, groups.

Clinical Psychology and Mental Health looks at definitions that aim to identify who in society might be described as mentally ill, the controversies surrounding this language, and the variety of treatments available. Biological psychology will look at scientific methods for research the brain and nervous system as well as drug treatments.

PSYCHOLOGY

What will I learn?

Throughout you will learn how to take part in psychological debate; looking at the nature vs nurture debate and free will vs determinism. You will also learn the strengths and weaknesses of different research methods; so that you can assess the quality of evidence you are given. You will design and conduct ethical research experiments that will help you mediate between theory and practice, and allow you to analyse data in various forms.

Assessment

We follow the AQA syllabus which is assessed through 100% examinations. These exams will contain a mixture of short answer and extended writing questions.

Getting prepared

Read some of the books on the recommended reading list. Look at the British Psychological Society website and find their "Research Digest" which you can have e-mailed to you once a month: it gives a précis of recent interesting research. Familiarise yourself with the AQA Psychology syllabus.

Future opportunities

A-Level Psychology is regarded by universities as a Science A-Level. It also allows you to develop your writing and commentary skills. Therefore studying Psychology A Level is excellent preparation for many degree courses. Many students that study Psychology at A Level go on to study Psychology at degree level. After their degree they may take a post graduate qualification in a particular area of Psychology for example, clinical psychology. A post graduate qualification is the first step to becoming a practising Psychologist.



PSYCHOLOGY

Recommended reading

- Opening Skinner's Box Lauren Slater
- The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat
Oliver Sacks
- Scientific American and New Scientist
magazines
- A Very Short Introduction to Psychology
- The Curious Incident of the Dog in the
Night-Time Mark Haddon
- The Lucifer Effect Philip Zimbardo



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Why study it?

The study of Philosophy and Ethics at A Level is engaging, academically rigorous and excellent preparation for a wide range of courses at degree level. The subject involves a study of philosophical, theological and ethical theories which underpin and structure our world today. An understanding of these ideas is essential to an informed and nuanced engagement with key themes in politics, law, medicine, education, human rights and religion.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5 in English Language
- GCSE grade 5 in Religious Studies

What will I learn?

The course will focus on western philosophy including discussions on the arguments for and against the existence of God, discussions about the nature of religious language and how it can be used to prove and disprove God. We look at how religion influences day to day life and the choices that people make in light of their religious beliefs.

In ethics we will compare and contrast different theories on 'how to be good' applied to ethical dilemmas such as the use of nuclear weapons. We will question whether we are truly free and what role the conscience plays in moral behaviour. We cover a range of normative ethical theories that are religious and non-religious including Divine Command Theory, Bentham and Mill and hybrid ethical systems such as Aristotle's Virtue Ethics.

In the Islam paper, we examine the impact of religious figures and sacred texts, consider the variant social and historical developments in religious thought and evaluate the role and value of different religious practices in Islamic communities.

Assessment

We follow the Eduqas syllabus which is assessed through 100% examinations. These exams will contain a mixture of explanation and evaluation questions.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Getting prepared

You should read a range of books that consider ethical and philosophical opinions – please see the list below. Joining a debating society or discussion group would also be excellent preparation.

Future opportunities

An A Level in Philosophy and Ethics is highly regarded by universities and is excellent preparation for degrees in Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies, PPE, Sociology and Law. Graduates in these subjects may go on to careers in Law, Civil Service, Foreign Office and Teaching. The Ethical theories studied in this A Level are also highly relevant to degrees in Medicine, Science and Business.

Recommended reading

- Virtue Ethics by R Crisp & M Sloté
- Moral Problems in Medicine: A Practical Coursebook by M Palmer
- Ethics: Discovering Right and Wrong by L.J. Pojman
- Utilitarian Ethics by A. Quinton
- Practical Ethics by Peter Singer
- Sophie's World by J. Gaarder



SOCIOLOGY

Why study it?

Sociology is an immensely challenging and exciting discipline. Its aim is to understand how societies work. It investigates the structures and cultures of different societies throughout the world and throughout history. When you study sociology you will acquire the knowledge and skills to analyse society in the United Kingdom in the 21st Century. You will also gain an understanding of the theories and concepts which form a key part of the current debate about contemporary society and the critical changes taking place.

Sociology will certainly help you to help make sense of your own experiences in society. It can give you new ways of seeing the social world around you. You will also develop the necessary skills to enable you to assess different views and reach conclusions about society, based on a careful consideration of evidence.

Entry requirements

- GCSE grade 5 in English Language

What will I learn?

In Year 12, you will study:

Paper 1 – Education with Methods in Context

- Do children from different social and ethnic backgrounds have an equal and fair chance at school?
- Why do girls do better than boys in exams?
- How do Sociologists research society and in particular the education system?

Paper 2 – Topics in Sociology (Families and households)

- Why do we live in families?
- Are women and men equal in families?
- How much power and influence do children have in their families?

In Year 13, you will study:

Paper 2 – Topics in Sociology (Beliefs in Society)

- Why do young people have an increasingly low level of participation in religion?
- What are sects and cults?
- Is there an increase in fundamentalism and why?

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What will I learn?

Paper 3 – Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods

- What is crime? How is it different from deviance?
- Who breaks the law and why?
- Is the criminal justice system racist?
- What are sociological perspectives?
- How do sociologists research society and human behaviour?

Assessment

We follow the AQA syllabus which is assessed through 100% examinations. These exams will contain a mixture of short answer and extended writing questions.

Getting prepared

Watching the news and current affairs programmes. Read broadsheet newspapers like the Guardian and Independent. Look at the British Sociological association website for relevant sociological studies, research and lectures. If you can join up to Sociology review online and begin to read about contemporary social issues that would be highly beneficial. Familiarise yourself with the AQA Sociology syllabus via the AQA website.

Begin to observe people's interactions critically, e.g. between youths, in different situations and link their behaviour to social institutions in society such as the family, religion, media or criminal justice system.

Future opportunities

A Level Sociology provides a good preparation for university as it equips you with the skills needed to succeed in higher education.

It is also important for any career which involves dealing with the general public such as teaching, social work, police and youth work.

Moreover, it is particularly relevant for those working in market research and social science research. Finally, it can lead to careers in advertising, journalism, government policy making, business and law.

SOCIOLOGY

Recommended reading

- Sociology Review
- The Independent
- The Guardian
- The Times
- Barker, E. Making of a Moonie
- Durkheim E. Suicide
- Friedan, B. Feminine mystique
- Greer, G. Female Eunuch
- Griffin, J. H. Black like me'
- BBC1 Panorama
- Channel 4 Unreported world
- www.lse.ac.uk/serials/Bjs
- www.mori.com
- www.sosig.ac.uk/sociology
- www.sociology.org.uk
- www.sociologyonline.co.uk
- www.britsoc.co.uk



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