



THE TIFFIN GIRLS' SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION TO THE SIXTH FORM

for entry in September 2024

www.tiffingirls.org

1. Life in the Sixth Form at Tiffin Girls' School

In our Sixth Form we continue the school's aims of high academic achievement and helping every student to develop to their full potential. Our students are taught by subject specialists, and the vast majority achieve grades A*, A and B at A Level. We have an excellent record of entry into a wide range of the most competitive courses and universities for higher education.

The school takes individual advice and guidance for Sixth Form options very seriously. Sixth Form applicants need to consider their options wisely to ensure that they are choosing a set of subjects that will engage them and that will play to their strengths. The school will take into consideration an applicant's overall profile, including their GCSE results, before agreeing to them studying any particular set of subjects. We aim to help our students decide wisely, both about their participation in Sixth Form life and for their future careers and education.

Our Sixth Form Centre is a designated space in the heart of the school, which includes silent study areas, group study areas, computer workstations, social spaces and a kitchen/eating area. Sixth Form students do not have to wear a uniform or business dress; instead we have a liberal Sixth Form dress code.

In the Sixth Form, students are divided into tutor groups of approximately 20 students. Pastoral care is provided by a team of tutors in each year group and the Sixth Form team:

Mr D Hares – Assistant Headteacher & Director of Sixth Form

Ms K Kilpatrick – Assistant Headteacher & Deputy Director of Sixth Form (with specific pastoral responsibility)

Ms F Pounds – Assistant Head of Sixth Form

Ms A Cohen – UCAS and Higher Education coordinator

Ms J Carroll – Sixth Form Administrator

The Sixth Form is an integral part of our school community, but it also has an identity of its own. There are many opportunities for student leadership available. Each year, a team of Year 12 prefects is appointed, who help the staff to organise and run the school, and other Sixth Formers take on roles supporting our academic departments or as mentors to younger students. More senior posts are available for Year 13 students, including Head Girls, House Officers, Deputy Head Girls and Technical Support Officers. Sixth Form students run a range of clubs in the school, and they also play a prominent part in the school orchestras, choirs, productions and sports teams. They have the opportunity of joining in a wide variety of activities including debating, Model United Nations, the Young Enterprise scheme and Feminist Society. Sixth Form students run several subject-based clubs, and each year there are new societies set up by Sixth Formers.

2. Academic Information

All A Levels are now two-year linear courses, and the final grade achieved is determined by exams taken at the end of the two-year course in Year 13. All of our departments have considered and selected their specification to give the appropriate degree of challenge for our highly intelligent and motivated students.

At The Tiffin Girls' School, all students who enter Year 12 in September 2024 will choose four subjects to study in Year 12. In the Summer Term of Year 12, they will sit internal end of year exams in these subjects, and once the results of these exams are known, students will select one of these subjects to drop before continuing with three subjects to full A Level in Year 13. This curriculum offer of four subjects in Year 12 and three subjects in Year 13 enables all students to maintain a broad and intellectually stimulating curriculum, while also maintaining as much flexibility as possible before specialising in Year 13. The simplest way of expressing this principle is: 'breadth and flexibility in Year 12, depth in Year 13'.

The internal end of year exams in Year 12 will be a rigorous and formally-conducted series of exams, which will require serious and detailed preparation on the part of students. These exams will act as an interim assessment of their progress at the midway stage of their A Levels, and will also be used to guide students' university applications to be made in Year 13; in particular they will be used as the starting point on which to base students' predicted grades for their UCAS applications.

3. The Sixth Form Curriculum

The curriculum at Tiffin Girls' School consists of 25 one-hour periods. All students study four subjects in Year 12. Each course is taught in 4 one-hour periods per week, with the exception of Route 2 Maths. This is our accelerated Maths course, which requires 7 periods per week and covers the whole of A Level Maths in one year, enabling students to access A Level Further Maths in Year 13.

3.1 Year 12 curriculum

A Pastoral programme, a Higher Education programme, a super-curricular lecture programme and opportunities for PE are also provided in the Year 12 timetable. Business-related opportunities exist through our flourishing Young Enterprise programme, for which the school won the UK championships in 2013 and were national runners-up in 2021. Students are also encouraged to do voluntary work. The school runs the Duke of Edinburgh Award, with very large numbers of participants at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. Representatives from universities, businesses and other organisations frequently come in to school to give presentations about their careers and courses.

3.2 Year 13 curriculum

As they move into Year 13, students drop one of their four Year 12 subjects in order to concentrate on three subjects in Year 13. These courses are taught in 4 one-hour periods per week.

It is only possible for a student to study four subjects in Year 13 if they are completing both A Level Mathematics and Further Mathematics in Year 13 (for which they will have had to study Route 2 Maths in Year 12) alongside two other subjects. Universities place no requirement on students to complete more than three A Level courses, and there is no advantage to doing so - it is better to achieve highly in three subjects than to over-extend to four.

3.3 The subjects on offer for Year 12 starting in September 2024

Details of all these courses can be found in the online Sixth Form Subject Guide.

Art	English Literature	Music
Biology	French	Physics
Chemistry	Geography	Psychology
Computer Science	History	RS (Philosophy & Ethics)
Drama and Theatre	Latin	Spanish
DT (Product Design)	Mathematics	
Economics	(Further Mathematics – not studied until Year 13)	

Please note:

- These are the courses on offer at the time of going to press. Whether or not a particular course runs is a decision taken at a later stage and will depend on a number of factors, including the number of students opting for it and the availability of appropriate staffing. It may not be until the summer term that they are finalised.
- We aim to make as many different possible subject combinations available as we can, to reflect our students' diverse range of talents and interests. Please note that, as a state school, there are constraints on our resources, and so we cannot guarantee to make every possible permutation of subjects available.

- Although we would hope that any subject available in Year 12 will also be available in Year 13 so that students are able to complete the A Level, we must reserve the right to withdraw courses if the numbers choosing to continue with the subject into Year 13 fall below economically viable limits.

4. Advice on A Level Options

4.1 Choosing your subjects

Your choice of A Level subjects can have an impact on the courses available to you at university. If you have already decided on a course that you would like to study at university, take a look at the course requirements in order to check that your A Level choices will enable an application. If you are currently unsure about your university and career aspiration, try to take a range of subjects that will keep your future choices as wide as possible.

4.2 The combination of subjects

A high proportion of our students expect to gain a place at some of the most competitive universities in the country. The Russell Group is a group of universities which fall into this category (there are, of course, many excellent universities outside this group). However, the advice they provide is pertinent to all universities. The Russell Group have recently launched an updated advice website, 'Informed Choices', which any prospective university student and their parents will find useful, whether or not they know which course they intend to study at university.

<https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>

Our full offering of subjects has been carefully considered to support our students in applying to a wide range of university courses.

When selecting which four subjects to study in Year 12, students should consider the following questions:

- Which subjects do they enjoy the most?
- Which are their strongest subjects?
- What are the long-term implications of their chosen combination of subjects?

The first two of these questions relate to the fact that A Levels are very challenging courses, representing a significant step up from GCSE. Students can find this increase in difficulty particularly hard to negotiate if they choose subjects that do not properly interest them, or in which they are likely to struggle. The third question relates to the need for students to make wise decisions regarding their future university and career options. They must research this carefully, using reputable sources; the UCAS website and specific universities' departmental websites are usually excellent starting points.

4.3 Subjects including Non-Examined Assessments

A number of A Level subjects include Non-Examined Assessments (NEAs), usually referred to as coursework. In some subjects, such as the sciences, this constitutes a set of required practical experiments that lead to a practical endorsement that sits alongside the overall exam grade. In others, usually the humanities and creative subjects, the NEA work contributes a significant part of the final A Level grade.

Students should consider carefully the potential impact of studying multiple subjects with heavy NEA requirements, as these will require them to be organised with their time and to stay on top of long-term deadlines. This can be harder at A Level than at GCSE due to the greater challenge of the NEA work and the increased need for independent work. The exam boards oversee all NEA work, and an appeals process relating to procedures involved in internal assessment decisions exists at the School. Full details of subjects involving NEAs can be found in our Sixth Form Subject Guide.

5. University Applications

The vast majority of our students proceed to higher education after two years in the Sixth Form. In 2023, 20 Tiffin Girls' alumnae took up places at Oxford and Cambridge, 80% gained a place at a Russell Group university, and 73% gained a place at their first-choice university. A number of students that turned down their firm university choice did so because their excellent grades now enable them to make a more competitive application as part of a gap year.

Students entering the Sixth Form in September 2024 will generally start university in 2026. Their UCAS university applications will be completed in September/October 2025, i.e. at the beginning of Year 13. Students' performance in their summer 2025 end of Year 12 exams is important, as their grades from these exams will be the starting point for determining their predicted grades for their UCAS applications.

Universities will use a wide range of information in their selection of candidates, including:

- GCSE grades
- End of Year 12 exam grades
- A Level predicted grades
- Students' personal statements
- The school's reference, written by subject teachers, form tutors, the Head of Sixth Form and UCAS Coordinator
- For some universities and courses there are also admissions tests, such as the UCAT for Medical and Dental applicants, the LNAT for Law applicants, and a wide range of tests for courses at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.
- For some universities and courses there are also interviews included in the selection process, including Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Medicine courses and all courses at Oxford and Cambridge.

We have a rigorous guidance programme in place for all our Sixth Formers with regard to their UCAS and/or other higher education applications and their future career pathways. This starts immediately in Year 12, as all students have a weekly timetabled period allocated to 'Higher Education Focus'. This is followed through the year by parent information evenings to explain the process, and ideas given to help students form their plans. We receive invitations from a number of universities to send students on study days and masterclasses through the course of Year 12, and students can also enter a variety of university essay competitions to develop their understanding of their chosen subjects.

Discussion then continues between the students, their teachers and form tutors so that many of them are starting to make decisions before the summer holidays. With additional sessions, students will have started to draft their personal statement by the end of Year 12 so that when they return in September of Year 13 they are ready to complete their UCAS application. Mock interviews are also arranged so that candidates are well prepared. The final step from school to university is a very important one, and students will get help and advice at each stage along the way to help them choose the right course and university for them.

6. Further Information for Students Applying from other Schools

We welcome applications to join our Sixth Form from Year 11 students in other schools. Over the past three years, the number of external candidates joining our Sixth Form has been: 20 in September 2021; 11 in September 2022; 31 in September 2023.

For students joining us from other schools in September 2024, we have moved to a system of post-results only applications. This means that there is no application form to be completed in advance at this point in the year, as all applications will be made in the immediate period following GCSE results day in August 2024. Any external applicants must bring in their original GCSE results sheet from their school between 9.00am and 5.00pm on GCSE results day in August 2024 and the School will then consider their application. External applicants are invited to register for email updates if they intend to make an application using the QR code

on display at the Open Evening or by using the Google form available on the school website.

Link to form here: <https://forms.gle/FECS4FmyVCvhK7PT7>

Our full Admissions Policy for entry to the Sixth Form in the Academic Year 2024-2025 can be found on our website at the following link, which all prospective external applicants should read. This document also contains details of our oversubscription criteria. Please note that following a recent change to our admissions policy we now give priority to applications from students who fulfil specific disadvantage criteria, such as those in receipt of Free School Meals or Pupil Premium funding. Full details can be found in the Admissions Policy at the following page of our website:

<https://www.tiffingirls.org/admissions/sixth-form/>

Please see the school website for our recent A Level exam results and Higher Education destinations:

<https://www.tiffingirls.org/academic/sixth-form/>

