



THE TIFFIN GIRLS' SCHOOL

**SIXTH FORM SUBJECT GUIDE
for September 2024**

Introduction

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. 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, the grades achieved on these exams will be used as the starting point on which to base students' predicted grades for their UCAS applications.

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

- Which are the subjects 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. The following page summarises the recommended A Level combinations for a selection of popular university courses.

[Sixth Form Admissions Policy for entry 2024](#)

The suggested requirements for some degree courses

When choosing your A Level options with a specific degree course in mind, you should consider the following (please note that this is not a definitive list of course requirements):

- Architecture: a good Art portfolio is required, and a strong ability to draw. An interest in the history of art is helpful. Mathematics is needed at least to good GCSE standard and for more engineering based/technical architectural courses, Mathematics and/or Physics A Levels may be necessary.
- Biology: A Level Biology is required, and Chemistry is often required too, and is essential if applying for Biochemistry.
- Chemistry: A Level Chemistry is required, Mathematics is also required. For Chemistry at Oxford, another science is also recommended.
- Computer Science: A Level Mathematics is required, and some courses may require Further Mathematics at least to AS Level.
- Economics: A Level Mathematics is required by most universities, and a small number of universities also require A Level Further Mathematics, at least to AS Level.
- Engineering: A Level Mathematics, Physics, and often Further Mathematics, are required.
- Law: There is no specific combination of required subjects; ideally, applicants should study a logic-based subject (e.g. Mathematics, a science, a modern or classical language, Philosophy and Ethics) and a discursive, essay-based subject (e.g. History, English).
- Mathematics: A Level Mathematics is essential. Some universities will also require A Level Further Mathematics, but it should be noted that plenty of highly competitive universities do not require A Level Further Mathematics for their Maths degrees.
- Medicine: applicants must study A Level Biology and Chemistry. It should be noted that no universities require A Level Mathematics to study Medicine, although a small number of medical schools suggest it as a preferred (but not *required*) subject. Importantly, a broadening subject such as an essay-based subject, a language or a creative subject is now preferred by some medical schools. Many of our previous students have gained entry to top medical schools after taking A Levels in non-science subjects (examples from recent years include Spanish, French, Art, Music, English, History, Religious Studies, Psychology and Design & Technology) as long as they are also taking the required sciences (i.e. Biology and Chemistry).
- Music: Music must be studied, and at least grade 4 or 5 piano is usually required.
- Natural Sciences at Cambridge: For the Biological Natural Sciences route, A Level Biology and Chemistry are required, and A Level Mathematics is highly recommended. For the Physical Natural Sciences route, A Level Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics are required.
- Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Oxford: A Level Mathematics is favoured, alongside an essay-based subject.
- Psychology: A Level Biology is often required.

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ART

EXAMINATION BOARD: EDEXCEL

SPECIFICATION: FINE ART 9FA0

Why study this subject?

The course will develop your ability to appreciate the visual world and to respond in a personal and creative way. It will also develop you as a creative thinker, fostering the ability to conceptualise. The skills you will develop will be varied. Among them, you will develop a working knowledge of materials, practices and technology in one or more of the disciplines within art. You will analyse and use sources to inspire your own work. You will use learnt skills to interpret, convey and synthesise your ideas and feelings through art, craft and design.

Course content

Component 1: Personal Investigation (Coursework), 60% of A Level

In this component there are 2 elements; practical work and the personal study.

The practical work will develop your ability to approach and resolve the issues that emerge as an inevitable part of creating art and design work. You will learn to employ a problem-solving process in relation to your creative activities. This process involves identifying creative areas of interest, undertaking research, developing a range of ideas, development, and possibilities that are then evaluated and realised as a solution.

The personal study will require you to research, evaluate, analyse and establish links between your own practical work and the broader art world, both historical and contemporary. It is essential your practical work and personal study interlink. Your study should be a written and illustrated thesis (Min 1,000 words). You will submit a work journal to compliment your study and a visual response to the research in the form of a video. The study could focus on the working methods of artists, designers, architects and crafts workers, and their tools, equipment and materials. Or it could focus on the social, political and theoretical background to works of art, architecture, craft and design.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment (Exam), 40% of A Level

The paper for this component will provide you with a choice of questions. You will be given a six-week preparation period. You must submit one final piece unaided and produced under supervision in a period of 15 hours. This timed element will be taken after 14 February in the year of the examination. You will need to produce preparatory work and should undertake investigative preparatory work in your work journals throughout the course.

Assessment: Assessment Objectives

A01 Develop ideas through sustained and focused investigations informed by contextual and other sources, demonstrating analytical and critical understanding. = 25%

A02 Explore and select appropriate resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining their ideas as work develops = 25%

A03 Record ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions, reflecting critically on work and progress. = 25%

A04 Present a personal and meaningful response that realises intentions and, where appropriate, makes connections between visual and other elements = 25%

Future Career Opportunities

There are many careers in art, craft and design; some of these require further study at an art school, further education college or university. At present most students wishing to take art, craft or design further will go on to do a one year 'Foundation' course at an art college or college of further education before applying to degree courses in more specialist areas of art and design. The careers open to you would be in graphic design, fashion/textile design, 3D/product design, magazine illustration, photography, interior design, theatre design, architecture, advertising, teaching, and the traditional creative artist.

BIOLOGY

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: BIOLOGY 7402

Why study this subject?

AQA are offering a broad, modern, contextual and challenging approach to the study of A level Biology.

Students will be given the opportunity to build up their knowledge from the foundations of Biology – biological molecules, learning how these build into cells and organisms. The common ancestry of all organisms links together our common building blocks and physiology and this is emphasised throughout the course.

The topics covered will enable students to develop both depth and breadth of understanding of the biological world. Topics range from the fundamentals of genetics and inheritance, the human immune system, physiology, evolution, biochemistry, and culminate in the study of how all this knowledge is currently being applied in modern scientific research. Students will study genetic engineering, gene regulation and expression in the fields of oncology and epigenetics.

An understanding of scientific method as the means by which the body of scientific knowledge is increased and an enquiring and critical approach is essential to any further education in science.

Students will learn the history of and the major contributors to our current scientific understanding. During the 2 year course students will need to carry out a minimum of 12 practical activities. Their performance in these will contribute to an overall mark in their practical assessment.

Students will also come to understand that science is not static and is an ever changing field in which there is more than one way to interpret any piece of evidence. Students will learn to think critically, question new ideas and realise how much more there is to know.

Year 12 Course content

1. Biological molecules

All life on earth shares a common chemistry. This module looks at this common chemistry.

2. Cells

All life on earth exists as cells. Students will explore the features and workings of cells.

3. Organisms exchange substances with their environment.

Students will study exchange in the context of mammalian physiology. Areas covered are the respiratory system, the digestive system, the circulatory system and mass transport in plants.

4. Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms.

Students will explore biodiversity, phylogeny and evolution.

Year 13 Course content

5. Energy transfers in and between organisms

Students will study the biochemistry of photosynthesis and respiration as well as nutrient cycles and interactions in ecosystems.

6. Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments

Students will study the nervous and endocrine systems in mammals as well as the hormonal system of plants

7. Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems

Students will look in depth at the theory of evolution.

8. The control of gene expression

Students will learn about factors which control gene expression – the study of epigenetics. Humans are learning how to control the expression of genes by altering the epigenome. This has many medical and technological applications.

A Level Assessment

There are three written papers. The practical endorsement is a result of the successful completion of all 12 required practicals to A level standard.

Paper 1:

Written exam: 2 hours - 91 marks - 35% of A level

Any content from topics 1 – 4 including relevant practical skills

Paper 2:

Written exam: 2 hours - 91 marks - 35% of A level

Any content from topics 5 – 8 including relevant practical skills

Paper 3:

Written exam: 2 hours - 78 marks - 30% of A level

Any content from topics 1 – 8 including relevant practical skills

Future Career Opportunities

An A level qualification in biology could prepare you to study biology or one of the biological sciences in further or higher education. You may wish to take a more vocational course leading to a career in medicine, veterinary medicine, animal health, dentistry, optometry, horticulture, agriculture or teaching. It is also of value in its own right and teaches a wide range of transferable skills for any future career choice.

CHEMISTRY

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

SPECIFICATION: CHEMISTRY H432A

Why study this subject?

Chemistry is an exciting field; chemical knowledge enriches our lives by being at the forefront of technical advances in medicine, new materials and fuel technology. Chemistry underpins understanding of many other scientific disciplines, linking physics, biology and the earth sciences. It is a study requiring a high degree of scientific literacy and numeracy and so is valued by universities and employers. However, it is also one of the most challenging subjects at A Level and most definitely requires a great deal of work and dedication in order to achieve success.

Course content

Module 1: Development of practical skills

This module underpins the whole of the specification and covers the new practical skills that students will develop throughout the course.

Module 2: Foundations in chemistry

Students will acquire the basic chemical skills of formulae writing, equation writing and calculating chemical quantities. They will extend their GCSE knowledge of acid-base and redox reactions. A more detailed understanding of electron configurations will enable them to account for the arrangement of elements in the periodic table. The unit also introduces the three types of strong chemical bonding (ionic, covalent and metallic), an understanding of which will support all their future chemical studies.

Module 3: Periodic table and energy

This module considers how the structure of the periodic table contributes to chemical knowledge, illustrating this with a study of Groups 2 and 7. The study of energetics in chemistry is of theoretical and practical importance and students will learn to define, measure and calculate enthalpy changes. There is a qualitative study of the ways in which chemists can control the rate, direction and extent of chemical reactions.

Module 4: Core organic chemistry

Organic chemistry in this unit begins with basic naming and representation of the structure of organic molecules. Students extend their GCSE knowledge of alkanes and alkenes and study the properties and reactions of alcohols and halogenoalkanes. The techniques of infrared spectroscopy and mass spectrometry are introduced.

Module 5: Physical chemistry and transition elements

Students will further their understanding of chemical kinetics and equilibria by making a quantitative study of these areas. The concept of equilibrium is extended to consider acid-base chemistry, calculating pH and considering the behaviour of buffers. Students' knowledge of thermodynamics will be increased through a consideration of enthalpy, entropy and free energy. The transition elements will be studied in detail and an awareness of the behaviour of these elements will allow an appreciation of the redox chemistry of the transition elements and their use in electrochemical cells

Module 6: Organic chemistry and analysis

The further organic chemistry section builds on the reactions of alcohols studied in Module 3, by describing the properties and reactions of carbonyls, carboxylic acids and esters. This extends to a study of arenes and organic nitrogen compounds such as amines, amides, amino acids and proteins. Students will use the knowledge and understanding of organic chemistry that they have acquired over the whole course when covering the organic synthesis section. They will also gain an appreciation of how the techniques of chromatography and nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometry can be used to provide information about the structure of organic molecules.

A Level Assessment

Paper 1: Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry

Examination of 2 hours 15 minutes in two sections (37% of A level)

Section A: objective test questions

Section B: structured questions covering theory and practical skills

Paper 2: Synthesis and analytical techniques

Examination of 2 hours 15 minutes in two sections (37% of A level)

Section A: objective test questions

Section B: structured questions covering theory and practical skills

Paper 3: Unified chemistry

Examination of 1 hour 30 minutes (26% of A level)

Structured and extended response questions covering theory and practical skills

Non-exam assessment: Practical endorsement for chemistry

Teacher-assessed component involving demonstration of laboratory competence in a minimum of 12 experiments. Pass/fail criteria which are reported separately and do not contribute to the A level grade

Future Career Opportunities

As well as chemistry, this course is also essential for anyone considering courses in medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, pharmacology, pharmacy, materials science or biochemistry. Chemistry graduates are not only employed by the chemical industry (e.g. food retailers, bulk chemical manufacture, brewing, cosmetics) and in specialised research. Other professions such as accountancy, law, personnel and management seek to employ them too because they recognise the rigorous course they have followed, which involves a high level of numeracy, problem solving, thinking and communication skills.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

SPECIFICATION: COMPUTER SCIENCE H446B

Why study this subject?

The course is intended to give you the scope to develop your interest in different aspects of Computing and IT, including the many areas, such as cybersecurity, games, networking, augmented/virtual reality, online services and AI that are currently at the forefront of development. It is particularly useful if you intend choosing a course at university with a strong computing component, but the emphasis on computational thinking would be welcome on many other courses, as it demonstrates high level academic skills.

Course content

There are two units, which are examined, plus a practical programming project.

Paper 1:

Characteristics of Processors, Input, Output and Storage Devices: looking at the hardware that makes up modern computer systems both inside and outside the system box.

Software and Software Development: Systems software and a complete look at the range of programming languages, from machine code through to OOP, and the methods used by programmers to complete large tasks.

Exchanging Data: A detailed look at databases, networks and the web, including all the hardware that would be used in different situations.

Data Types, Structures and Algorithms: Understanding how different types of data can be stored in a computer system. A range of conceptual Data Structures are considered, along with the coding and consideration of their efficiency and best use. Standard algorithms for managing these are taught, including some recursive examples.

Legal, Moral, Ethical and Cultural Issues: Discussion of the issues surrounding the use of IT and the laws which control it.

Paper 2: Content of Algorithms and Problem Solving

Problem Solving and Programming: Theoretical work in the development of program code and access to the full power of an IDE-based programming language. This will be necessary for you to complete your project in Unit 4.

Elements of Computational Thinking: Work on the background to programming – what are the basic ideas behind programming and how are they changing?

Algorithms: Algorithms to solve well-known problems, such as searching, sorting and shortest path and the introduction of formal mathematical measures for efficiency.

Content of non-exam assessment – The Programming Project

You will find a problem and write a program to solve it. This will involve going through the complete life cycle, including:

- Analysis of the problem – what is it that the user actually wants, and can this be delivered?
- Design of a solution, using formal methods and algorithms
- Development of a solution, in a language of your choice
- Evaluation against the original criteria – how far did you achieve what the user required?

A Level Assessment

Papers 1 and 2 are assessed as conventional written exams (2.5 hours each). (80% of A level)

The Project is assessed by your teacher, and moderated externally. While it is only marked once, on submission, some sections may be taken in early and checked for obvious problems, and suggestions made where sections are missing or of insufficient quality. (20% of A level)

Future Career Opportunities

Most modern careers involve a degree of IT capability, and there is still much scope for those with a higher level of skills to move forward quickly in a wide range of professions.

On a more straightforward level, there are huge opportunities in the many IT fields, including AI, Data Science, mobile technologies, games, project management, systems analysis and all the technical areas such as Cybersecurity, networking and databases. Employers are especially keen to recruit those with soft skills, such as the ability to work in teams, talk in layman's terms to clients or manage others.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY: PRODUCT DESIGN

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: PRODUCT DESIGN 7552

Why study this subject?

Product Design will equip you with rigorous thinking skills to generate creative, practical and marketable solutions to real-life problems; designing and making products that meet peoples' needs. This multi-disciplinary course will prepare you with the skills you need to perform in a creative problem-solving environment: you will work to deadlines and industry standards; experiment with new technologies; communicate your ideas using a full range of IT and presentation packages; think laterally and use analytical skills. The course has been designed to encourage students to work in a collaborative studio-style environment and take a broad view of design and technology. Product Design students develop their ability to design and make products and to appreciate the relationship between idea development, materials, manufacture and marketing.

Course content

A Level Design and Technology: Product Design requires students to engage in both practical and theoretical study. This specification requires students to cover design and technology skills and knowledge as set out below.

Technical Principles:

- Materials and their applications
- Performance characteristics of materials
- Enhancement of materials
- Forming, redistribution and addition processes
- The use of finishes
- Modern industrial and commercial practice
- Digital design and manufacture
- The requirements for product design and development
- Health and safety
- Protecting designs and intellectual property
- Design for manufacturing, maintenance, repair and disposal
- Feasibility studies
- Enterprise and marketing in the development of products
- Design communication
- Modern manufacturing systems

Designing and making principles:

- Design methods and processes
- Design theory
- How technology and cultural changes can impact on the work of designers
- Design Processes
- Critical analysis and evaluation
- Selecting appropriate tools, equipment and processes
- Accuracy in design and manufacture
- Responsible design
- Design for manufacture and project management
- National and international standards in product design

A Level Assessment

Paper 1: Technical principles

2 hours and 30 minutes written exam, 120 marks, 30% of A Level

Paper 2: Designing and making principles

1 hour and 30 minutes written exam, 80 marks, 20% of A Level

Non-exam assessment (NEA)

Practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles.

Substantial design and make project, 100 marks, 50% of A Level

Future Career Opportunities

Students with an A Level in Design Technology can pursue a wide range of careers:

Engineering, architecture, interior design, product design, advertising and media, film and television, education and training, graphic design, sales and marketing, retail buying, theatre and set design, furniture design, jewellery design and manufacturing industries, starting your own business.

The course is well respected in many of fields of study; it prepares students for any profession that values problem solving, creativity, good organisation and communication and research skills.

DRAMA AND THEATRE

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: DRAMA AND THEATRE 7262

Why study this subject?

You will have the opportunity to pursue your interest in drama and theatre and to develop your skills. Creative thinking, critical evaluation, teamwork and presentation skills will all be extended; which are not just essential for drama but applicable to a wide range of higher education subjects and in the workplace. You will refine your collaborative skills, analytical thinking and your approach to research. Students grow in confidence and maturity as they successfully realise their own ideas. They learn to evaluate objectively and develop a sound appreciation of the influences that cultural and social contexts can have on decision-making. Whatever the future holds, students of A Level Drama and Theatre emerge with a toolkit of transferable skills preparing them for their next steps.

The course offers you the freedom to choose both the content and form of the practical performances. Learning through experience, seeing theatre and making theatre for yourselves. You are introduced to a wide range of theatrical styles and contexts as they explore plays practically, devise and work on performances. Each exam paper is designed to allow you to demonstrate creativity and imagination in interpreting set texts and apply independent thinking as they evaluate a live theatre production.

Course content

Component 1: Drama and theatre (written) 40% of A level

- Section A: One question on the study of a set play.
- Section B: One two-part question on an extract from a second set play
- Section C: One question on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production.

Students will work practically on the set plays in lessons in preparation for the written exam, there will be an opportunity to work from the viewpoint of an Actor, Director or Designer. There will be many opportunities to watch live theatre.

Component 2: Creating original drama (practical) 30% of A level

Performance of devised drama, influenced by the work and methodologies of one prescribed practitioner. A supporting working notebook is also assessed.

Component 3: Making theatre (practical) 30% of A level

Exploration and interpretation of three extracts, each taken from a different play.

Methodology of a prescribed practitioner must be applied to Extract 3.

Extract 3 to be performed as a final assessed piece.

A reflective report of all three extracts is also required.

Set texts:

List A: Drama Through the Ages

- Sophocles: *Antigone*
- William Shakespeare: *Much Ado About Nothing*
- Carlo Goldoni: *The Servant of Two Masters*
- Henrik Ibsen: *Hedda Gabler*
- Bertolt Brecht: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*
- Dario Fo: *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*

List B: 20th & 21st century drama

- Federico Garcia Lorca: *Yerma*
- Tennessee Williams: *The Glass Menagerie*
- Steven Berkoff: *Metamorphosis*
- Caryl Churchill: *Cloud 9*
- Timberlake Wertenbaker: *Our Country's Good*
- Polly Teale: *Bronte*

Future Career Opportunities

This course provides opportunities for progression to courses in higher education in the subject area of drama and theatre studies, or in other subjects as an entry qualification.

Many students have gone on to careers in acting, musical theatre, theatre administration, direction, stage management, as well as teaching and academia, television, journalism, public relations, medicine and law.

ECONOMICS

EXAMINATION BOARD: EDEXCEL

SPECIFICATION: ECONOMICS A 9ECO

Why study this subject?

The study of economics enables students to learn how the material resources of an individual, a community, a country or the world are managed. It allows students to develop an appreciation of economic concepts and theories through a critical consideration of current economic issues, problems and institutions that affect everyday life.

Year 12 Course Content

Students develop knowledge and understanding of core economic models and concepts in two themes. Students will need to apply their knowledge and understanding to both familiar and unfamiliar contexts in the assessment and demonstrate an awareness of current economic events and policies.

Theme 1: Introduction to markets and market failure

This theme focuses on microeconomic concepts. Students will develop an understanding of: nature of economics; how markets work; market failure; government intervention.

Theme 2: The UK economy – performance and policies

This theme focuses on macroeconomic concepts. Students will develop an understanding of: measures of economic performance; aggregate demand; aggregate supply; national income; economic growth; macroeconomic objectives and policy.

Year 13 Course Content

Students develop knowledge and understanding of core economic models and concepts in Themes 1 and 2, and then build on this and apply their knowledge to more complex concepts and models in Themes 3 and 4. Students will need to apply their knowledge and understanding to both familiar and unfamiliar contexts in the assessments and demonstrate an awareness of current economic events and policies.

Theme 3: Business behaviour and the labour market

This theme develops the microeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 1 and focuses on business economics. Students will develop an understanding of: business growth; business objectives; revenues, costs and profits; market structures; labour market; Government intervention.

Theme 4: A global perspective

This theme develops the macroeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 2 and focuses on global economics. Students will develop an understanding of: international economics; poverty and inequality; emerging and developing economies; the financial sector; role of the state in the macro economy.

A Level Assessment

Paper 1: Markets and business behaviour – 2 hours – 35% of total A level – 100 marks available

Questions will be drawn from Themes 1 and 3. The paper comprises three sections.

Students answer all questions from Section A and Section B, and one from Section C.

Section A comprises a range of multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

Section B comprises one data response question broken down into a number of parts.

Section C comprises a choice of two extended open-response questions; students select one.

Paper 2: The national and global economy – 2 hours – 35% of total A level – 100 marks available

Questions will be drawn from Themes 2 and 4. The paper comprises three sections.

Students answer all questions from Section A and Section B, and one from Section C (as per Paper 1).

Paper 3: Microeconomics and macroeconomics – 2 hours – 30% of total A level – 100 marks available

Questions will be drawn from all four themes. Students are required to apply their knowledge and understanding, make connections and transfer higher-order skills. The paper comprises two sections. Each section comprises one data response question broken down into a number of parts, including a choice of extended open-response questions; students select one from a choice of two.

Future Career Opportunities

Students with AS or Advanced GCE Economics have access to a wide range of possible career and higher education opportunities. You develop and use a variety of transferable skills throughout the course, including: collecting and analysing economic data from a variety of sources; communication and presentation; problem solving and evaluation; IT.

These skills are well recognised by and in great demand from employers and universities alike. Economics combines well with a range of science, social science and humanities subjects and may lead to university courses and careers in such areas as law, business, accounting, politics and, of course, economics.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

SPECIFICATION: ENGLISH LITERATURE H472

Why study this subject?

Studying for this subject encourages students to develop interest in and enjoyment of English Literature through reading widely, critically and independently across centuries, genre and forms, and through experience of an extensive range of views about texts and how to read them. Developing critical appreciation will encompass reading of literature traditional and new, in translation, fiction and non-fiction. Wherever possible the English Department supports classroom studies with visits to theatres etc.

Component One: Shakespeare, Drama and Poetry pre-1900

Section A: Shakespeare – the study of one Shakespeare play (*Hamlet*). Candidates should be able to: analyse the ways Shakespeare uses the effects of language, structure and form to shape meanings; consider how the issues raised in an extract in relation to their understanding of the play as a whole; consider the ways the play has been interpreted by different audiences

Section B: Drama and Poetry pre-1900 – the study of one play (*A Doll's House*) and one poem or collection of poems (Rossetti: *Selected Poems*). Candidates should be able to: demonstrate their understanding of the two texts and connections between them; consider the influence of contexts in which the texts were written; explore different interpretations of the texts.

Component Two: Comparative and Contextual Study (American Fiction, 1880—1940) – the study of at least two texts (*The Great Gatsby* and *The Grapes of Wrath*) in a selected genre. Candidates should be able to: analyse ways in which writers shape meanings; demonstrate understanding of the significance and influence of contexts in which literary texts are written and received; articulate informed, effective judgements of unseen extracts in relation to their selected genre.

Component Three: Literature Post-1900 – the study of three texts for two coursework tasks

Task One: close reading or re-creative writing with commentary on one literary text (*The Crucible*). Candidates should be able to: demonstrate close reading skills; identify how attitudes and values are expressed in the chosen text

Task Two: comparative essay on two literary texts. Candidates should be able to: explore the contexts of the texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them; identify and consider how values and attitudes are expressed in texts; explore connections between the texts.

A Level Assessment

Component One: Shakespeare, Drama and Poetry pre-1800: 2 hours 30 minutes exam (40% of A level)

Section A: Shakespeare

Candidates are required to produce responses to two tasks: the first requires close analysis of a given extract of the play; the second asks learners to consider a proposition about the play as a whole

Section B: Drama and Poetry pre-1800

Candidates answer one question from a choice of six thematic tasks and write an essay that discusses both texts in response.

Component Two: Comparative and Contextual Study: 2 hours 30 minutes examination (40% of A level)

Task A: Candidates are required to write a close critical analysis of an unseen prose extract in the genre they have studied

Task B: Candidates answer one question from a choice of three which requires discussion of at least two texts in the genre they have studied

Component Three: Coursework (20% of A level)

Candidates are required to submit two tasks: a close critical reading of an extract from one text (1000 words); an essay comparing two other texts (2000 words). All three texts must be thematically linked. Candidates must study one poetry, one prose and one drama text. At least one of these texts must have been first published or performed in 2000 or later. Texts in translation are not allowed.

Future Career Opportunities

The subject will complement almost any other and recently English students have gone on to study English Literature, Drama, Medicine, Architecture, Art and Design, Law, Politics, International Relations, Economics and humanities subjects like History and Geography.

FRENCH

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: FRENCH 7652T

Why study this subject?

In a shrinking world, in which business no longer recognises national frontiers, more and more people are realising how far language competence can broaden their horizons and career opportunities. The further study of a language covers a stimulating range of topics and offers fascinating insights into other cultures and inculcates valuable study skills, as well as developing indispensable communication skills.

French is a widely spoken language in the world: its further study will allow you to deepen your understanding of a wide range of Francophone cultures and enable you to engage with one of the most thriving and wide-ranging economic communities in the entire world, thus opening you innumerable doors for professional development in a range of careers.

Year 12 Course content

- Topics:

1. Aspects of French speaking society

- The changing nature of the family
- The cyber-society
- The place of voluntary work

2. Artistic culture in the French world

- A culture proud of its heritage
- Contemporary francophone music
- Cinema: the 7th art form

- Grammar

- Works (students must study either one text and one film or two texts)

Year 13 Course content

- Topics:

1. Aspects of French society

- The changing nature of the family
- Cyber society
- The place of voluntary work

2. Aspects of French speaking society

- Positive features of a diverse society
- Life of the marginalized
- How criminals are treated

3. Artistic culture in the French speaking world

- A culture proud of its heritage
- Contemporary francophone music
- Cinema: the 7th art

4. Aspects of political life in the French speaking world

- Today's youth, tomorrow's citizens
- Demonstrations and strikes
- Politics and immigration

- **Grammar**

- **Works** (students must study either one text or one film)

- **Individual research project**

A Level Assessment

Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing (40% of A Level)

This exam lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and assesses knowledge of the topics and grammar. Students will have to listen to spoken passages and read texts and produce written responses to comprehension questions. They will also have to produce translations into French and English

Paper 2: Writing (30% of A Level)

This exam lasts 2 hours and assesses one text and one film or two texts from the lists in the specification and grammar

Paper 3: Speaking (30% of A Level)

This exam lasts 21—23 minutes and assesses one sub-theme from the topics studied and the student's individual research project. The students will have to engage in a topic discussion based on a stimulus cards and then carry out a presentation and follow up discussion about their individual research project

Future Career Opportunities

Languages give excellent access to careers in international organisations, the civil service, journalism and the media and multinational firms, as well as specialist careers such as interpreting, teaching and translating. Languages combine particularly well with other humanities, business studies, economics and law and allow students to participate in study programmes abroad or a period abroad as part of another degree. With an increasing European focus in the job market, languages are more important than ever.

GEOGRAPHY

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: GEOGRAPHY 7037

Why study this subject?

If you are keen to explore and discuss the issues facing the planet's populations and the diverse physical and human environments they occupy, then Geography is for you. Successfully bridging the Arts / Science divide, it keeps career options wide open and complements other subject choices. Geography is a broad-reaching mix of topics, issues, skills and perspectives, all of which are applied to a stimulating and topical content base. It is a demanding academic subject that is highly valued amongst leading universities.

Year 12 Course content

Module content is taught in school and supported by fieldwork. We run an additional sixth form trip every other year.

Paper 1: Physical Geography

This module explores the different physical processes that shape our environment and the implications of these for people. It covers:

- Water and carbon cycles;
- Coastal systems and landscapes.
- Geography investigation and fieldwork

Paper 2: Human Geography

This module examines the human factors that shape our understanding of 'place' and how places can change over time. The content includes:

- Contemporary urban environments;
- Changing places;
- Geography investigation and fieldwork

Year 13 Course content

Paper 1: Physical Geography

This paper covers physical geographical processes in contrasting environments at different scales. It emphasises the links within and between different systems and the impact that these can have on people. The main content areas are:

- Hazards (includes hazards posed by tectonic activity and storms)

Time will also be given in the autumn term to complete the Non-examined assessment.

Paper 2: Human Geography

This paper examines the human processes that shape our understanding of different places and a number of key global issues. It explores themes which have wide-reaching geopolitical implications including trade, global political systems, the sharing of resources and how we change and develop places. The topics include:

- Global systems and governance;
- Revision

Non examined assessment

This is an independent investigation (coursework), based on fieldwork. It is marked by teachers and moderated externally. The report will be 3000 to 4000 words. Fieldwork is carried out in Year 12 and during the summer holidays. Time is given to write up the report independently.

A Level Assessment

Papers 1 and 2

Both papers are 2 hours 30 minutes long, have three sections, and are 40% of the A level (combined they are worth 80%). They involve answering multiple choice questions, structured data response questions, extended writing questions and an essay question.

Non-examined assessment

This is an independent investigation written by students. It is worth 20% of the A level.

Future Career Opportunities

Geographers are spread far and wide around the world of work. Always a popular degree choice at university, a geographical base followed by professional or vocational training is a common career pathway. Geographers are sought after in many occupations as, through the diversity covered in the subject, they combine relevant and applicable knowledge with a strong skills base and are regarded as flexible, adaptable and good at solving problems. Popular careers destinations are business, law, management consultancy, civil servants, diplomats, journalism and a range of environmentally based careers such as conservation and development.

HISTORY

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: HISTORY 7042CO

Why study this subject?

The main reason for studying History in the Sixth Form is an enjoyment of the subject. You should have an interest in the past and a desire to discuss issues. The skills required by the course are for students to be able to argue a case, both orally and on paper, and to be able to analyse evidence and draw conclusions from it. You should enjoy the opportunity of studying a variety of historical periods.

Year 12 Course content

The AS course looks at two very different periods of time, which contrast in style and provide a broad foundation for understanding the past.

Unit 1C: Part 1: The Tudors, 1485—1547

This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period. Content covered includes:

- The reign of Henry VII: consolidation, threats and character.
- The role of Wolsey as Principal Minister and domestic reforms introduced.
- The government and parliament of Henry VIII
- Religious revolution and Reformation.
- England's relationship with foreign governments.

Unit 2O: Democracy and Nazism: Germany, 1918—1933

This option provides the opportunity to study a period of major change in depth, focusing on key ideas, events and developments, including:

- The political crises and the establishment of the Weimar Constitution in 1919
- The impact of the Versailles peace settlement on Germany
- Politics and economy in the 1920s, including the hyperinflation and the period of recovery
- Weimar culture and international recovery
- The collapse of democracy and the rise of Hitler.

Year 13 Course content

The full A Level course covers all of the content studied in Year 12 and continues developing the same topics in Year 13.

Unit 1C: Part 2: England, 1547—1603: Turmoil and Triumph

This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period. Content covered includes:

- Edward VI's minority, government and religious change
- Government under Mary; religious changes and their impact; foreign relations
- Elizabeth as queen: character, aims and image
- The religious settlement and challenges to it including rebellion
- Government, ministers and relations with parliament
- England's relations with foreign powers
- Relations with parliament, the problems of succession and Mary, Queen of Scots
- England's relations with foreign powers

Unit 20: Part 2: Nazi Germany, 1933—1945

This option provides the opportunity to study a period of major change in depth, focusing on key ideas, events and developments, including:

- Hitler's consolidation of power, 1933—1934
- The structure and workings of the Nazi state and relations with the industrial and military elites
- Indoctrination, propaganda and Nazi organisations and the impact of Nazism on different sections of society; Opposition and the impact of the Terror State
- Nazi racial ideology and anti-Semitism.

Historical Investigation: The Historical Investigation requires students to submit a Historical Investigation based on a development or issue which has been subject to different historical interpretations. It will cover a period of 100 years and will be approximately 3500—4500 words.

A Level Assessment

Unit 1: 2 hours 30 minutes

Candidates answer a compulsory source based question and two (from a choice of 3) essay questions.

Unit 2: 2 hours 30 minutes

Candidates answer a compulsory source based question and two (from a choice of 3) essay questions.

Future Career Opportunities

The skills learnt in History, such as the ability to analyse information, argue a case and express yourself clearly on paper and verbally, are highly respected by employers. As a result, History is an established route into law, accountancy, business management, the media and many other professions. History is now an entry requirement for some law and English courses at university.

LATIN

Examination Board: OCR

Specification: Latin H443

Why study this subject?

You will deepen and extend your knowledge of how languages work and use that knowledge to find solutions to set problems. You will read some great literature and comment upon it. You will think flexibly and meet challenges with confidence. Latin is widely valued and respected by universities as a qualification for any course, but especially Classics. We hope to offer a visit to Rome and the Bay of Naples during the course.

Year 12 Course Content

Unit L1: Latin Language

The main focus of this unit is the language of authors of the 1st Century BC and the 1st Century AD. You will build on the language skills developed at GCSE, increasing your knowledge and understanding of various linguistic structures. There is a word list of about 800 words, of which 467 have already appeared on your GCSE list, meaning you have about 330 new words to learn.

Unit L2: Latin Prose and Verse Literature

You will read one verse and one prose text, each consisting of 200 lines – making 400 lines in all. You will translate, comment upon and appreciate this literature, learning to examine the purposes of the authors more closely than you did at GCSE. You will continue to use the same literary terms as you did at GCSE. The prose text for next year is a legal speech by Cicero defending a disgraced politician. The verse text is from Virgil's Aeneid and tells of the fall of Troy and the escape of Aeneas and his family.

Year 13 Course Content

Unit 1: Latin Verse

Literature

This unit will involve the study of one Latin verse text of 250 lines. Literary criticism, cultural background and personal response will all be key to the study of the poem. . The verse A2 text is Ovid's Fasti, which comprises of origin stories of Roman festivals and the foundation of Rome. The lines covered include the story of Lucretia, the expulsion of the Roman kings and the origins of the Lupercalia.

Unit 2: Latin Prose Literature

This unit will involve the study of one Latin prose text of 250 lines. Literary criticism, cultural background and personal response will also be key to understanding the historical context of the passage. The prose A2 text is Tacitus' Annals which tells the history of the emperors of Rome. The selection covers one of the most turbulent times in Roman history after the ascension of Tiberius and the murder of several members of the imperial family.

Unit 3: Latin Unseen Translation

This unit builds on the language skills developed at AS, increasing your knowledge and understanding of translation passages. All grammar and syntax is covered during Year 12 and revised in Year 13. The unit also includes a short question on scanning the rhythm of two lines of the verse poetry unseen translation.

Unit L4: Latin Prose

In this unit you will build up to translating a short passage into Latin. You will build on the linguistic competence developed at AS level and consolidate your understanding of more complex linguistic structures and increase your vocabulary. You will also learn to write in stylish Latin mimicking the writing of the great Roman authors.

The vocabulary for this unit is all taken from the AS vocabulary list which we review during the course of Year 13.

A Level Assessment

Unit 1: Unseen Translation

1 hour 45 minute paper (33% of A Level)

Translate a passage of prose into English and a passage of verse into English. There will also be a question on scansion.

Unit 2: Prose Composition

1 hour 15 minute paper (17% of A Level)

Translate a passage of prose from English into Latin (50 marks)

Unit 3: Latin Prose Literature

2 hour examination (25% of A level).

Answer commentary questions on the text.

Unit 4: Latin Verse Literature

2 hour examination (25% of A level).

Answer commentary questions on the text.

Future Career Opportunities

Latin is a highly regarded qualification for most degree courses, both arts and sciences. It is an excellent basis for degrees in English, history, modern languages and law. A Level Latinists can also do a Latin or classics degree and diversify into ancient history or civilisation, Greek, archaeology, linguistics or philosophy. Having an A Level in Latin demonstrates your problem-solving skills, attention to detail and cultural appreciation.

MATHEMATICS

EXAMINATION BOARD: EDEXCEL

SPECIFICATION: MATHEMATICS 9MA0

Why study this subject?

Although traditionally seen as complementing the sciences, mathematics forms a compatible combination with many other subjects and is very popular with employers. The statistics element of the course may be particularly helpful with geography, economics, biology and psychology while the mechanics units are helpful for students who hope to study physics or engineering.

There are two different routes of studying Mathematics in Y12:

Route 1 (M1): Study the Mathematics A Level course over 2 years.

Route 2 (M2): Study the A Level course in one year with the intention of studying Further Mathematics in Y13. All exams to be sat at the end of Y13. This route requires more mathematics lessons per week and the pace is fast. For entry criteria to Route 2 Maths, please refer to the school's Sixth Form Admissions Policy, available in the admissions section of the school website.

Please note that it may not be possible to transfer between routes once the course has started.

A Level Course content

Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Statistics are studied.

In Pure Mathematics the topics include proof, algebra and trigonometry together with differentiation and integration.

The Statistics unit includes probability, handling of data, correlation, the Binomial and Normal distributions and hypothesis testing.

The Mechanics unit covers kinematics, the application of Newton's Laws and moments.

A Level Assessment

Papers 1 and 2: 2 hour papers assessing Pure Mathematics (each has a 1/3 weighting)

Paper 3: 2 hour paper assessing Mechanics and Statistics (this paper has a 1/3 weighting)

Future Career Opportunities

Mathematics is welcomed by Higher Education for admission to degrees in the sciences, geography, computer science, economics and business studies, as well as being an essential requirement for engineering degree courses. Many of the top City people (fund managers, etc.) have mathematics degrees.

Students intending to study mathematics at degree level should consider studying Route 2 and taking either an AS or A level in Further Mathematics.

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

EXAMINATION BOARD: EDEXCEL

SPECIFICATION: FURTHER MATHEMATICS (AS LEVEL 8FM0C; A LEVEL 9FM0CO)

Please note that Further Mathematics is only available to study in Year 13

Why study this subject?

If you have a particular talent and enjoy mathematics then you should consider studying Further Mathematics. You will extend the knowledge you already have gained through studying the A level course and encounter new areas of mathematics. The mathematics covered will be helpful not just to students intending to study mathematics at degree level but to any potential physicists, engineers or computer scientists. For Route 2 mathematicians it is possible to study either AS or A Level Further Maths in Y13.

AS Level Course content

For AS level you will study Core Pure Mathematics 1 topics such as complex numbers, matrices, vectors, proof and further calculus. This combines with a selection of topics from Further Mechanics 1 and Further Pure Mathematics 1 options.

In Further Mechanics 1 concepts such as momentum and impulse are introduced along with elastic collisions and work, energy and power.

In Further Pure Mathematics 1 coordinate systems, trigonometry, vectors and numerical methods are studied.

AS Level Assessment

Paper 1: one paper of 1 hour 40 minutes assessing Core Pure Mathematics 1 (weighting of 50%)

Paper 2: one paper of 1 hour 40 minutes assessing Further Mechanics 1 and Further Pure 1 (weighting of 50%)

A Level Course content

For A level you will study Core Pure Mathematics 1 and 2, together with the options Further Mechanics 1 and Further Pure Mathematics 1.

Core Pure Mathematics topics include proof, algebra, matrices, more advanced work on vectors together with polar coordinates, hyperbolic functions and more advanced methods of differentiation and integration.

Further Mechanics 1 includes the AS topics plus impulse-momentum and elastic energy.

Further Pure Mathematics 1 includes the AS topics plus further calculus and differential equations.

A Level Assessment

It is important to note that whilst the AS content forms part of the A level syllabus all the assessment of the A level course is at a more demanding level than at AS.

Paper 1: Core Pure Mathematics 1 – one paper of 1 hour 30 minutes (weighting of 25%)

Paper 2: Core Pure Mathematics 2 – one paper of 1 hour 30 minutes (weighting of 25%)

Paper 3: Further Mechanics 1 – one paper of 1 hour 30 minutes (weighting of 25 %)

Paper 4: Further Pure Mathematics 1 – one paper of 1 hour 30 minutes (weighting of 25 %)

Future Career Opportunities

Students who want to study for a degree in Mathematics, particularly at top institutions, should be doing Further Mathematics. Anyone who is considering a degree in a mathematically related subject would benefit from studying Further Maths, e.g. physics, engineering, computer science, some economics courses.

MUSIC

EXAMINATION BOARD: EDUQAS

SPECIFICATION: MUSIC A660PA /A660PB

Music is unique in its balance of logic and creativity: it is a science, an art, a humanity and a language and thus complements the full gamut of subject combinations. It is highly regarded by universities in recognition of this breadth. Recent A level Music students have gone on to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities to study Maths, Medicine, Physics, Law, History of Art, English, History, and more. Many others have gone on to read Music at Oxbridge, Russell Group universities, and conservatoires, individually supported by the department in their applications, and in preparing for choral scholarships where desired.

The Department runs a vibrant co-curricular programme and Sixth Form students have the opportunity to direct an ensemble or choir. A level Music lessons are relaxed yet purposeful, taking a quasi-seminar format, which we feel prepares students for a university setting.

Course Content

The A level course has three components: performing and composing (60% overall with choice of weighting) and appraising (40%). The course allows students the flexibility to opt for additional weighting in either composing or performing, via Option A / B choices explained below.

Component 1: Performing, externally assessed by a visiting examiner in the Spring of Year 13

Students opt either for Option A or Option B.

Either

Option A: Total duration of performances: **10—12 minutes / 35%** of qualification.

A performance consisting of a minimum of **three** pieces. At least one of these pieces must be as a soloist. The other pieces may be either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. One piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one area of study. At least one other piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one other, different area of study.

or

Option B: Total duration of performances: **6—8 minutes / 25%** of qualification.

A performance consisting of a minimum of **two** pieces either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. One piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one area of study.

Component 2: Composing, externally assessed by the WJEC in Year 13

Either

Option A: Total duration of compositions: **4—6 minutes / 25%** of qualification.

Students write **two compositions**, one of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will have a choice of four set briefs, released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition.

or

Option B: Total duration of compositions: **8—10 minutes / 35%** of qualification.

Students write **three compositions**, one of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will have a choice of four set briefs, released during the first week of September in Year 13. The second

composition must reflect the musical characteristics of one different area of study (i.e. not the Western Classical Tradition), while the third composition is a free composition.

Component 3: Appraising listening examination (in the summer of Year 13). **2 hours 15 minutes, 40%** of qualification. This is a written examination, consisting of set work analysis with a score, extended responses on wider context, unprepared extracts of music with and without a score, and comparison questions.

There are three areas of study:

The Western Classical Tradition

We study the development of the Symphony 1750-1900, exploring its origins, the leading figures of the Enlightenment, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, and the remarkable development of the symphony in the Romantic period, as instrumental music became increasingly politicised in the War of the Romantics, ultimately leading to the musical variety of the early twentieth century. In further depth, we explore two set works; one for detailed analysis and the other for general study: Haydn's 'London' Symphony No. 104 and Mendelssohn's 'Italian' Symphony No. 4. In this course, students take their musical skills to the next level, analysing symphonic scores, exploring the principles of harmony and counterpoint, developing aural skills and academic writing, and a critical, enquiring mind.

Jazz 1920—1960

Students study Jazz 1920—1960, beginning with Jazz's roots in many different musical styles in and around New Orleans and New York. The enormous influence of Ragtime and the piano craze, alongside the rural Blues led Buddy Bolden to create the first Jazz, and with the advent of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, this new music went global. Students learn the characteristics of New Orleans Jazz (focussing on King Oliver and Louis Armstrong's Hot Five and Hot Seven), and the Early Jazz as typified by Jelly Roll Morton and his Red Hot Peppers, as well as Fats Waller, Jack Teagarden and Eddie Condon. The Swing Era style of Benny Goodman, Duke Ellington and Count Basie took over the world with their infectious swing and popular dance styles; bandleaders became celebrities and their singers (eg Ella Fitzgerald and Frank Sinatra) became stars.

In Year 12, students finish their focus with the revolutionary and virtuosic small-group music of Bebop, typified by the playing of Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Thelonious Monk. In Year 13, students look at the 1950s' reaction to Bebop: Cool Jazz, seen through the music of Miles Davis, Stan Getz, Chet Baker, Claude Thornhill and others. Throughout the course, students develop their aural skills by discerning different aspects of Jazz by ear, learning to differentiate and describe exactly what they hear in response to stimuli. They also learn more than 20 standards and develop their understanding of Jazz through playing and improvising.

Into the Twentieth Century

In this topic, students explore the music of the early 20th century, a fascinating period in which musical practice and thought split into a number of 'isms', principally Impressionism, Expressionism, and Neoclassicism. Students develop the skills to identify these styles and explore the more complex concepts inherent in this music. Our study focuses on two set works: Poulenc's 'Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano', Movement 2 and Debussy's 'Nuages' from the 'Trois Nocturnes' for orchestra.

PHYSICS

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: PHYSICS 7408A

Why study this subject?

Physics is an intellectually challenging subject that rewards you with a deeper understanding of how the world works. It is the study of everything: from particles smaller than an atom to the entire Universe; from the Big Bang to how your Oyster Card works. Physics gives you the skills to think logically and to solve problems that arise in everyday life.

Year 12 Course content

Section 1: Measurements and their errors

This section provides the student with a working knowledge of the specified fundamental (base) units of measurement. It deals with the need for practical work in the subject to be underpinned by an awareness of the nature of measurement errors and of their numerical treatment.

Section 2: Particles and Radiation

This section introduces students both to the fundamental properties of matter, and to electromagnetic radiation and quantum phenomena. They will appreciate the importance of international collaboration in the development of new experiments and theories in this area of fundamental research.

Section 3: Waves

GCSE studies of wave phenomena are extended through a development of knowledge of the characteristics, properties, and applications of travelling waves and stationary waves. Students will learn more about refraction, diffraction, superposition and interference.

Section 4: Mechanics and Materials

This AS module is about the principles and applications of mechanics and materials. Vectors and their treatment are introduced followed by development of the student's knowledge and understanding of forces, energy and momentum. The section continues with a study of materials considered in terms of their bulk properties and tensile strength.

Section 5: Electricity

This section builds on and develops earlier study of these phenomena from GCSE. It provides opportunities for the development of practical skills at an early stage in the course and lays the groundwork for later study of the many electrical applications that are important to society.

Section 6 Further Mechanics and Thermal Physics

The earlier study of mechanics is further advanced through a consideration of circular motion and simple harmonic motion (the harmonic oscillator). A further section allows the thermal properties of materials, the properties and nature of ideal gases, and the molecular kinetic theory to be studied in depth.

Year 13 Course content

Section 7 Fields and Their Consequences

The concept of field is one of the great unifying ideas in physics. The ideas of gravitation, electrostatics and magnetic field theory are developed within the topic to emphasise this unification. Many ideas from mechanics and electricity from earlier in the course support this and are further developed. Practical applications considered include: planetary and satellite orbits, capacitance and capacitors, their charge and discharge through resistors, and electromagnetic induction. These topics have considerable impact on modern society.

Section 8 Nuclear Physics

This section builds on the work of Particles and radiation to link the properties of the nucleus to the production of nuclear power through the characteristics of the nucleus, the properties of unstable nuclei, and the link between energy and mass. Students should become aware of the physics that underpins nuclear energy production and also of the impact that it can have on society.

Section 9 Option Topic: Astrophysics

This option applies fundamental physical principles to the study and interpretation of the Universe. Students gain deeper insight into the behaviour of objects at great distances from Earth and discover the ways in which information from these objects can be gathered. The underlying physical principles of the devices used are covered and some indication is given of the new information gained by the use of radio astronomy.

A Level Assessment

Paper 1 Sections 1—6.1 (further mechanics) are assessed (34% of A Level)

Written Examination. 2 hours, 85 marks

60 marks of short and long answer questions.

25 multiple choice questions each worth one mark.

Paper 2 Sections 6.2 (Thermal Physics) – 8 with assumed knowledge of sections 1—6.1 (34% of A Level)

Written Examination. 2 hours, 85 marks

60 marks of short and long answer questions.

25 multiple choice questions each worth one mark.

Paper 3 Practical Skills and Options Topic (32% of A Level)

Section A: Practical Skills and Data Analysis. 45 marks of short and long answer questions.

Section B: Option Topic. 35 marks of short and long answer questions.

Future Career Opportunities

Upon taking this course, Students develop practical and problem solving skills which are relevant to a vast number of career paths. Students taking A Level Physics go on to study a variety of Scientific courses including Physics, Engineering, Architecture and Medicine. It can also be desirable for many other professions where the ability to think logically, apply ideas to new situations and solve problems are considered to be valuable skills.

PSYCHOLOGY

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: PSYCHOLOGY 7182

Why study this subject?

Psychology is the study of human behaviour and mental processes that underlie our thoughts, feelings and actions. If you are curious about how the mind works, and why we behave the way we do then you will find psychology a stimulating and fulfilling course.

Psychology bridges the gap between art and science and, as such, it is not out of place alongside the three sciences or the arts/humanities. Psychology students benefit from the opportunity to develop extended writing and research methods skills, alongside utilising biological and mathematical knowledge. Many students choose Psychology because they want to study a new subject, to make a change from those they have taken at GCSE. Not only is it an exciting and intriguing subject (which students then choose to pursue at Oxbridge and other universities), but it also provides an ideal foundation for many university courses including medicine, law, economics and media.

Course content

First year topics include:

- Social influence, for example why we obey authority;
- human memory and why we remember some things and forget others;
- how our attachments to our primary caregivers affect our development;
- what is normal and abnormal human behaviour;
- how we treat the behaviour we deem abnormal;
- how psychologists use different research methods to study the different areas of Psychology.

Second year topics include:

- Issues and debates, students discuss key debates and issues that may affect conclusions in psychology. For example, the relative contribution of nature and nurture to human behaviour;
- relationships, looking at factors which influence attraction and the process of a relationship breakdown;
- schizophrenia, biological and psychological factors influencing the development and treatment of schizophrenia;
- forensic psychology, including offender profiling and explanations for offending behaviour.

A Level Assessment

Paper 1: Introductory topics in Psychology: Written paper – 2 hours (33.3% of A level)

Section A: Social Influence - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section B: Memory - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section C: Attachment - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section D: Psychopathology - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Paper 2: Psychology in context: Written paper – 2 hours (33.3% of A level)

Section A: Approaches in Psychology - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section B: Biopsychology - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section C: Research Methods - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 48 marks

Paper 3: Issues and options in Psychology: Written Paper – 2 hours (33.3% of A level)

Section A: Issues and debates - Multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section B: **Relationships** or gender or cognition and development - One topic from the options, examined using a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section C: **Schizophrenia** or eating behaviour or stress - One topic from the options, examined using a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Section D: Aggression or **forensics** or addiction - One topic from the options, examined using a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing, 24 marks

Future Career Opportunities

As a cross-disciplinary subject that involves understanding and producing both numerical and written content, A Level psychology prepares you well for most degrees and careers. Psychology is an integral part of much professional training (e.g. medicine, law and business) and so would form a good basis for any career, whether or not you decide to study it at degree level. Typical career areas include educational, clinical, occupational, forensic psychology and research. Many psychology graduates also go into business, marketing, advertising, personnel work and law.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

EXAMINATION BOARD: OCR

SPECIFICATION: RELIGIOUS STUDIES H573A

Why study this subject?

The course offers a disciplined academic approach to the study of religion, philosophy and ethics and is equally suitable for those who have a religious commitment and those who have none. It will allow you to develop knowledge, understanding and skills by adopting an enquiring, critical and reflective approach. It will allow you to reflect on your own values, opinions and attitudes. RS students learn key transferable skills of critical questioning and analysis, free thinking and independence of mind. They develop their ability to construct cogent, written arguments. They gain a more sophisticated understanding of the history of ideas, which provides excellent contextual knowledge for other A Level subjects.

Religious Studies (RS) is a subject that covers a very wide range of issues and skills. Most people do not study RS because they want to become theologians or to work in the church. Nor do you have to have any strong religious views yourself (RS involves exploring and challenging religious convictions). You will enjoy RS if you are interested in the type of issues it covers; you will be good at it if you can train yourself to think logically and accurately, to understand a range of theories and to evaluate them critically, to study primary source material carefully and to represent the ideas of others fairly, and to write clear, well-organised essays. RS is principally a subject that involves reading and essay writing, so your ability in subjects such as English and History at GCSE may indicate your likely suitability for the subject at A level. You do not need to have studied RS at GCSE.

Course content

Philosophy of Religion to include:

- ancient philosophical influences
- arguments about the existence of God
- the nature and impact of religious experience
- the challenge of religious belief of the problem of evil
- the nature of the soul, mind and body
- ideas about the nature of God
- issues in religious language

Religion and Ethics to include:

- normative ethical theories
- the application of ethical theory to two contemporary issues of importance
- ethical language and thought
- debates surrounding the significant idea of conscience
- sexual ethics and the influence on ethical thought of developments in religious beliefs

Developments in Christian Religious Thought to include:

- St Augustine's view of human nature
- death and the afterlife
- knowledge of God's existence
- person of Jesus Christ
- Christian moral principles
- Christian moral action through the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer

- religious pluralism
- gender, society and theology
- secularism
- Liberation Theology and Marx

A Level Assessment

These will be assessed by three two-hour written exams equally weighted at 33.3%

Future Career Opportunities

Religious Studies provides the opportunity to hone a wide range of skills, such as the ability to analyse a range of information in detail, communicating ideas verbally and in writing, as well as cultural literacy and interpersonal skills. These skills are highly valued by employers, and therefore Religious Studies lends itself to a wide range of careers. Students who complete A Level Religious Studies have in the past gone on to complete a degree in subjects such as theology, law, history, medicine, philosophy, psychology, and government and politics.

SPANISH

EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA

SPECIFICATION: SPANISH 7692T

Why study this subject?

The further study of a language covers a stimulating range of topics, offers fascinating insights into other cultures and inculcates valuable study skills, as well as developing indispensable communication skills.

Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world; its further study will allow you to deepen your understanding of a wide range of Hispanic cultures and enable you to engage with one of the most thriving and wide-ranging economic communities in the world, thus opening innumerable doors for professional development in a range of careers.

A Level Course content

Topics:

Aspects of Hispanic society

- Modern and traditional values
- Cyberspace
- Equal rights

Multiculturalism in Hispanic society

- Immigration
- Racism
- Integration

Artistic culture in the Hispanic world

- Modern day idols
- Spanish regional identity
- Cultural heritage

Aspects of political life in the Hispanic world

- Today's youth, tomorrow's citizens
- Monarchies and dictatorships
- Popular movements

Grammar

Works (students must study one film and one text)

Individual research project

A Level Assessment

Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing (40% of A Level)

This exam lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and assesses knowledge of the topics and grammar. Students will have to listen to spoken passages and read texts and produce written responses to comprehension questions. They will also have to produce translations into Spanish and English

Paper 2: Writing (30% of A Level)

This exam lasts 2 hours and assesses one text and one film or two texts from the lists in the specification and grammar

Paper 3: Speaking (30% of A Level)

This exam lasts 21—23 minutes and assesses one sub-theme from the topics studied and the student's individual research project. The students will have to engage in a topic discussion based on stimulus cards and then carry out a presentation and follow up discussion about their individual research project

Future Career Opportunities

Studying languages gives excellent access to careers in international organisations, the civil service, journalism and the media and multinational firms, as well as specialist careers such as translating and interpreting. Languages combine particularly well with other humanities, business studies, economics and law and allow students to participate in study programmes abroad or a period abroad as part of another degree. With an increasing European focus in the job market, languages are more important than ever.