



Dame Alice Owen's School

Advanced Level Courses

For September 2023 admissions

PLEASE NOTE: The provision of 'A' Level courses will depend on the number of applicants and staff availability.



ART AND DESIGN

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Entry requirements:	6 in GCSE Art
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course outline

The A level course comprises the development of a portfolio of work over a two year period and is split into two components. Component 1 - The Personal Investigation is coursework based and Component 2 - Externally Set Exam (ESA).

Component 1: Students are to generate practical work in response to the theme of 'Contrast' demonstrating sequential development of ideas and research from both primary, secondary and contextual sources. Students are encouraged to experiment with media, processes and relate their work to that of other artists, whilst developing and refining their work towards personal outcome(s). In addition, students are to submit a piece of continuous prose of a minimum 1000 words known as the personal study

Component 2: A theme-based assignment set by Edexcel, represents the culmination of the A level course with work produced during the preparatory period and 15 hours of controlled assessment.

A Level

Component 1 of the A Level carries 60% of the grade. This includes a portfolio of work and an illustrative dissertation. The exam is worth 40% of the grade.

The course must document evidence of at least two art disciplines ranging from the following: Fine Art, Graphics, Installation, Sculpture, Textiles and Photography

Marks for both units are awarded for:

- Developing ideas through sustained investigations
- Experimenting with resources, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing and refining work as it progresses.
- Recording in visual and other forms, ideas, observations and insights relevant to intentions.
- Presenting a personal, informed and meaningful response, demonstrating critical understanding and realising intentions

Assessment

Work is assessed regularly and summatively with art staff consistently providing one to one tuition during lessons to support and guide the students. Half termly critiques encourage students to share and discuss ideas with their peers. It is essential that students always have their sketchbook for every lesson to document progress.



Extra Information

The syllabus is designed to continue from and compliment the GCSE course and is intended to meet the needs of the following groups of candidates:

- Students who wish to undertake further studies in art, craft and design, usually at Art College and Higher Education.
- Students who are considering careers for which an art background is relevant. These might include advertising, publishing, architecture, museum, theatre or art gallery work.
- Students who have an interest in and aptitude for the subject but who do not intend to take the subject beyond A Level, but wish to add breadth to their advanced level education in the Sixth Form.

There are no compulsory trips although the examiners favourably comment upon gallery visits of our Art Study Tours to Paris, Florence, Madrid and Barcelona. Any work beyond the classroom such as life drawing and via The Creative Dimension Trust (a series of free specialist crafts-based workshops) can also be submitted for assessment.

We recommend at least grade 6 for A level entry in order to meet the assessment objectives with confidence. The Art studios are open to all A level students at any time where students are free to use the facilities to continue with coursework. As an A level Art student, you are also encouraged to join the Creative Crew which helps to design and paint the set for the drama productions and to be a young leader by supporting members of the lower school by running the Pottery or Origami Club or by providing support in lower school lessons. This helps to build your confidence when presenting and can be included in your UCAS/Art Foundation Application.

In recent years, students have successfully applied and gained entry to established further and higher education courses including Central St. Martins, The Royal Drawing School, Kingston and Cambridge University. In recognition for their outstanding work, students have exhibited work at The Mall Galleries in London and The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. Moderators have praised our exemplary documentation and superb exhibition highlighting accurate assessment as a strength across all objectives. 'The centre is to be commended on its accurate marking and the students are to be congratulated on their sophisticated realisations and diverse use of media'.



BIOLOGY

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry requirements:	Grade 6 in Maths. Grades 7,6 in Combined Science GCSE or grade 6 in GCSE Biology. Those students with a 7, 6 grade in Combined Science are expected to have achieved a grade 7 in the Biology components
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course outline

Biology A-level goes into much more detail than you will have covered at GCSE. It will give you the skills to make connections and associations with all living things around you. Biology literally means the study of life and if that's not important, what is? Being such a broad topic, you're bound to find a specific area of interest, plus it opens the door to a fantastic range of interesting degrees such as:

- Biology
- Psychology
- Sport and exercise science
- Medicine
- Anatomy
- Physiology and Pathology Pharmacology
- Toxicology and Pharmacy

Core content

First year of A-level

- Biological molecules
- Cells
- Organisms exchange substances with their environment
- Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms

Second year of A-level

- Energy transfers in and between organisms
- Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments
- Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- The control of gene expression

Practicals

Biology, like all sciences, is a practical subject. Throughout the course you will carry out practical activities including:

- using microscopes to see cell division
- dissection of animal and plant systems
- aseptic technique to study microbial growth
- investigating activity within cells
- investigating animal behaviours



These practicals you will give you the skills and confidence needed to investigate the way living things behave and work. It will also ensure that if you choose to study a Biology-based subject at University, you'll have the practical skills needed to carry out successful experiments in your degree.

Exams

There are three exams at the end of the two years for A-level, all of which are two hours long. At least 15% of the marks for A-level Biology are based on what you learned in your practicals.



BUSINESS

Examination Board:	EDEXCEL
Entry requirements:	6 in GCSE Business Studies or an equivalent subject
Pre-requisite GCSE:	No
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course outline

Business is front-page news and the course exposes students to a broad range of business scenarios from the outset, in order to explore and understand business behaviour and develop a critical understanding of what business is and does. The course integrates up to date topic areas such as digital technology and e-commerce. Students will develop their analytical and evaluative skills crucial for success at University and the world of work. Most of the assessment material is based on real world scenarios and therefore students will be required to interpret up to date case studies. Business is a very marketable A Level which acts as a great foundation for a range of related degrees.

The qualification is structured into four themes and consists of three externally examined papers.

Theme 1

- Meeting customer needs
- The market
- Marketing mix and strategy
- Managing people
- Entrepreneurs and leaders

Theme 2

- Raising finance
- Financial planning
- Managing finance
- Resource management
- External influences

Theme 3

- Business objectives and strategy
- Business growth
- Decision-making techniques
- Influences on business decisions
- Assessing competitiveness
- Managing change

Theme 4

- Globalisation
- Global markets and business expansion
- Global marketing
- Global industries and companies



Exams

- Paper 1: Marketing, people and global business (Theme 1 & 4).
- Paper 2: Business activities, decisions and strategy (Theme 2 & 3)
- Paper 3: Investigating business in a competitive environment (synoptic).

For further information of the course structure, please visit: -

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/business-2015.html>



CHEMISTRY

Examination Board:	AQA - Specifications 7404 (AS) and 7405 (A-level).
Entry requirements:	Grade 6 in Maths. Grade 7,6 in Combined Science GCSE or Grade 6 GCSE Chemistry. Students with a 7,6 grade in Additional Science are expected to have achieved a 7 grade in the Chemistry component.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Chemistry GCSE or Additional Science
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course outline

The course is divided in a traditional manner into physical, inorganic and organic chemistry.

Practical Work

There are 12 compulsory practicals to be carried out during the A-level course although practical skills are not assessed. However 15% of the marks in the final papers are assigned to assessment of understanding of experimental procedures and use of experimental results.

A-Level

The content at A-level is as follows:

- *Physical chemistry* - Atomic structure; Amount of substance; Bonding; Energetics; Equilibria; Oxidation and reduction
- *Inorganic chemistry* - Periodicity; Group 2; Group 7;
- *Organic chemistry* - Alkanes, halogenalkanes; Alkenes; Alcohols; Organic analysis
- *Physical Chemistry* - Thermodynamics; Rate equations; Equilibrium constant K_p ; Electrode potentials; Acid and bases;
- *Inorganic Chemistry* - Transition metals; Reactions of ions in aqueous solution;
- *Organic Chemistry* - Optical isomerism; Aldehydes and ketones; Carboxylic acids and their derivatives; Aromatic chemistry; Amines; Polymers; Amino acids, proteins and DNA; Organic synthesis; NMR; Chromatography

Exams

At the end of the second year there are 3 papers, all of which are 2 hours long

- Paper 1 Physical chemistry and inorganic chemistry
- Paper 2 Physical chemistry and organic chemistry
- Paper 3 All content



COMPUTER SCIENCE

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry requirements:	6 in GCSE Computer Science, 6 in GCSE Maths & an aptitude for programming.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course outline

We live in a digital world and understanding how the machines, which we use for large parts of our lives, work is becoming an increasingly valuable asset. This A Level is not just for students interested in a career in computing, but also for those who may go into a wide range of work areas including science, engineering or business. This course consists of both the theory of computing (here, an interest in Maths is useful although you don't have to be studying A Level Maths), and practical programming is an art which requires lots of practice – it is hugely rewarding if you are resilient and enjoy solving problems). You will get to code in both an exam and the non-examined assessment (coursework).

Topics

1. Programming
2. Data structures
3. Algorithms
4. Computational theory
5. Data representation
6. Computer systems
7. Computer organisation and architecture
8. Ethical, legal and cultural issues around computing
9. Communication and networking
10. Databases
11. Big data
12. Functional programming
13. Problem solving using systems

Exam Structure

Paper 1

On screen exam as it involves coding
 2hrs 30mins (100 marks), 40% of A Level
 Questions on topics 1 to 4 above

Paper 2

Written paper
 2hrs 30mins (100 marks), 40% of A Level
 Questions on topics 5-13 above

Non-Examined Assessment



75 marks, 20% of A Level

This is a coursework project which will be started at the end of Year 12. It's a great opportunity to plan and code a solution to a problem you have chosen yourself. Real examples have included a robot which maps out a new environment and can then route efficiently around it, a 'tank war' game which fire projectiles at an enemy taking account of height, force and wind speed, and a simulation of genetic mutations over multiple generations.



DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Examination Board:	OCR
Entry Requirements:	6 in Design and Technology
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Design & Technology GCSE course
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

Design and Technology is an inspiring and rigorous course, which has been designed to strengthen learners' critical thinking and problem solving skills within a creative environment enabling learners to design and make high quality products that solve real world problems. Students will consider their own and others' needs, wants, aspirations and values.

Design and Technology: Product Design A Level will encourage learners to:

- develop the capacity to think creatively, innovatively and critically through focused research and the exploration of design opportunities arising from the needs, wants and values of users and clients
- be open to taking design risks, showing innovation and enterprise whilst considering their role as responsible designers and citizens
- develop intellectual curiosity about the design and manufacture of products and systems, and their impact on daily life and the wider world
- have a critical understanding of the wider influences on design and technology, including cultural, economic, environmental, historical and social factors
- develop a strong core theory knowledge and understanding of principles in design and technology enabling them to make informed decisions in broader contexts
- be able to create and analyse a design concept and use a range of skills and knowledge from other subject areas, including Mathematics and Science, to inform decisions in design and the application or development of technology
- gain an insight into the creative, engineering and/or manufacturing industries
- be able to make informed design decisions through an in-depth understanding of the management and development of taking a design through to a prototype/product

Course content

- Student's work is mainly workshop based using a variety of graphic, resistant and compliant materials.
- The knowledge and understanding required for the examination will take the form of detailed studies, essays and reports conducted throughout the course.
- Teaching takes the form of lectures, discussion, videos, visits and workshop projects.



Exam

Unit 1: Principles written Paper

75 Marks (25% of total A Level)

1 hour 30 minutes

Unit 2: Problem solving written Paper

75 marks (25% of total A Level)

2 hours 30 minutes

Non Exam Assessment

Units 3 & 4: Iterative Design Project

150 marks Approx. (50% of total A Level)

65 hours

Students undertake a substantial design, make and evaluate project centred on the iterative process. Students will identify a design opportunity or problem from their own choice. A portfolio will document their design journey

Extra Information

Visits to the Design Museum and The New Designers Graduate Show are arranged.

As part of the London Design Festival (September), students are encouraged to visit 100% Design, Designers block, Design Junction and Open House in their own time for cultural enrichment.

An A Level in Design and Technology: Product design, together with two other A' levels at a good grade will give you access to both academic and vocational courses in:

Architecture, Interior Design, Interior Decoration, Landscape design, Furniture Design, Exhibition Design, Theatre/Stage/Film Set Design, Special effects, Vehicle Design, Engineering (Structural/mechanical/aerodynamics), Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Product Design, Packaging Design, Ceramics design, Fashion and Textiles Design.



DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Entry Requirements:	A grade 6 in GCSE Drama and English Literature
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Students without Drama GCSE but stage school or theatre experience will be considered individually
Compulsory Trips:	Yes

Course Outline

The aims of the Drama and Theatre Studies A Level are to encourage students to:

- develop their interest and enjoyment of drama and theatre both as participants and as informed members of an audience
- foster an enthusiasm for and a critical appreciation of the subject
- develop an understanding and an appreciation of the significance of the social, cultural and historical influences on the development of drama and theatre
- experience a range of opportunities to develop a variety of dramatic and theatrical skills, enabling them to grow creatively and imaginatively in both devised and scripted work
- integrate theory and practice through their understanding of critical concepts and the discriminating use of specialist terminology

Our expectations:

- We expect students to have a minimum of a 6 grade in GCSE Drama. In exceptional cases, we will consider students who have not done GCSE. In this case, they must have had some experience, either at a stage school, working backstage in a theatre and/or have been in school productions. As there is a significant amount of written coursework and one written exam, they must have at least a grade B in English Language and Literature.
- In preparation for the practical units, students will be expected to rehearse outside of lessons, at lunchtimes and after school.
- Due to the practical nature of drama and the fact that much of the assessment is completed in groups, excellent attendance is essential.
- Students must be prepared to attend theatre trips as these play a vital role in aiding the structure of devised work, seeing a practitioner style in practice, improving understanding of acting and design skills and as a compulsory part of the final written exam.
- Reading plays outside of the subject's set texts is also encouraged as students choose monologues and duologues to perform in front of an examiner in their final year. Students should read a wide range of plays including those written post 2000 in an effort to be informed about new writing and practitioner styles.

Assessment

The Drama and Theatre A Level consists of two coursework components and one externally examined paper.

- Component 1: Devising - *Coursework - 40% of the qualification (80 marks)*
 - There are two parts to the assessment:
 - A Portfolio (60 marks)
 - The Devised Performance or Design Realisation (20 marks)
- Component 2: Text in Performance – *Coursework- 20% of the qualification (60 marks)*



- Group performance or design realisation (36 marks)
 - Monologue or Duologue or Design Realisation (24 marks)
- Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice - *Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes- 40% of the qualification (80 marks)*
 - Section A: Live Theatre Evaluation (20 marks)
 - Section B: Page to Stage: Realising a Performance Text (36 marks)
 - Section C: Interpreting a Performance Text (24 marks)

Trips & Visits

We take our students to the theatre on a regular basis and last year we took them to see 'Cyrano de Bergerac' and 'The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe'. We would have booked more, instead watching lots of live-streamed productions in lockdown including the brilliant Bridge Theatre's production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' as exam practice. Theatre trips are a requirement as they form part of the students' written exam and provide vital inspiration for Devising. Last year the students attended an in-house workshop run by the mask practitioner Vamos and one on preparing for auditions with professional actor and alumni Nari Blair-Mangat. In the past we have also run overnight trips to the RSC to watch plays and attend related workshops which have been supremely beneficial. We will be organising other practitioners to come in in order to broaden the students' understanding of both current and core Theatre Practitioners where and when appropriate. Students are also encouraged to visit the theatre in their own time for research purposes, inspiration and of course enjoyment.

Careers in the Creative & Performing Arts

Our students take many different paths post A' Level, some go to **university** and some to **theatre school**. Past students have gone on to study acting at ALRA, Bournemouth, the Oxford School for Drama, the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Mountview, Rose Bruford & St Mary's. Others have gone on to study Theatre Studies at Bristol, East Anglia, Exeter and Leeds. Some take single honours in Theatre Studies and others joint honours, past students taking English, French, Psychology and Sociology; there isn't a prescribed combination! Other students take their study beyond BA (hons) level taking an MA in Directing and there are a good number of students who study the technical side of theatre too, lighting, sound, stage, costume, set design and stage management.

Possible Career Opportunities

Actor, Animation & VFX, Art Department, Assistant Director, Background Artistes, Camera, Cinematographer, Choreographer, Construction (Major Features), Costume Designer, Director, Grips, Investigative Journalist, Lighting Technician, Locations, Make-up and Prosthetics, News Presenter, Props Designer, Producer, Production, Production Accountant, Post Production, Radio DJ, Reporter, Rigger, Set Crafts (Carpenters & Scenic Painters), Sound Designer, Stage Combat Choreographer, Set Designer, Special Effects, Stage Manager, Stunt Co-ordinator, TV Presenter & Writer.

Want to know more about what you can do and what you can earn? Try searching the Bectu website:

<https://bectu.org.uk/get-involved/ratecards/>



ECONOMICS

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Entry Requirements:	A Grade 6 in Maths and Economics (if studied at GCSE), if not, then a Grade 6 in a Humanities subject is required. An interest in current affairs is useful, as is a willingness to discuss recent economic issues in class.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	No
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

Studying Economics will help you to learn about the main economic issues that affect our standard of living. For example:

- what is happening to unemployment in the UK?
- why does the government want to keep inflation low?
- why are most of the poorest countries in the world in Africa?
- what are the advantages and disadvantages of economic growth?
- how can Economists help to reduce pollution?
- are supermarket price wars really in the public interest?
- was the UK right to vote for Brexit?
- should the government raise taxes to spend more on education and health care?
- what will the world be like when you retire?

Economists are trained to look closely at the costs and benefits of proposed actions to help policy makers take the right decisions. For example, the decision to join the Euro might have advantages for the UK as well as disadvantages. Studying A-Level Economics will enable you to understand the key issues that affect everyday life in the UK and therefore take an informed part in public debate.

Assessment

The new exam is based around 4 themes:

- Theme 1 introduces students to markets and market failure
- Theme 2 introduces students to performance and policies issues for the UK economy
- Theme 3 explores business behaviour and the labour market
- Theme 4 explores the global perspective

Assessment for all units involves a mixture of multiple choice, data response and extended answer questions.

Extra Information

A-Level Economics will enable you to progress to taking a university degree in Economics or a related subject. It is also valued by employers for the knowledge and skills it develops. Economists are employed in a wide range of areas including advising governments and business.



ENGLISH LITERATURE

Examination Board:	OCR
Entry Requirements:	A grade 6 in GCSE English and English Literature
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

English Literature combines well with many other subjects. History, Politics and Modern Foreign Languages are particularly suitable, but it can also be a valuable contrast to scientific, technological and economics-based subjects. If you are considering going on to Higher Education, the English Literature qualification provides a wide range of opportunities for degree courses in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. The English Literature qualification is also welcomed for many different careers because it emphasises creativity, disciplined thought and communication, plus an ability to synthesise and contextualise ideas.

This qualification gives you the opportunity to study literature across the genres of prose, poetry and drama, and to read around concepts of literature and literary analysis.

Studying for these qualifications will enable you to develop:

- your interests in and enjoyment of reading and discussing literary texts;
- your knowledge and understanding of a wide range of English literature texts;
- your skills of literary analysis.

The A Level English Literature specification is designed to build on what students already know from GCSE and:

- Encourage the development of critical awareness and understanding of individual works of literature.
- Develop understanding of relationships between texts and of the significance of cultural and contextual influences on readers and writers.
- Target the core skills every literature student needs to explore and understand a wide range of texts.
- Offer flexibility and freedom for centres by presenting a wide range of topic areas and suggested texts to choose from.
- Allow students, within the A Level non-examined assessment component, to pursue more detailed study in a field of particular personal interest.
- Develop the valuable transferable skills of sustained research and composition.

A Level

There are two examined components and one coursework component. The two exams are equally weighted and offer opportunities for candidates to provide extended exploratory responses.

The first exam component 'Drama and Poetry Pre-1900' offers students the opportunity to engage in close reading and pay attention to Shakespeare's use of language. The second exam component 'Comparative and Contextual Study' will consist of a close reading (unseen exercise) and a comparative



essay. The paper will be split into different topic areas. Chosen topics include: American Literature 1880-1940, The Gothic, Dystopia, Women in Literature and The Immigrant Experience. For the first part of this exam students will approach an unseen prose extract, from within their chosen topic area. The inclusion of this 'supported unseen' helps promote wider reading throughout the course because the more familiar a candidate is with literature from within their topic area, the more confident they will be about approaching the unseen in the examination. The second part of the exam will offer students a choice of three questions of which they must answer one question on the set texts they have studied in their chosen topic area.

The coursework component requires students to study three texts from across the genres of poetry, drama and prose. Task one is a critical piece and Task two is a 'linked texts' essay focusing on connections and comparisons between two texts.

A Level Assessment

Exam 1 - Drama and Poetry Pre-1900

2 hours 30 / 60 marks / 40%

- Shakespeare play: One extract question, one longer whole text question.
 - Coriolanus, Hamlet, Measure for Measure, Richard III, Tempest, Twelfth Night
- One drama text, one poetry text – literary question.
 - Poetry: Chaucer, Milton, Taylor-C, Tennyson, Rossetti.
 - Drama: Marlowe, Webster, Goldsmith, Ibsen, Wilde.

Exam 2 - Comparative and contextual study

2 hours 30 / 60 marks / 40%

- Comparative and contextual study
 - American Lit 1880-1940, The Gothic, Dystopia, Women in Lit and The Immigrant Experience. Core set texts and suggested set texts. (Core texts: The Great Gatsby, The Bloody Chamber, 1984, Mrs Dalloway, Reluctant Fundamentalist).
- Unseen exercise – close reading.
- Comparative essay based on studied texts.

Coursework

Cross genre. Lit post 1900 / 20%

- Critical piece or re-creative with commentary.
- Linked texts – connections and comparisons between two.



ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Examination Board:	OCR
Entry Requirements:	At least a Grade 6 in English Language and at least a Grade 6 in English Literature
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

English Language and Literature is the course for you if you want to combine your study of language and literature while developing your skills in writing for a variety of audiences and purposes. If you are looking for an A level that will give you transferable communication skills and that will help almost any other course or career, look no further than English Language and Literature.

The engaging course integrates the study of language and literature – both spoken and written - and will enable you to develop your analytical and creative writing skills. You will study poetry, drama and prose texts as well as a collection of non-fiction texts in an anthology. Exposure to a greater variety of texts than those encountered at GCSE and opportunities to apply linguistic and literary concepts and methods to your analysis, will allow you to explore the richness of language and literature and cultivate your own critical responses. Additionally, you will develop your original and creative writing talents, and strengthen your evaluative skills. The English Language and Literature course enables depth and breadth of study, with flexible content that supports independence, wide reading and creativity.

The A Level English Language and Literature allows you to develop your interest in, and enjoyment of, English as you:

- develop and apply your knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation;
- develop and apply your understanding of the concepts and methods appropriate for the analysis and study of language;
- use linguistic and literary approaches in your reading and interpretation of texts, showing how the two disciplines can relate to each other;
- engage creatively and critically with a wide range of texts;
- explore the ways in which texts relate to each other and the contexts in which they are produced and received;
- develop your skills as producers and interpreters of language.

English Language and Literature combines well with many other subjects. History, Politics and Modern Foreign Languages are particularly suitable, but it can also be a valuable contrast to scientific, technological, humanities and economics-based subjects. If you are considering going on to Higher Education, the English Language and Literature qualification provides a good foundation for degree courses in English, the Arts, Humanities, Politics, Law and Media. The English Language and Literature qualification is also welcomed for many different careers because it emphasises creativity, disciplined thought and communication, plus an ability to synthesise and contextualise ideas. It can lead to careers in writing, journalism, management and administration, public relations, teaching, law, publishing and the media.



Assessment

We follow the OCR English Language and Literature (EMC) specification which is supported by the English and Media Centre.

Texts studied:

- A Level Component 1 (Non-fiction spoken and written texts - 16%)

Question focused on comparison of non-fiction text to one from the non-fiction anthology

- A Level Component 2 (The language of poetry and plays - 32%)

Carol Ann Duffy's 'Rapture' and Tennessee Williams' 'Streetcar Named Desire'

- A Level Component 3 (Reading as a Writer, Writing as a Reader - 32%)

F. Scott Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby'

Fiction creative writing and accompanying commentary.

- A Level Component 4 (non-exam assessment – 20%)

Comparative analytical study to include the study of George Orwell's 'Down and Out in Paris and London' and a creative writing piece totalling 3,000 words.



FRENCH

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	A grade 6 in GCSE French
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes. French national or part French national students who do not have French GCSE but can speak the language well will be considered.
Compulsory Trips:	Study trip is not compulsory but extremely advisable.

Course Outline

Studying A-level French will help students develop their confidence and communicative skills in the language and build upon the skills acquired at GCSE. The course will also enhance their knowledge and understanding of the culture of the country together with Francophone countries and study the issues and influences which have shaped French-speaking countries. Our aim is to develop an interest in and enthusiasm for learning French and to encourage students to consider French within a broader context.

Students will have 5 lessons per week. In addition to standard lessons, there will also be a compulsory weekly lesson with the French assistant to provide additional opportunity for students to become more proficient in their speaking. A study trip to Biarritz will take place in Year 12.

The A-level course will enable students to see how French speaking society has been shaped, socially and culturally and how it continues to change. In the first year of the course, aspects of the social context are studied, together with aspects of the artistic life of French speaking countries. In the second year further aspects of social backgrounds are covered, focusing in particular on issues such as life for those on the margins of French speaking society, as well as looking at the positive influences that diversity brings. Students also study aspects of the political landscape in a French speaking country looking at immigration from the political perspective. Students will also study a French novel (*No et moi*, Delphine de Vigan) and a film (*la Haine*, Mathieu Kassovitz) and will have the opportunity to carry out independent research on an area of their choice.

Year 1

Aspects of French-speaking society: current trends

- The changing nature of the family
- Cyber society
- Place of voluntary work within society

Political and artistic culture

- A culture proud of its heritage
- Contemporary francophone music
- Cinema

Year 2

Aspects of French-speaking society: current issues

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

Political and artistic culture



- Teenagers, the right to vote and political commitment
- Demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power?
- Politics and immigration

Assessment

A2

- Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation skills (French - English and English - French) (2 hours 30 minutes) 50% of A-level
- Paper 2: Writing – 2 essays, one on literary text (*No et moi*, Delphine de Vigan) and one on film (*La Haine*, Mathieu Kassovitz) (2 hours) 20% of A-level
- Paper 3: Speaking which will include students presenting their findings from their individual research project (21- 23 minutes, including 5 minutes of preparation time) 30% of A-level

The speaking exam will be conducted by the subject teacher.



GEOGRAPHY

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	A grade 6 at GCSE Geography
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	Yes. One 4 day residential trip to develop skills necessary to complete fieldwork investigation data collection.

Course Outline

A level geography is one of the top facilitating subjects, which means it compliments both arts and science subjects. This in turn means it keeps your options open, being as appropriate for someone wanting to study medicine as it is for someone wanting to study law, economics or politics. Geography is by its nature multidisciplinary, which makes it very attractive to employers, with geography university graduates having some of the highest employment rates following completion of their degrees. This is due to the broad range of analytical and written skills that geographers develop. Coursework provides students the opportunity to develop their report writing and academic research skills.

Skills developed during this course include:

- Report Writing
- Research Skills
- Qualitative and Quantitative Data Collection Skills
- Analytical and Reasoning Skills
- Mathematical Skills
- Communication skills
- Team work/ Group Work
- Geographical Information Systems

GCSE Geography students will be familiar with some of the topics outlined below, but at A-Level, deeper and broader understanding is required. The format of the final examination is similar to that of GSCE, with a mixture of shorter response questions and longer essays.

Topics

Component 1 - Physical Geography

- Water and carbon cycles

This topic focuses on the major stores of water and carbon at or near the Earth's surface and the dynamic cyclical relationships associated with them. These are the major elements in the natural environment and understanding them is fundamental to many aspects of physical geography. This includes developing a much deeper understanding of the human influences on the carbon cycle that lead to climate change, including feedback loops and tipping points.
- Hazards

This topic focuses on the lithosphere and the atmosphere, which intermittently but regularly present natural hazards to human populations, often in a dramatic and sometimes catastrophic fashion. By exploring the origin and nature of these hazards and the various ways in which people respond to them, students are able to engage with many dimensions of the relationships between people and the environments they occupy.



- Coasts

This topic investigates how coasts change through natural and human processes. Using a systems approach, students develop an understanding of the complex factors involved in the dynamic equilibrium that establishes along coastlines. The influence of factors such as local and global sea level change on coastlines are also studied along with approaches to coastal management and case study examples of coastlines in the UK and abroad that illustrate the challenges coasts provide as areas for human habitation.

Component 2 - Human Geography

- Global systems and global governance

In this topic students will investigate the economic, political and social changes associated with technological and other driving forces which have been a key feature of global economy and society in recent decades. Increased interdependence and transformed relationships between peoples, states and environments have prompted more or less successful attempts at a global level to manage and govern some aspects of human affairs.

- Resource security

This topic focuses on the large-scale exploitation of unevenly distributed natural resources, which is one of the defining features of the present era. Increasing demand for water, energy and minerals and their critical role in human affairs leads to massive local and regional transfers of water and massive global transfers of energy and minerals.

- Changing places

This topic focuses on the factors and processes that affect the nature of places and how they change and develop over time. People's engagement with places and their experience of them and the meaning they ascribe to them are unique and of fundamental importance in their lives.

Component 3 Non-Examined Assessment

Fieldwork is a compulsory element of the course and currently involves a 4 day residential trip. This equips them with the skills required to plan a successful NEA and collect the data of their choice in the environment they choose outside of school time. Students are required to undertake an independent investigation of their choice. This must incorporate a significant element of their own fieldwork data collection. The fieldwork undertaken as part of the individual investigation is based on either human or physical aspects of geography, or a combination of both. They may incorporate field data and/or evidence from field investigations collected individually or in groups. Students are supported to work on their own in designing, contextualising and analysing their fieldwork to produce an independent investigation with a unique title that demonstrates fieldwork knowledge, skills and theoretical understanding.

Assessment

- Component 1 = Physical Geography paper – 40% of A Level (exam)
- Component 2 = Human Geography paper – 40% of A Level (exam)
- Component 3 = Non-Examined Assessment – 20% of A Level (coursework)



GERMAN

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	A grade 6 in GCSE German
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes, though German national or part German national students who do not have German GCSE but can speak the language well will be considered
Compulsory Trips:	Study trip in Y12 is not compulsory but extremely advisable

Course Outline

Studying A-level German will help students develop their confidence and communicative skills in the language and build upon the skills acquired at GCSE. The course will also enhance their knowledge and understanding of the culture of the country together with German-speaking countries and study the issues and influences which have shaped their cultural identities. Our aim is to develop an interest in and enthusiasm for learning German and to encourage students to consider German within a broader context.

Students will have 5 lessons per week, and will become proficient in using a variety of online resources effectively to help their learning. In addition to standard lessons, there will also be a 30-minute compulsory weekly lesson with the German assistant to provide additional opportunity for students to become more proficient in their speaking. The Department organises a Year 12 study trip to Berlin or Munich.

The A-level course will enable students to see how German speaking society has been shaped, socially and culturally and how it continues to change. In the first year of the course, aspects of the social context are studied, together with aspects of the artistic life of German speaking countries. In the second year further aspects of social backgrounds are covered, focusing in particular on issues such as life for those on the margins of German speaking society, as well as looking at the positive influences that diversity brings. Students also study aspects of the political landscape in a German speaking country looking at immigration from the political perspective. Students will also study texts and film and will have the opportunity to carry out independent research on an area of their choice.

We endeavour to broaden our students' learning experience by supporting them in applying for scholarships or taking part in competitions.

Year 1

Aspects of German-speaking society: current trends

- The changing nature of the family
- The digital world
- Youth culture, fashion, music and TV

Artistic culture

- Festivals and traditions
- Art and architecture
- The cultural life of Berlin- past and present

Year 2



Aspects of German-speaking society: current issues

- Multiculturalism in the German Speaking countries
- Immigration
- Integration
- Racism
- Aspects of the political life in Germany
- Germany within the EU
- Youth politics
- The German re-unification its consequences

Artistic Culture

- Text - currently 'Andorra' by Max Frisch
- Film - currently 'The Lives of Others'

Assessment

- Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation skills (German - English and English - German) (2 hours 30 minutes) 50% of A-level
- Paper 2: Writing – 2 essays, one on literary text and one on film (2 hours) 20% of A-level
- Paper 3: Speaking which will include students presenting their findings from their individual research project (21- 23 minutes, including 5 minutes of preparation time) 30% of A-level

The speaking exam will be conducted by the subject teacher.



HISTORY

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Entry Requirements:	A grade 6 at GCSE
Pre-requisite GCSE:	No, but need a Grade 6 in GCSE English Literature in its place
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

The aim of A Level History is to nurture people who are questioning and critical but with an open mind to new ideas and different opinions. The study of History is bound up with the study of evidence and what that evidence can say to historians about the past. In this sense, it builds upon ideas encountered at GCSE.

History is, however, also about communicating ideas and findings. This means that Sixth Form students will write essays, as essays are the main way by which historians tell each other what they think. History thus develops the skills of logical and clear argument and writing. It is for these reasons that A Level History is well thought of by employers and the top universities.

Topics

The A Level courses will focus on two hundred years of British and European History. The aim is that students will study topics that are interesting and relevant, which give them many opportunities to develop the historical skills mentioned above. The four modules of the A2 course to be examined at the end of year 13 will cover:

- Unit 1: Britain c1785-c1870: democracy, protest and reform
 - This study in breadth looks at the process of change in Britain and the extent to which popular pressure, protest and cooperation were responsible for political economic and social change. We look at the growth of democracy, industrialisation and protest the growth of unions and changing attitudes towards poverty and pauperism. A key focus is on the abolition of the slave trade.
- Unit 2: The Unification of Italy c1830-1870
 - The option comprises a study in depth of the Italian states from the 1830 revolutions to the creation and consolidation of the kingdom of Italy 1861-70. It looks at the political ideas of the Risorgimento, the revolutions of 1830 and 48, Austrian and French intervention, the Roman Republic, the rise of Piedmont, great individuals such as Mazzini, Cavour and the charismatic Garibaldi, the impact of diplomacy with Britain, France and Austria and finally the unification and emergence of the new Italian state.
- Unit 3: Germany 1871-1990: united, divided and reunited
 - This option combines a breadth and depth study. The breadth topics look at social and economic changes in Germany through the whole period. The depth study focuses on areas such as Bismarck and the Second Reich, Weimar Germany, Hitler and the creation of a totalitarian state as well as a focus on West Germany after World War 2 and the eventual reunification of Germany 1989-90.
- Unit 4: Historical Enquiry
 - Coursework is compulsory for A Level History and the focus of this enquiry is open to negotiation with students. Areas of study could encompass Ancient Civilisations, Medieval Women, Tudor Society, Mao's China, the Vietnam War, Imperialism or even local



archaeology. Basically anything which lends itself open to historical interpretation can be the focus of the enquiry. We encourage you to follow your interests with this and, where possible, to establish links with universities and research institutes.

So overall we hope to excite students with new and different material to their previous studies and we enjoy teaching students at A level who are thoughtful and enjoy an atmosphere of tolerance and discussion.



MATHEMATICS

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Entry Requirements:	7, 8 or 9 grade in CSE Maths for A level Maths, 8 or 9 grade in GCSE Maths for Further Maths
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

Mathematics A Level

Pure Mathematics is essentially Algebra and Trigonometry developing from GCSE but there is no further Geometry or Arithmetic. The subject content becomes more abstract and demanding, the teaching more academic and students will need to be able to apply the concepts to fresh contexts and to produce well explained solutions involving a series of logical processes.

The Application aspect of the course now contains a Statistics and a Mechanics element. There is no choice in which papers you can take at A Level single subject.

Assessment

A Level Mathematics will consist of three exams, two of which are Pure Mathematics and one is an Application paper, each are 2 hours long.

Further Mathematics A Level

Further Mathematics A Level consists of four exams, three of which are Further Pure and one will be either a Further Mechanics or a Further Statistics, students will need to choose the appropriate option, each of the four papers are 1 hour 30 minutes long.

In brief, the content of the papers are:

- Pure Mathematics 1 and Pure Mathematics 2 (Two papers)
Proof; Algebra; Trigonometry; Co-ordinate geometry; Sequences and series; Differentiation; Integration; Exponentials and logarithms; Vectors.
- Statistics and Mechanics:
Statistical sampling; Data presentation; Probability; Statistical Distribution; Statistical Hypothesis testing; Kinematics; Forces and Newton's laws; Moments.
- Core Pure Mathematics 1 and Core Pure Mathematics 2 (Two papers):
Proof; Complex numbers; Matrices; Further Algebra and Functions; Further Calculus; Further Vectors; Complex numbers; Further algebra and Functions; Further calculus; Polar coordinates; Hyperbolic functions; Differential Equations.
- Further Pure Mathematics 1:
Further calculus; Further differential equations; Coordinate systems; Further vectors; Further numerical methods; Inequalities.
- EITHER:



- Further Statistics 1: Linear regression; Statistical distributions (discrete); Statistical distributions (continuous); Correlation; Hypothesis testing; Chi-Squared tests
- Further Mechanics 1: Momentum and Impulse; Collisions; Centres of mass; Work and Energy; Elastic strings and springs.

We continue to offer this very intensive diet for our most able students who will enjoy the fast pace, the depth of study and the challenge.

Studying Further Mathematics (either of the Z1 or Z2 options) enables students to gain 2 separate A Levels. The whole course content (single and further maths) will be taught in eight lessons per week rather than the ten lessons normally allocated to two separate A Levels. This course is recommended for students considering a degree in Mathematics or a subject involving substantial mathematics.

Extra Information

A minimum grade 7 pass at GCSE is necessary to study A level Mathematics and an 8 for Further Maths, although many level 8 students might not have the aptitude for Further Maths.

In Year 13 the Department offers extra preparation for the additional papers required of Oxbridge candidates.



MUSIC

Examination Board:	OCR
Entry Requirements:	6 grade at GCSE. Students must receive instrumental or vocal tuition whilst undertaking the AS/A Level course. A minimum performing standard equivalent to at least ABRSM grade 5 at the start of the course is strongly advised.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Music GCSE not compulsory, but advisable. If not, then theory equivalent to ABRSM grade 5 theory is recommended.
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

Ideal for those who are passionate about and interested in music, the A-level course explores a broad range of musical repertoire. Students will make connections between all areas of their music-making, both within the course and also beyond: as performers, composers and in their appraising of music, including analysis skills, theoretical understanding, contextual knowledge and stylistic awareness. Through this they will gain a deeper understanding of how music 'works' enabling them to develop further their expressive capabilities as performers and composers.

Students will have many opportunities to engage and extend their musical interests, and the course will certainly help them to prepare for further musical study, for example at a conservatoire or at university. However, it may also be studied purely for interest and, to this end, serves as one of the pre-requisite academic subjects for any university degree. Students considering this option should be actively involved in making music as performing forms an important part of the A Level course.

Assessment

Learners must choose either Option A in both Performing and Composing or Option B in both.

Performing. A-level Recital (25% or 35%)

(expected standard: equivalent to ABRSM grade 6)

This is a non-exam assessment performed in the Spring of Y13 with an audio-visual recording sent off for external assessment.

- **Option A** (25% of qualification): **a minimum of 2 contrasting pieces, at least 6 minutes.** Can be solo OR ensemble (including accompanying) OR a realisation using music technology. Free choice of repertoire and style.
- **Option B** (35% of qualification): **a minimum of 3 contrasting pieces, at least 10 minutes.** Can be solo OR ensemble (including accompanying) OR a realisation using music technology. **Section 1: Free Choice; Section 2: Focused Study**

Composing (25% or 35%)

This is non-exam assessment via coursework that is externally assessed via audio recordings.

- **Option A** (35% of qualification): Combined duration of compositions **at least 8 minutes.**
 - i) One to a set brief by OCR (Y13)
 - ii) One to a brief written by the learner
 - iii) Three short technical exercises



- **Option B** (25% of qualification): Combined duration of compositions: **at least 4 minutes**
 - i) One to a set brief by OCR (Y13)
 - ii) One to a brief written by the learner

Appraising - 40%

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes

- Analysing and evaluating music
- Familiar and unfamiliar pieces
- Prescribed works
- Questions based on aural extracts

Four areas of study.

The two compulsory ones:

- **Area of study 1:** The Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven
Including a set work.

- **Area of Study 2:** Popular Song: Blues, Jazz, Swing and Big Band
Including set works.

Plus 2 more areas of study from a choice of options (selected by the staff to be taken by the whole class), for example

- **Programme Music 1820-1910** and
- **Innovations in Music 1900 to the present day**



MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Entry Requirements:	A keen interest in the technical aspects of the music industry. Good computer skills and experience using music sequencing software such as logic pro are recommended. Performing skills on an instrument are not necessary but an understanding of musical performance is useful to aid in the recording tasks. Basic piano keyboard skills are useful but not essential.
Prerequisite GCSE:	GCSE Music preferable. If not a portfolio of 3 pieces of computer based music work as evidence of your current music tech skills.
Compulsory Trips:	None.

Edexcel Examination Board

The Edexcel Music Technology course is challenging and exciting; designed to give students a 'hands-on' insight into working in the music technology industry. Over the two years pupils will develop practical skills in recording, mixing and sequencing, as well as creating their own compositions and arrangements using technology. In addition, the course requires students to listen analytically to a range of 20th and 21st century styles and genres, understanding the vital role technology plays within the music industry. Therefore, it is a prerequisite that students should have an interest in, and willingness to learn about, many contrasting styles of music, as well as wanting to create music using technology.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT:

A Level

Non-examined assessment (NEA) 40%

Component 1: Multi-track Recording

Assessment Overview:

- Students will record a song from a list provided by the exam board. This recording must include a minimum of five compulsory instruments plus two additional instruments,
- This involves various recording techniques as well as the possibility of sequencing the keyboard part.

Component 2: Technology-based composition

Assessment Overview:

- One technology based composition chosen from three briefs provided by the exam board.
- Techniques could include synthesis, sampling and audio manipulation.

Examinations 60%

Component 3: Listening and Analysing

Knowledge and understanding of recording and production techniques and principles, in the context of a series of unfamiliar commercial recordings supplied by the exam board.



Assessment Overview:

- Section A: Listening and analysing (40 marks) – four questions, each based on unfamiliar commercial recordings (10 marks each)
- Section B: Extended written responses (35 marks)
 - two essay questions. One comparison question (15 marks) and a second essay question (20 marks).

Component 4: Producing and Analysing

Knowledge and understanding of editing, mixing and production techniques, to be applied to unfamiliar materials provided by Pearson in the examination.

Assessment Overview:

- Students will correct and then combine the audio and MIDI materials to form a completed mix, which may include creating new tracks or parts from the materials provided.
- Section A: Producing and analysing (85 marks) – five questions related to the audio and MIDI materials provided that include both written responses and practical tasks.
- Section B: Extended written response (20 marks) – one essay focusing on a specific mixing scenario, signal path, effect or music technology hardware unit.



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Examination Board:	OCR
Entry Requirements:	Grade 6 at GCSE.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	No. Students without PE GCSE must consult Mr Cotton
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

The current specification focuses on Sports Science topics which make up 70% of the course. These units are full of variation and allow students to explore Physiological, Psychological and Social factors in sport. Students are expected to perform OR coach an activity to a high standard for the practical assessment which also includes an analysis of strengths and weaknesses delivered via an oral response - this makes up the final 30%. The course content is outlined below:

Topics and Assessment

Physiological factors affecting performance

- 2 hour written paper (90 marks) – 30%
 - Applied anatomy and physiology
 - Exercise physiology
 - Biomechanics

Psychological factors affecting performance

- 1 hour written paper (60 marks) – 20%
 - Skill acquisition
 - Sports psychology

Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sport

- 1 hour written paper (60 marks) – 20%
 - Sport and society
 - Contemporary issues in physical activity and sport

Performance in physical education

- Non-exam assessment (60 marks) – 30%

Many past pupils will go on to study Sport related courses at university, including Physiotherapy, Sport and Exercise Science and Sports Therapy. However, previous A Level PE pupils have chosen to take a different route. In the past we have had students study History, Biology, Medicine, Philosophy, Politics and Economics. Some of our past students have also played sport at a high level. Jodie Williams represented Great Britain in the 200m at the Rio Olympic Games in 2016, whilst Issy Boffey won the European u20 800m title in 2019. Other past pupils include Andy Symons, who played premiership rugby for Leicester Tigers, Worcester Warriors and Northampton Saints and Gabby Jupp, European gymnastic silver medallist.



PHYSICS

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	Grade 6 in Maths. Grades 7,6 in Combined Science GCSE or grade 6 in GCSE Physics. Those students with a 7,6 grade in Combined Science are expected to have achieved a grade 7 in the Physics components.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

Physics A-level is a suitable choice for anyone who has enjoyed Physics at GCSE and wishes to expand their knowledge further as well as those who wish to study science or engineering at university. Physics is one of the most fundamental scientific disciplines, with its main goal being to understand how the universe behaves. Consequently, the A Level course involves a range of classical physics topics such as motion and gravity as well as modern physics including particle physics and special relativity. Physics A-level opens the door to a wide range of possible careers in areas such as medical imaging, meteorology, finance, engineering and astronomy.

Practicals

The course includes a series of required practical experiments which all students will undertake. In common with all science courses, the practical work does not directly contribute to the final grade. However, some exam questions will be based around the required practical experiments.

Students have the opportunity to use a range of specialist equipment, such as light gates to measure acceleration due to gravity, lasers to measure the wavelength of light, using micrometers and Vernier callipers and using Geiger Muller tubes to investigate gamma radiation.

Topics Year 1

Measurements and their errors

Particles and radiation (Particle Physics and Quantum Mechanics)

Waves

Mechanics and materials (Motion and properties of solids)

Electricity Year 2

Further mechanics and thermal physics (Circular motion and oscillations)

Fields and their consequences (Gravity, electric fields and electromagnetism)

Nuclear physics

Turning points in physics (including special relativity)



Assessment Exam Structure

Paper 1 (34%) – 2 hours: Topics 1 to 5 and the further mechanics part of topic 6 Multiple choice, short answer and long answer questions

Paper 2 (34%) – 2 hours All topics covered but with main focus on the thermal physics part of topic 6, topic 7 and topic 8. Multiple choice, short answer and long answer questions

Paper 3 (32%) – 2 hours Practical skills and data analysis (with assumed knowledge of all topics) Turning Points in Physics Short answer and long answer questions

Extra information

Students should be aware that Physics is an academically demanding subject and a willingness to work hard is essential for success. Studying Maths alongside Physics is not a requirement but it is useful. Those considering studying Physics or Engineering at University should note that most Physics and Engineering degrees require A-Level Maths as well as Physics.



POLITICS

Examination Board:	Edexcel
Entry Requirements:	Grade 6 in History (if taken) and a Grade 6 in English Language or Literature.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	N/A
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

This popular A Level subject tends to attract students interested in the world around them and who want to understand the ideologies and processes that have shaped it. In essence, Politics is the study of the use and abuse of power. The course covers questions all the way from whether the UK is still truly a democracy, debates on whether human beings are fundamentally selfish all the way through to analysing whether China will soon replace the USA as the world's main superpower. Whether your interests are in UK Politics, International Relations or Philosophy this course will have something for you. Most of all, if you enjoy debating, having an opinion and examining the news this is likely a subject you will enjoy. Politics A Level is often paired with subjects like History, Economics and Philosophy.

YEAR 12: the course focuses on two overlapping aspects of UK Politics. One half examines on the weird and wonderful world of Westminster and examines whether our Parliament is still fit for purpose, whether Prime Ministers are becoming too powerful and whether our relatively new 'Supreme Court' are doing a good enough job at keeping our politicians in check. As part of this the cohort visit Parliament and get a behind the scenes look at the inner workings of our political system. The other half zooms out and looks at our relationship with politics as citizens and voters. Is our voting system fair? Why do people vote the way they do? How powerful really is the media in influencing our opinions? This is a living, breathing course that encourages students to be constantly on top of developments in the UK and abroad. The Year 12 course provides non-stop opportunities for debate, discussion and disagreement whilst also teaching students to appreciate other points of view and analyse conflicting standpoints in the process of developing their own opinions. In the Politics department we are passionate about students challenging their assumptions and having the opportunity to find out for themselves what they truly believe in.

Towards the end of Year 12 and into Year 13 we move on to examine the history of political thought and consider how the great ideologies have developed, changed and mutated over the years. Here we look at the ideologies of Socialism, Liberalism, Conservatism and Nationalism. This segment of the course provides an opportunity to think about politics in more abstract and philosophical terms away from the day to day nitty gritty of Westminster. Should the government stay out of our lives? Does Nationalism always promote violence and exclusion? Has modern day socialism abandoned its roots?

YEAR 13: In the second year the course is focused on Global Politics. Here we ask the really big questions about the future of our planet. Can national governments come together to find common answers to common problems such as climate change? Does BREXIT spell the beginning of the end for the European Union? How real is the much-heralded 'Rise of China' as a new superpower? This topic allows students to look beyond our borders and consider how the process of globalisation is changing almost every aspect of our politics and our lives.



The Politics Department is committed to enabling Owenians to become true 'political animals' with an interest in the subject and the world around them that goes well beyond the classroom.

Assessment

The course consists of 3 components all to be completed at the end of Year 13 and it is all examination based.

Component 1: UK Politics (33.3% of examination) Political participation, democracy, political parties, role of the media, electoral systems, voting behaviour plus Core Political Ideas: Socialism, Liberalism and Conservatism.

Component 2: UK Government (33.3% of examination) Constitution, Parliament, Prime Minister and the Judiciary. Plus the study of Nationalism as an ideology.

Component 3: Global Politics (33.3% of examination) Globalisation, Global Governance, Human Rights, Environment, European Union, Power and Developments.



PSYCHOLOGY

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	Grade 6 in Biology and a grade 6 in English and Maths GCSE. A grade 6 is preferred in all three GCSE Sciences or two 6 grades if taking Combined Science.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	No
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

The mind is something intangible that exists within our brain. An unseen process of enzymes, chemicals and electric current moving within the structure of our neural networks dictates why we feel, think and behave the way we do. This, however, is not the only explanation for human behaviour and the course looks at 5 different approaches' ideas.

Why is it that some people suffer from stress and mental illness? Why does addiction happen? What happens if we destroy certain parts of our brain? How does memory work? What happens in the brain when we hallucinate? Why is it that if people are told to push a button even if it may kill someone- they push it anyway? How is it that some cultures actually have 3 genders but we traditionally have just male and female?

Psychology looks at questions like these in the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. It is a science with cutting edge research that has real world applications to issues in everyday life, ranging from artificial intelligence to social change.

Psychologists observe and measure behaviour and their therapies are based on scientific study. Psychology has links with many disciplines including biological, computer , sports and forensic science as well as humanities such as sociology, philosophy, anthropology and literature. It involves the study of theory, empirical evidence and practical applications. This mix of disciplines helps to make psychology such a fascinating subject.

How does it compare to subjects that I know?

Psychology bridges the gap between arts and sciences as it uses scientific research as well as essay-based examination answers. Psychology is grounded in the same scientific principles as its traditional counterparts taught at GCSE however is often incorrectly regarded as a soft option at A-level due to a lack of understanding of the subject. Psychology is comparable to other sciences in terms of the demands it places on candidates and students need to be aware of this before embarking on this course. As the subject matter is actually ourselves, there is an inherent interest in the subject which may explain why it is regularly one of the most popular A levels and undergraduate degree subjects in the UK.

What will I learn?

Students will have the opportunity to dispel various myths about behaviour and gain an in-depth understanding of specific human behaviours (see below for course content).

Students will learn how psychology places emphasis on the need for evidence in the process of knowledge construction and develop research, analytical and communication skills through studying a broad range of psychological theory and research methods. As part of the latter, students develop data-handling skills,



learning how to use statistical tests in order to assess if results within their own experiments are significant or due to chance.

How is the course set up?

This course of study comprises three written units, with no coursework.

The emphasis is on applying knowledge and understanding, thereby developing students' transferable skills of analysis, evaluation and critical thinking.

It is an essay-based subject which incorporates scientific principles throughout. For this reason, it is important that students who wish to study the subject have a thorough understanding of science to enable success in this subject.

Overall, at least 10% of the marks in assessments for Psychology will require the use of mathematical skills. These skills will be applied in the context of Psychology and will be at least the standard of higher tier GCSE mathematics

The exams

You will sit 3 exams at the end of the two years. This will comprise 3 papers, each paper accounting for 33.3% of your marks for the year, lasting 2 hours each. The exams will include multiple-choice, short answer and extended writing (up to 16 mark essays).

Where will success take me?

Psychology can help your career either directly or indirectly. Of course, if you wish to become a psychologist, therapist or mental health worker, this A Level is of direct value. In terms of further study, students may go on to study a BSc at university in the subject itself or use its good reputation as a rigorous course for access to a variety of other subjects and career options e.g. medicine, dentistry, architecture, marketing, business development, accountancy, human resources, forensics, occupational therapy, clinical psychology, neuroscience, nursing and teaching among others. You will find Psychology a useful subject to have behind you.

Topics

Year 1

- UNIT 1: Introductory topics in psychology
 - Social psychology includes the study of social influence, conformity and obedience, what leads to resisting authorities
 - Memory includes case studies of brain injury, forgetting, research into eyewitness testimony and how our memory works.
 - Attachment includes the study of bonding between parents and their children, how psychologists measure this bond, what happens when a caregiver is not present anymore and how early life influences us as adults.

- UNIT 2: Psychology in context
 - Origins of psychology: the emergence of psychology as a science
 - The 3 main schools of thought in psychology: cognitive: internal mental processes; behavioural: conditioning and social learning and biological explanations of behaviour: genes, neurochemistry, genotypes, phenotypes and evolution.
 - Biopsychology: nervous and endocrine system, fight or flight response
 - Psychopathology: abnormality, its definition, biological and psychological models of abnormality as well as treating abnormality includes OCD, depression and phobias.
 - Research Methods: how do psychologists study behaviour using scientific method, the features of different types of study: observations, experiments, samples
 - Data handling and analysis



Year 2

A level includes Unit 1 and 2 above and in addition:

- Approaches in Psychology: Psychodynamic approach to understanding behaviour, Humanistic psychology- freewill, self-actualisation, counselling psychology
- Biopsychology: what parts of the brain do which functions, split brain research, plasticity and functional recovery of brain after trauma, ways of scanning the brain, biological rhythms
- Research methods: which tests to use and when
- Unit 3: Issues and debates in psychology – gender and culture bias, freewill and determinism, nature-nurture, holism and reductionism, ethics
- And each of the following topics:
 Gender, Schizophrenia, Aggression

As a department, we believe in fostering confident, independent thinkers, who can engage respectfully with others in a safe environment. Attendance to lunchtime lectures from professionals allow students to see how Psychology is applied to the real world. Our various annual summer trips (London Zoo, Bethlem Museum of the Mind or to the Freud Museum) are always appreciated after a busy year.



RELIGIOUS STUDIES (PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION & ETHICS)

Examination Board:	AQA – Syllabus 7062
Entry Requirements:	Grade 6 if already study RS at GCSE
Pre-requisite GCSE:	No, but a grade 6 required in English
Compulsory Trips:	No

Why Religious Studies? Why not?

Religious Studies is one of the more underrated and misunderstood subjects. The focus is not just on religion [it focusses even more so on Philosophy and Ethics] and neither is it simply an extension of GCSE Religious Studies. A Level Religious Studies offers so much more. Most importantly, it is a subject that will provide you with the opportunity to develop key skills [see below] that are absolutely essential for success on most degree courses.

The reason why Religious Studies is highly recommended by the top Russell Group universities is because it is unlike any other course. Indeed, its importance as a subject for preparation for Higher Education is evidenced by the fact that both Oxford and Cambridge University include Religious Studies in the top-level list of 'suitable A levels'.

It should also be added that whilst many A Level subjects focus on specific areas of knowledge, Philosophy in particular, is focused on developing the skills necessary to be successful. The skills nurtured and developed in Religious Studies, then, are crucial for a variety of degrees and career paths and include:

1. **Good interpersonal skills:** Communication and interaction with other people, both individually and in groups, are essential. These skills include empathy and compassion, intrigue and questioning skills as well as a critical and philosophical approach to key ideas and opinions.
2. **Team working:** Throughout this subject you will work collaboratively with groups of students in order to achieve goals.
3. **Problem solving:** A Level Religious Studies focuses upon discovering, analysing and solving problems especially dealing with current ethical issues or finding solutions to philosophical questions.
4. **Time management and ability to work to deadlines:** These are very important. The course can be very demanding so you must organise your time sufficiently in order to cope with the requirements.
5. **Good verbal and written communication skills:** Considerable time is spent discussing and debating important religious, philosophical and ethical questions. From this you will develop an increasingly open mind as well as the ability to employing coherent language to support your arguments and counter-arguments. Written skills are intensely developed throughout the year with specific focus on written language, essay writing skills and development of a written argument, with counter-arguments.
6. **Analytical skills:** This subject develops the ability to gather information [often through research], articulate, analyse, solve complex problems and make decisions based on the research or information found.
7. **Independent learning:** Finally, a key skill in A Level Religious Studies is developing your ability to think, act and pursue your own studies autonomously, often through independent work and research.



What will I study?

The course is divided equally into three areas of study. In **Philosophy** you will learn different philosophical approaches to questions on the nature of the soul, mind and body and the relation between them and analyse to what extent God's existence can be rationally demonstrated e.g., through the Cosmological, Teleological and Ontological arguments etc. You will also consider the nature of Religious Experience, the Problem of Evil and Suffering and philosophical responses to it, before concluding with an exploration of the philosophical issues surrounding belief in Miracles as 'transgressions of natural laws by a deity' [David Hume] and the extent to which Religious Language is meaningful e.g., through the Verification [Alfred Ayer] and Falsification principles [Anthony Flew] and Language Games [Ludwig Wittgenstein] etc.

In Christianity and Ethics, you will study traditional ethical theories in the form of Natural Law, Situation Ethics, Kantian Ethics [Kant was a leading Enlightenment philosopher and ethicist] and Jeremy Bentham's Principle of Utilitarianism, before applying them to contemporary ethical issues in medicine, sexual ethics including gender & sexuality etc. The nature and the role of conscience are also analysed, alongside the extent to which ethical language is meaningful.

Finally, you will explore the links between Christianity, Philosophy and Ethics [Dialogues]. This is a 'synoptic paper' where you will be required to evaluate from a historical perspective, how Christianity has been influenced by Philosophy and Ethics in today's modern world.

How will I be assessed?

- Assessment will take the form of two separate 3-hour papers covering Philosophy, Ethics & Christianity at the end of Year 13 [May/June 2025].
- Examination questions will take the form of a wide range of essay style questions and marked as follows: A01-Knowledge & Understanding [10 marks] and; A02-Critical skills of evaluation [15 marks].
- For more information have a look at the [AQA Religious Studies specification](#).

To summarise

A key feature of the A Level Religious Studies course involves the study of Philosophy and this dates back to the ancient Greek world. Since this period, its themes, concepts and methods have provided us with the opportunity to explore questions of truth and existence and contend with the nature of humanity itself.

Intertwined within these important disciplines, a study of Christianity will demonstrate that it has profoundly influenced the thinking of theistic and atheistic philosophers and ethicists alike, providing new perceptions of the world and the nature of existence. The study of Christianity, Philosophy and Ethics therefore allows us to open our minds to the world around us, challenging our perceptions of everyday life while developing valuable life skills in the process.

A Level Religious Studies, then, will teach you a spectrum of key skills including reasoning, critical analysis, the construction and deconstruction of arguments and clarity of thought. A focus on discussion will help you to 'hold your own' when faced with criticisms in other areas.

Finally, historically many of our A Level Religious Studies students at Owens have gone on to read PPE, English, History, Law, Psychology, Politics, English and Economics etc. at universities that include Bristol, Cambridge, Durham, Nottingham and Oxford etc.



SOCIOLOGY

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	Grade 6 in a Humanities, or similar GCSE course.
Pre-requisite GCSE:	N/A
Compulsory Trips:	No

Sociology is the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behaviour. Sociologists investigate the structure of groups, organisations, and societies, and how people interact within these contexts. Since all human behaviour is social, the subject matter of sociology ranges from the intimate family to the hostile mob; from organised crime to religious cults; from the divisions of race, gender and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture; and from the sociology of work to the sociology of sports. In fact, few fields have such broad scope and relevance for research, theory, and application of knowledge.

Sociology provides many distinctive perspectives on the world, generating new ideas and critiquing the old. The field also offers a range of research techniques that can be applied to virtually any aspect of social life: street crime and delinquency, how people express emotions, welfare or education reform, how families differ and flourish, or problems of peace and war. Because sociology addresses the most challenging issues of our time, it is a rapidly expanding field whose potential is increasingly tapped by those who craft policies and create programs.

Sociologists understand social inequality, patterns of behaviour, forces for social change and resistance, and how social systems work. Sociology is an exciting discipline with expanding opportunities for a wide range of career paths.

Owen's leavers whose A-levels included Sociology have gone on to universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Leeds and Birmingham. Sociology itself is obviously studied at 'top universities' and the subject should naturally appeal to students interested in social issues. However, the course is also a suitable preparation for degrees as varied as English Literature, History, Law, Psychology, Medicine and Education.

Many teaching methods feature in Sociology lessons. The priority is student interest and preparation for eventual exams, so help with essay technique is specific and student-friendly.

Three examination papers are taken - there is no coursework component.

Paper 1: Education / Methods of Research

Paper 2: Families / The Media

Paper 3: Crime / Sociological Methods and Theories

These topics are explained in a simplified outline below.



Year 1

- Education
 - The changing nature of education in modern society and why achievement varies according to social class, ethnicity and gender
- Family Life – assessing its importance and how it has changed over time
- Research Methods – how sociologists research society and its many issues

Year 2

- Sociological theories about society – from Functionalism & Marxism to Postmodernism
- The Media – its role and effects in our 'media-saturated society'
- Crime and its causes – ranging from 'street crime' to 'crimes of the powerful'

Extra Information

Lunchtime 'taster sessions' will be available from November. Please look for notices.

The full details of the AQA specification are readily available at <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/sociology/as-and-a-level>

Should you have any queries, feel free to contact Mrs Simpson in school or by e-mail: simpsonj@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk



SPANISH

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	A grade 6 in GCSE Spanish
Pre-requisite GCSE:	Yes. Spanish national or part Spanish national students who do not have Spanish GCSE but can speak the language well will be considered
Compulsory Trips:	Study trip is not compulsory but extremely advisable

Course Outline

The A-level specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. It constitutes an integrated study with a focus on language, culture and society. It fosters a range of transferable skills including communication, critical thinking, research skills and creativity, which are valuable to the individual and society. The content is suitable for students who wish to progress to employment or to further study, including a modern languages degree.

The course focusses on how Spanish-speaking society has been shaped socially and culturally and how it continues to change. In the first year, aspects of the social context are studied, together with aspects of the artistic life of Spanish-speaking countries. In the second year further aspects of the social background are covered, this time focusing on matters associated with multiculturalism. Students also study aspects of the political landscape including the future of political life in the Hispanic world by focusing on young people and their political engagement.

Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of themes relating to the culture and society of countries where Spanish is spoken, and their language skills. They will do this by using authentic spoken and written sources in Spanish.

Students will have 5 lessons per week, and will become proficient in the use of the language lab. In addition to standard lessons, there will also be a compulsory weekly lesson with the Spanish Assistant to provide additional opportunity for students to become more proficient in their speaking. The Department will also organise a study trip to take place in Year 13 (if possible in respect of Covid 19 at that time).

Course Content

- Social issues and trends
- Political and artistic culture:
 - Modern day idols
 - Spanish regional identity
 - Cultural heritage
 - Today's youth, tomorrow's citizens
 - Monarchies and dictatorships
 - Popular movements
- Grammar



Assessment

- Paper 1: Listening Reading and Writing
2 hours 30 – 100 marks – 50% of A-Level
 - Resources in Spanish taken from authentic sources
 - Translation to English (100 words) – 10 marks
 - Translation to Spanish (100) words – 10 marks
- Paper 2: Writing
One text and one film – 80 marks – 20% - 2 hours
 - Answer 2 questions – 300 words each (no word limit)
 - The film to be studied will be *El Laberinto del Fauno* (Pan's Labyrinth) by *Guillermo del Toro*.
 - The chosen text is *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* by Lorca
- Paper 3: Speaking
Total exam 21-23 minutes (including 5 minutes of preparation time) – 60 marks – 30%
 - Individual research project – 2 minute presentation and further discussion (9-10 minutes) – 35 marks. Cannot be based on book or film studied.
 - One of four sub-themes of Hispanic society or Artistic culture – stimulus card (5-6 minutes) – 25 marks.



TEXTILE DESIGN

Examination Board:	AQA
Entry Requirements:	6 in GCSE Textiles or other creative subject
Pre-requisite GCSE:	No, but will need to demonstrate creative potential
Compulsory Trips:	No

Course Outline

We follow the AQA Art and Design: Textile Design specification. The Textile Design course offers the opportunity to develop skills over a broad range of textile and fashion techniques such as printing, weaving, knitting, embellishment and digital applications. Students at Dame Alice Owens School usually favour a product focussed Fashion Design route when conducting their personal investigation and examination units. However, students with an interest in other aspects of Textile Design are free to explore all areas of interest.

This is a very creative and practical A level with a firm focus on fashion design with all projects leading to finished fashion garments. Practical work is produced by researching and developing ideas using sketches, digital exploration, sketchbooks and worksheets, supported by critical evaluation and an awareness of contemporary and historical influences. Practical outcomes can take the form of 3D models and experiments through to beautifully crafted finished garments and products.

The Textile Design course content is outlined below, however, students are encouraged to explore any aspect of Fashion and Textile design which interests them:

- Fashion Design
- Costume Design
- Digital Textiles
- Constructed Textiles
- Printed and Embellished Textiles

Year 12 Textile Design will begin with a foundation course which will engage students in a wide range of textiles techniques and experiments. The foundation course enables students to develop a personal style and to discover their own area of specific interest. The personal investigation for component 1 of this A level will begin around Easter time of year 12.

A-level assessment

The Textile Design A level assessment begins after Easter of Year 12 with component 1 where you will develop work for a **personal investigation** into an idea, issue, concept or theme supported by written material. This will count for 60% of your total A-level marks. In component 2 you will produce **personal work** in response to one of eight exciting starting points which will count for 40% of your total A-level marks.

We have received consistently good feedback from AQA about our coursework. This year the chief moderator commented:



“The work was some of the best we have seen with some aspects of the work presenting at degree level. The approach was modern and students pushed the boundaries in a very mature way.”

Trips & Visits

Visits and workshops are arranged to galleries and museums such as the Victoria and Albert museum, The New Designers Show and the Fashion and Textiles Museum. Students are also encouraged to visit museums and galleries in their own time for research and inspiration.

Further Education

Most Textile Design students go on to study the subject at degree level at a range of Universities such as Nottingham Trent, Sheffield Hallam, the London College of Fashion, and Central St Martins specialising in all areas of Fashion, Textiles and Business Management e.g. Constructed Textiles, Contemporary textiles, Costume design, Fashion design, Footwear design, Fashion promotion, Printed textiles, Sportswear design, Theatre design, Costume interpretation, Bespoke tailoring, Fashion journalism, Fashion management.

Possible Career Opportunities

- Design: Womenswear, Menswear, Childrenswear, Fashion Accessories, Footwear, Interior Designer, Sportswear, Swim-wear, Costume Designer, Pattern cutter, Machinist, Set Designer.
- Construction: Bespoke Tailoring, Costume interpretation and construction, Millinery.
- Other: Creative Director, Buying, Sourcing, Merchandising, Styling, Branding, Photography, Fashion Journalism, Imaging, Editorial work, P.R, Business Management, Retail, Trend Forecasting.
- Technical Careers: smart & technical textiles, automotive textiles, medical textiles, textiles science. Textiles technologist, fabric technologist, garment technologist.

For further details, please see Ms Cerny in the Textiles Department.