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# **THE BLUE COAT SCHOOL**

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**A GUIDE TO  
SIXTH FORM COURSES**

**FOR ENTRY IN SEPTEMBER 2012**

# **WELCOME TO THE SIXTH FORM GUIDEBOOK FOR 2012-13**

The Blue Coat School Sixth Form is a key and valued part of the School and its identity. The School proudly offers an academic curriculum within an exciting Sixth Form experience.

The Sixth Form here is both a blend of tradition and modernity. Students wear a uniform, are taught in formal lessons by highly qualified staff who are used to working with students who are all capable of high AS and A2 grades.

Beneath the traditional exterior is a thoroughly modern school where students are monitored and supported by an experienced and dedicated team of Sixth Form Managers and Tutors. The School has a suite of study rooms, with computer facilities, to enable this highly academic Sixth Form to offer extensive study facilities to its students. The Common Room is the social hub of the Sixth Form and offers relaxation and informal discussion in this academic environment.

The well-being of students is given a very high priority here and we work to make all students (of which there are about 80 newcomers every year) and parents welcome and included in the life of the Sixth Form from the very start.

Our aim is to enable students to have a happy and successful time in the Sixth Form and, with 81% of last year's students attaining an A\*, A or B grade, and a full programme of pastoral and university preparation support in place, we have a deserved reputation for excellence.

All Blue Coat Sixth Form students study four AS Levels in Year 12, plus AS Level General Studies. They also follow an Enrichment Programme with formal timetabled lessons where all students develop their own group-based activities and gain valuable experience at the key skill of working together in teams.

In Year 13 students study three A2 Levels, thereby completing three subjects to Advanced Level, together with General Studies.

**Sixth Form Years are the most important years of your school career.**

**It is extremely important that you make an informed decision and it is our intention that all the detail in this guidebook will help you in your decision-making.**

**For each Advanced Level Subject, this Guidebook sets out:-**

- The pre-conditions for starting the course
- The exam board for the syllabus on offer
- A description of the subject matter

The information this Guide contains is based on the most up to date information available at the time of printing.

## **Careers Information**

Such is the diversity of careers available at 16, 18 or post-graduate, that it is not possible to attempt a useful summary in this booklet. Therefore a member of the Sixth Form Team/Careers Department will be available to meet, by appointment, inside or outside school hours, any parent or student who wishes to discuss any particular aspect of careers, Further Education or Higher Education.

The School's careers organisation, Connexions, is outward looking with many contacts in the Universities, industry and commerce. These contacts are used to add to the information offered in the personal consultations, which are the mainstay of our advisory process.

If you wish to make an appointment, please email:-

[l.hayburn@bluecoatschool.org.uk](mailto:l.hayburn@bluecoatschool.org.uk)

# THE SIXTH FORM CURRICULUM

The Sixth Form is devoted to the study of AS and A2 Level subjects in a two year course in Year 12 and Year 13.

The AS (Advanced Subsidiary) qualification represents the first half of the full A Level (50% of the marks). These are primarily for students in Year 12.

The A2 qualification represents the second half of the full A Level. However, in the final examination students will be tested on their understanding of the course as a whole (the synoptic element). A2 Levels will be studied by Year 13 students.

## **So basically, AS + A2 = A Level**

In order to achieve at Advanced (A) Level in any particular subject, students must succeed at both AS and A2 Level in that subject.

In Year 12, all students will study AS Level General Studies, which is part of the Sixth Form curriculum. All students follow an organised and timetabled Enrichment Programme, which focuses on the key skill of working with others and encourages students to work in teams to develop individual programmes of fundraising, sales of items and initiatives to enliven the wider life of the Sixth Form and School as a whole.

A detailed programme of guidance and support will be offered covering areas of study skills, university choice and preparation, and UCAS completion. This runs through both Year 12 and Year 13, and is a key part of the School's commitment to ensuring that all students . whether new to the School or from Year 11 . are supported fully in making decisions about their future.

**Movement into Year 13 depends upon passing those three subjects chosen for study at A2 Level at Grade D or above. It will not be possible to study any further AS Levels. It is a requirement in Year 13 that students undertake A2 study in 3 subjects.**

## **Work Related Learning**

Many of our students have part time paid employment, which the school does not discourage as long as it is in moderation. Those students who wish to follow vocational university course are also encouraged to carry out voluntary work in local hospitals and care homes. This enables them to be a rounded student and have an extra element to their UCAS application. The Blue Coat School is committed to this element and provides a week during June/July, when Year 12 students are encouraged to organise their own work experience.

# EXPECTATIONS IN THE SIXTH FORM

Becoming a member of the Sixth Form is an important step. You should be prepared to regard yourself as an adult, responsible for the example you set, and you will be expected to work hard at your chosen subjects. You will work more closely with your teachers but you will also have to take on more responsibility for self-directed study, personal research and keeping to deadlines.

Although staff will monitor your progress, you are expected to take an active part in monitoring your own progress and to discuss strategies for improvement with your teachers should you run into difficulty. You will have to exercise self-discipline and see yourself as a role model for younger students.

You have roles, too, in leading the School and in the exercise of responsibility in respect of lower school students. The Sixth Form at The Blue Coat School is not intended to be the same experience as other Post-16 education provision. You will be required to meet the highest standards of personal appearance, dress and conduct as befits your leadership role.

During your first term in Year 12, you will receive a Target Grade for each Advanced Level subject. This will be based on prior achievement. Assessment over the course will be measured against this target. It is your responsibility to do your best to achieve your target grades, and the Sixth Form Management Team will be monitoring your achievement against the Target Grades, which will appear on every Report about your progress that is sent home.

***Part-time employment is of course allowed because students can gain much from it, but it must not be allowed to interfere with meeting academic deadlines.***

Further details on expectations in Sixth Form are available on the website in the document called %General Information about the Sixth Form 2012-2013+.

## **Timetabling**

Each AS subject will be studied for 10 of the 50 on hour lessons in the fortnightly timetable.

The remaining ten lessons given to General Studies (two lessons), Enrichment (one lesson) and Form Period (one lesson). Six lessons are set aside for individual study.

## **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS TO ADVANCED LEVEL COURSES**

The minimum qualification for entry into Year 12 is 30 points gained in five appropriate and relevant subjects at GCSE.

GCSE grade	Equivalent points
A*	8
A	7
B	6
C	5

Please look carefully at the pre-requisite grade(s) for each subject, a summary of which is available at the back of the Guidebook.

## **CHOICE OF SUBJECTS**

### ***GOOD REASONS FOR CHOOSING A SUBJECT:***

When embarking on a Sixth Form course, many considerations must be taken into account and balanced by the individual.

- **Motivation:** - A Sixth Form student spends 20% taught time a week, plus study time, on each subject. Therefore, it is important to have both a real interest in that subject and the motivation to succeed. Similarly the student must be capable of more self-directed study, independent learning and reading, rather than relying always on homework, where the terms of reference are pre-set by the teacher.
- **Ability:** - A student must have the ability to study a subject beyond GCSE. The intellectual requirements are more exacting, demanding analytical skills, reasoning ability and insight, to a far greater degree than required for GCSE.
- **Career or Higher Education Requirements:** - Some University courses will require specific subjects or combinations of subjects as a condition of entry, or at least favour some subjects before others. Therefore, in making a choice, a student must be looking ahead already to the next stage of the career he or she is to start at the end of the Sixth Form course. Options chosen now will affect decisions to be made at 18. The student will wish to aim high, but should take a realistic view, and be guided in estimating his or her future academic potential by results achieved to date.

In many cases future intentions will still be unclear, but it is important that any ideas on the future, however tentative, must be indicated so that advisers may help to the full. It is worth remembering that GCSE results and AS results (including General Studies) appear on an application form to Higher Education. Therefore the range and quality of GCSE results does play an important part in the selection process.

### ***POOR REASONS FOR CHOOSING A SUBJECT:***

Choosing the correct subjects is the vital first step. It should be taken by students and parents who have sought all the advice they need from school resources and who then make a considered personal decision. It should not be a matter of drifting into a choice simply to follow friends. Equally, to base a choice on GCSE results alone is dangerous. Success in a subject at GCSE is encouraging, but to pick the three highest GCSE grades is a negative way of choosing Advanced Levels. The difference between GCSE grade A and grade B may be marginal. Motivation, interest and future requirements should be more important considerations.

## **SUBJECTS OFFERED**

**THE SUBJECTS OFFERED AT ADVANCED LEVEL ARE :-**

Art	History
Biology	Latin
Chemistry	Maths
Computing or ICT	Further Maths
Design & Technology	Music
Economics	Philosophy
English Literature	Physical Education
English Language and Literature (Combined Course)	Physics
French	Psychology
Geography	Religious Studies
Government & Politics	Spanish

Advanced Level General Studies will be studied by all. Currently the A2 modules in General Studies are taken in the January exam session in Year 13.

The Extended Project Qualification and AQA Bacculaureate will be offered to all.

## **COMBINATION OF SUBJECTS**

**The possible combinations are limited by timetabling restrictions: it is impossible to offer unlimited choice. If students appear to be choosing an inappropriate combination they will be given guidance prior to any final decisions. To help in this process, they are asked to include their future career intentions (if known) on their application form.**

There are certain subjects that traditionally fit together very well. For example, the three sciences, or English and History. The skills and university or career choices from these are relatively clear.

Few contemporary career paths are based on one discipline, so the School encourages students to explore the flexibility and choices offered to enable them to study a range of courses at AS Level.

Even most Medicine and Science-based courses at University do not require a student to have studied all three sciences. Professions like Accountancy and Law do not require A Levels in these subjects.

Universities and employers are looking for a range of skills and interests, and, crucially, a student's potential to develop.

Please seek advice from your teachers and careers advisors at your school and undertake research. It is YOUR responsibility, particularly if you have a specific career in mind, to ensure that your AS Level subject combination is appropriate.

If you are offered a place in The Blue Coat School Sixth Form, we do our very best to timetable your first four choices on the application form. If it is impossible to fit all of the first four into the timetable we will use your fifth (reserve) choice. We will contact you if this is the case.

We cannot guarantee that your fifth choice will also fit into the timetable. Consequently if you do not meet the grade criteria for one of your choices, or if you change your mind on Results Day, we cannot guarantee that a place will be available. We will look carefully at the timetable and group sizes before deciding whether we can confirm your place.

# HIGHER EDUCATION

The choice of individual subjects or the combination of subjects may well be influenced by Higher Education and career goals. It is important to bear in mind a number of factors:

- There are degree courses in most subjects which can be followed by those with modest A Level results as well as those with high grades, although of course, the higher the projected grades, the wider the choice of courses and institutions. Students are encouraged to look beyond the traditional school subjects to those such as Engineering, Archaeology, Accountancy, Law, Pharmacy, Medicine, Biochemistry etc.
- The grade requirements from Universities tend to vary from AAA or A\* AA for most courses at Oxford or Cambridge through AAB or ABB at most long established Universities, to CCD, CDD or as low as EE in some Universities for certain courses.
- However, there are certain courses which are available only at a restricted number of Universities and open only to those with the highest A Level grades, e.g. Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science.
- It is not unknown in exceptional circumstances for Universities to accept students with grades lower than originally stipulated and demanded. However, it is never something to depend upon when making decisions about possible courses.
- It is, therefore, important to consider carefully the choice of A Level subjects and, where a high minimum requirement for University entry is likely, it is also important to consider whether it is a realistic prospect for the student to achieve those grades. In some University departments certain combinations of subjects only are acceptable. In others the choice may be quite open. An increasing number of subject faculties also value practical experience and knowledge on the part of the applicant.

For more details about offer levels there are copies of the Big Guide by UCAS, and other guidebooks, in the School Library and Sixth Form Common Room. ~~£~~Complete Degree Course Offers by Brian Heap (of which there are several copies in School) is also available. The UCAS website also has a ~~£~~course search feature which enables students to look at entry requirements. [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com).

- Increasingly, practical experience or work experience, especially in the most competitive subjects, e.g. Veterinary Sciences, Medicine and Law, is becoming a prerequisite. This indicates a real commitment to the subject; something for which Universities are looking.

# The AQA Baccalaureate

All students in The Blue Coat Sixth Form follow a programme to enable them to get accreditation for their all round achievements as young people.

*This qualification is ideal for Blue Coat School Sixth Form students because it clearly demonstrates the skills and personal qualities that employers and universities are looking for, celebrates their achievements and develops more rounded individuals by extending students' experiences way beyond their A level courses.*

Time in this Sixth Form has always been about encouraging independence, independent learning, research, and time management as well as active community participation. This qualification brings this together in a nationally recognised qualification.

The AQA Baccalaureate is a qualification that comprises **four** elements that, together, demonstrate that students have achieved success in terms of A Levels together with wider learning and enrichment activities.

**The four elements of the AQA Baccalaureate comprise of:**

## **1. Depth of Study**

To show this, students must study at least three A Levels with any examination board. All A levels offered here, except Critical Thinking and General Studies are included.

## **2. Breadth of Study**

Students must have studied and passed a qualification in either AS level General Studies or Critical Thinking to be eligible for this part of the qualification. All Blue Coat students study General Studies to A level.

## **3. Enrichment Activities**

Students must undertake a variety of activities involving at least 100 hours over a two year programme, though we envisage that the majority will complete this in their AS level year. A minimum of 30 hours must be undertaken in each of the following areas:

### **a. Work Related Learning**

This includes work experience in Year 12 or 13, work shadowing or paid employment.

#### **b. Community participation**

This includes voluntary service in, for example, local schools, hospitals, residential homes, hospices, charity shops, Camp Kenya.

#### **c. Personal Development**

This includes **active** involvement in, for example, sport, music, drama, debating, first aid, foreign language skills, driving safety and road awareness, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. This development has to be over and above the norm. For example, attending Debating Society would not be enough . whereas running it would be.

Students would have to keep a log of their work in all three areas, and this would need to be to a high standard to make them eligible. This would be completed by April in Year 13 (2013).

### **4. An Extended Project**

Students will be required to identify, design, plan and complete an individual project. This involves applying organisational skills to meet a planned objective of their choice on a subject in which they are interested. This will involve 30 hours of guided teaching of study skills, and the final written project will be approximately 5000 words in length. In all, this is expected to take 120 hours. If it is a practical-based project it will need a minimum of 1000 words in an accompanying presentation.

Each Blue Coat Sixth Form student should complete this Project to a high academic standard, with an accompanying logbook recording progress, guided by a Mentor who will meet the student several times during the development of the project to guide and ensure that the criteria for success are being met.

***The AQA Baccalaureate Award will be graded at three levels.***

#### **a. Pass**

A student who completes three A Levels (each at grade E or above) and the Extended Project will receive an additional **AQA Baccalaureate Pass Qualification.**

#### **b. Merit**

A student who completes three A Levels (each at grade C or above) and the Extended Project will receive an additional **AQA Baccalaureate Merit Qualification.**

### **3. Distinction.**

A student who completes three A Levels (each at grade A) and the Extended Project will receive an additional **AQA Baccalaureate Distinction Qualification**.

Currently the Extended Project is offered to students in Year 13 after they have taken both of their A2 modules for General Studies in the January exam session.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

### **(EXTERNAL Applicants Only)**

The Application Form (issued separately) must be filled in, **at the latest, by Friday 3rd February 2012**, signed by the student and parent, and handed in to the School Office F.A.O. Mrs L Hayburn. After filling in the form any changes in the choices may be made by a parent giving written notification to Mrs L Hayburn: **ks5@bluecoatschool.org.uk**.

**All applications will be considered carefully based on the information given. If you are likely to be a suitable candidate for The Blue Coat Sixth Form you will be invited to an Advisory Meeting with a Senior member of staff to discuss your application. We tend to use email for these invitations. Please state clearly on your application form if you do not have daily access to email.**

**You will hear about the success of your application by 24th April 2012.**

## **HOW TO APPLY** **(INTERNAL Applicants Only)**

If you are already a student at the Blue Coat School you must get your application form (issued later) filled in by **Monday 19th March 2012**, signed by the student and parent, and handed in to your Form Tutor. For Blue Coat School students there will be taster sessions on **Friday 27th January 2012**, an Options Evening on **Tuesday 31st January 2012**, as well as a Year 11 ParentsqEvening on **Wednesday 22nd February 2012**, so there are several opportunities to discuss your choices prior to the deadline.

A reserve subject will be called upon only after consultation with the student. At any time after filling in the form, any changes in the choices may be made by a parent giving written notification to **Mrs G Thomas, Examinations Officer**.

### ***FOR BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL CANDIDATES:***

***It must be understood that a late alteration of choice is only possible if it involves changing to an already timetabled combination of subjects and if there is a place available in that class.***

***The minimum entry requirements must, of course, also have been achieved. All students must have their Sixth Form place and choice of courses confirmed on GCSE results day, THURSDAY 23rd August 2012 by bringing their results to the School. If you are unable to attend in person you must make arrangements for the school to receive copies of your results on Results day. If we do not receive copies of your results on that day then you risk losing your place.***

# **A LEVEL COURSES**

# ART

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

A grade B in GCSE Art is needed. You should have a keen interest in the subject and the ability to work independently.

**EXAM BOARD** WJEC Advanced Subsidiary AS and A Level A2

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

We offer the Fine Art option within Art and Design. This means that there is a strong emphasis on developing drawing and painting skills, developing independent ideas and researching the work of other artists. You will use a range of materials and techniques and will need to make regular use of sketchbooks.

## **SPECIFIC PERSONAL QUALITIES NEEDED FOR THE COURSE**

You will need to be self-motivated, committed and enthusiastic. Working from a common starting point, you will develop your own programmes of work, exploring issues and ideas which interest you, so an independent approach and an enquiring mind are vital to success.

## AS Level

### Unit 1: Coursework Portfolio

For this unit you will explore a specific theme, e.g. portraiture, landscape, set by your teacher. The course will start with workshops, giving you the opportunity to experiment with a range of materials and techniques. You will then develop your ideas independently to produce a personal portfolio of work, including preparatory studies and a final piece.

### Unit 2: Controlled Assignment

The assignments for this unit are set by the exam board and are theme based. You will have 6 . 8 weeks to develop a set of preparatory work for your chosen assignment and 8 hours focus time to produce a final piece.

## **A2 Level**

### **Unit 3: Personal Investigation**

This is the coursework element of A2. It is to be based around a theme developed from a personal starting point. Students will be expected to produce a portfolio of practical work, including preparatory studies and a final piece, accompanied by a written element of no less than one thousand words. This unit is progressively independent and self-directed, so a high level of self discipline and self-motivation are required.

### **Unit 4: Controlled Assignment**

The assignments are set by the exam board and are again theme based. Students will select an assignment and will have 6 . 8 weeks to develop a set of preparatory work. You will then have 12 hours to produce a final piece.

### ***ANY QUESTIONS?***

***Contact Mrs Watson, the Head of Department, and she will be happy to advise you further.***

# **BIOLOGY**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THE COURSE**

A grade B or above in GCSE Biology is needed or at least a grade A in Core and a grade A in Additional Science. A grade B or above in Mathematics is also required. A real interest in Biology coupled with the desire to read around the subject is important too.

**EXAM BOARD**      AQA

## **AS Level (1411)**

This is made up of three units. Two of the units will be tested by written examinations. Both examination papers will have short and longer questions. The Unit 1 paper will also contain a short essay while Unit 2 will contain data analysis questions. The third is a centre-assessed unit of practical skills. This will be similar to the practical Investigative Skills Assessment taken during your GCSE course.

The first unit (BIOL1) will be taken in the January of your AS course so it is essential that you focus on your work as soon as the course begins.

### **Unit 1: Biology and Disease (BIOL 1)**

In this Unit you will study the digestive, gas exchange and blood systems of mammals. To understand the physiology behind these systems you will also cover the basic principles of enzyme action and the mechanisms used to transport substances across membranes, i.e. diffusion, osmosis and active transport. The systems described in this unit may be affected by disease. Therefore, you will also learn how the body defends itself against invaders.

During this Unit you will be given opportunities to carry out practical work. You will be assessed on your understanding of *How Science Works (HSW)* in all three AS units. Therefore, it is important that you review your GCSE notes on HSW over the summer vacation.

### **Unit 2: The variety of living organisms. (BIOL 2)**

Although a species may be defined in terms of similarity, there is frequently considerable variation and this is influenced by genetic and environmental factors. In this unit you will study the structure of DNA and how the sequence of bases results in genetic diversity. You will learn how factors such as size and metabolic rate affect organisms and how this gives rise to adaptations such as specialised gas exchange surfaces and mass transport systems.

### **Unit 3: The Centre Assessed Unit (CAU) (BIOL 3)**

The Centre Assessed Unit comprises of a Investigative Skills Assignment (ISA) and a Practical Skills Assessment (PSA). The ISA is marked by your teachers following guidelines provided by the examination board. The PSA is assessed over the course by your teacher(s). The CAU accounts for 20% of the total AS Level mark.

The Biology department offers the chance for students to sit two ISA tests per year. The best mark is forwarded to the examination board.

The A2 course starts in the summer term of Y12, so it is very important that no early holidays are booked during this term. As before, one A2 module is a centre assessed unit. **Units 4 & 6** require practical techniques which can only be developed during fieldwork. Consequently, there will be day trips out during the summer term to practise sampling techniques and carry out investigative work.

## **A2 Level (2411)**

This is made up of three units. Two units will culminate in written examination papers. Unit 4 is just over an hour long but Unit 5 contains a synoptic element and is 2 ¼ hours in length.

The question format is also similar to AS level, with short and long ones as well as essays and data handling questions. The final unit (Unit 6) is a centre assessed unit which is similar to Unit 3 of the AS course.

### **Unit 4: Populations and the Environment (BIOL 4)**

This unit explains how populations can be affected and how energy is made and transferred between organisms. The biochemistry of photosynthesis and respiration are studied in detail to show how Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP) is generated. This module extends the work on inheritance which was started during the AS course.

The practical work during this unit will focus on factors affecting photosynthesis and respiration. The main fieldwork techniques will also be addressed, e.g. sampling, measurement of abiotic factors, and a study of a habitat with the application of statistics. These fieldwork skills will be the focus of the field trip to Ainsdale sand dunes in the Summer term of Y12.

### **Unit 5: Control in cells and in organisms (BIOL 5)**

Multicellular organisms have the ability to control the activities, which occur within them. They do this by detecting stimuli and stimulating appropriate responses. Unit 5 will tease apart the mechanisms which control many of these responses. Animals increase their chances of survival by avoiding harmful environments. Therefore, an in depth study of the nervous system and muscle contraction will also take place.

By the end of this unit you should have developed an understanding of the ways in which organisms and cells control their activities. This should lead to an appreciation of common ailments resulting from the breakdown of these control mechanisms and the use of DNA technology in the diagnosis and treatment of human diseases.

## **Unit 6: A2 centre assessed unit (BIOL 6)**

This will follow a similar format to the Centre Assessed Unit (CAU) of the AS Level course. However, the skills tested will address the work covered in Units 4 and 5. The focus will be on fieldwork techniques, statistics (e.g. Spearman rank correlation and  $X^2$  test) and the investigative skills associated with respiration and photosynthesis. The CAU will account for 10% of the total A Level mark. Two teacher marked ISA tests will be offered to students during the autumn and early spring terms.

## **Teaching & Learning Methods**

A mixture of note taking, practical work and problem solving will be used. Powerpoint presentations and videos are also included when relevant. Topic tests are a regular feature of the course as well as homework assignments geared to enhance understanding. Independent research activities involving the internet are included at both AS and A2.

## **Subject Combinations**

Most pupils support Biology by studying Chemistry, Mathematics or Physics, although an increasing number combine Biology with Psychology or Geography. Ideally you should enjoy dealing with numbers, as statistics and data handling are important elements of the course.

## **What Can We Do With An A Level In This Subject?**

Many students choose Biology because it provides an ideal preparation for medicine and many other health related vocational courses. However, a Biology A Level allows you to follow any career path.

## **Any Questions?**

**Contact Mr Kenny, the Head of Department, and he will be happy to advise you further. Specimen papers and mark schemes are available at : [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)**

# CHEMISTRY

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

A grade B or above in GCSE Chemistry or at least a grade A in Core and a grade A in Additional Science. A grade B or above in Mathematics is also required.

## **EXAM BOARD** AQA

This is a recently introduced specification, which leads directly from GCSE. Students who have studied separate Chemistry may be at an advantage to begin with. The aim of the new specification is to ensure that learning is enjoyable and enhances enthusiasm for Chemistry.

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

### AS Level

You will study two theory units leading to an examination in January and June of Year 12. The third unit for examination involves Investigative and Practical skills, which is assessed by way of a Practical Skills Assessment (PSA) and Investigative Skills Assessment (ISA), just as it is at GCSE.

You will have two teachers for Chemistry at all times during your A level course. The Year 12 course is divided as follows in terms of exam papers and marks towards AS Level:

#### Unit 1

This is called Foundation Chemistry and it explores the fundamental principles that form the basis of Chemistry. These include furthering your knowledge of atomic structure bonding and the properties of matter as well as studying the way chemical calculations work. In addition to this you will extend your understanding of Organic Chemistry, so important in everyday life, organising the millions of organic substances into groups whose properties we can understand and whose reactions we can predict.

The Unit 1 exam will be taken in January of Year 12.

#### Unit 2

This unit introduces more new principles and their applications. It involves study of how quickly as well as how far a chemical reaction is likely to proceed according to conditions; energy change; redox reactions; the chemistry of halogens and the alkaline earth metals and metal extraction.

### **Unit 3**

This unit is devoted to Practical Chemistry. You will undertake practical work such as titrations, testing for ions in solution, measuring heat energy changes, investigating rates of reaction, preparing and recrystallising organic compounds, testing for functional groups and burning hydrocarbons. These practicals will form an integral part of the course. There is a practical exam and theory paper on the practical work undertaken.

### **A2 Level**

In Year 13 you will take **Unit 4** in January 2012 when there is also the opportunity to re-sit modules 1 and / or 2 if you need to. Unit 4 involves further study of Organic Chemistry and some of the Unit 2 topics along with the detailed study of acid base theory and some instrumental methods of analysis.

### **Unit 5**

This is the final unit involving new work and consists of a study of some transition elements and their colourful compounds . another area for practical involvement, some of the mechanisms of catalysis, electrochemical cells, further study of chemical energy change and application of acquired knowledge to explain the way the elements and their compounds change their behaviour across a period.

### **Unit 6**

This is the practical unit, which takes place during the teaching of Unit 4 and 5. Included will be the work such as analysis of iron tablets by titration, investigating pH changes, preparation of aspirin, the iodine clock experiment and study of coloured transition metal compounds. There is a practical exam and theory paper on the practical work undertaken.

Extra lessons for those seeking to achieve the new A\* grade (90% or more) and those taking specialist exams such as BMAT or the Chemistry Olympiad are held after school throughout Year 13 and are open to all.

### ***ANY QUESTIONS?***

***Contact Mrs Beggs, the Head of Department, and she will be happy to advise you further. Alternatively, talk to your Chemistry teacher.***

# **COMPUTING**

A Level Computing is available as an option at the Blue Coat School.

A choice has to be made as to the preferred option. There are significant differences in content and between Computing and ICT, and careful thought should be given before deciding which is the most suitable for you. Please refer to the detailed descriptions of the courses that follow.

The main differences between A Level Computing and A Level ICT are that in A Level Computing the emphasis is on the structure and organisation of computer systems, programming language concepts and skills. In A Level ICT the emphasis is on understanding information systems, the application of ICT in business and developing high level skills in general purpose programmes such as Desk Top Publishers, Spreadsheets and Databases.

## **COMPUTING**

### **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

Advanced Level Computing is an academically demanding subject that requires the ability to absorb difficult concepts. A grade A GCSE in ICT or equivalent **plus** grade A GCSE at higher level Mathematics is a prerequisite for all students.

Students should also be able to demonstrate the following important requirements of:

- a keen interest in the subject;
- a determination to work hard to master a host of new concepts; and
- the ability to carry out and organise project work and be self motivated to achieve a successful outcome.

**COMPUTING: EXAM BOARD**      **WJEC**

**COMPUTING: SUBJECT MATTER**

### **AS Level**

**CG1** 32.5 % 3 hours Written Paper 100 marks (130 UMS\*)

A written paper of one section, presented in a question-and-answer booklet format. There are no optional questions. Quality of Written Communication is assessed in one question only.

**CG2** 17.5% Internal Assessment (Task) 100 marks (70 UMS\*)

Candidates analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate a solution to a *given* problem requiring the production of original code (programming).

## **A2 Level**

**CG3** 32.5% 3 hours Written Paper 100 marks (130 UMS\*)

A written paper of one section, presented as a question paper requiring a separate answer booklet. There are no optional questions. Quality of Written Communication is assessed in one question only.

**CG4** 17.5 % Internal Assessment (Project) 100 marks (70 UMS\*)

Candidates analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate a solution to a substantial problem of their choice requiring the production of original programming.

This is a substantial piece of work, undertaken over an extended period of time.

*\*UMS means Uniform Mark Score, and is a way of weighting different examination papers by the Examination Board so that they are worth different percentages of the overall score.*

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Mr Keating, the Head of Department, who will be happy to help and advise you further.**

# **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

Advanced Level ICT is an academically demanding subject that requires the ability to absorb difficult concepts.

**Either** a grade A in ICT or equivalent **OR** a grade B in ICT **plus** a grade B GCSE at higher level Mathematics is a prerequisite for all students.

Students should also be able to demonstrate the following important requirements of:

- (a) a keen interest in the subject,
- (b) a determination to work hard to master a host of new concepts,
- (c) the ability to carry out and organise project work and be self motivated to achieve a successful outcome.

**ICT: EXAM BOARD      WJEC**

## **ICT: STRUCTURE OF COURSE AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT**

### **AS Level**

**IT1:** 30% 2 hours 15 minutes Written Paper 80 marks (120 UMS\*)

A written paper of two sections, A and B, presented in a question and answer booklet. There are no optional questions. Quality of Written Communication is assessed in one question in Section A.

Candidates will be required to prepare a spreadsheet on a specific topic, defined by WJEC, in advance of the written paper. Hard copies of the spreadsheet are taken into the examination and used to answer questions in Section B. This spreadsheet is submitted with the completed examination paper.

**IT2:** 20% Internal Assessment 80 marks (80 UMS\*)

Candidates undertake DTP and multimedia tasks, presenting the outcome for internal assessment and moderation by WJEC.

### **A2 Level**

**IT3:** 30% 2 hours 30 minutes Written Paper 90 marks (120 UMS\*)

A written paper of two sections, A and B, presented as a question paper requiring a separate answer booklet. Candidates answer all questions in Section A and one from two in Section B. Quality of Written Communication is assessed in the optional question only.

**IT4:** 20 % Internal Assessment 100 marks (80 UMS\*)

Candidates analyse, design, implement, test and evaluate a solution to a problem of their choice requiring the use of a relational database.

This is a substantial piece of work, undertaken over an extended period of time. It is internally assessed and moderated by WJEC.

*\*UMS means Uniform Mark Score, and is a way of weighting different examination papers by the Examination Board so that they are worth different percentages of the overall score.*

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Mr Keating, the Head of Department, who will be happy to help and advise you further.**

# **DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY**

## **PRE CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

Students must have studied a full Design & Technology based subject and achieved at least a grade A at GCSE.

## **EXAM BOARD**

AQA

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

The course consists of four modular units, two at AS Level (1&2) and two in A2 Level (3 & 4).

### **AS Level**

#### **Unit 1**

This comprises of a 2 hour written paper based primarily on Materials and Components. Students will have the opportunity to work with and study a variety of Resistant Materials so that they understand the working characteristics, physical properties, cost and availability of materials in design situations (50% of total AS marks).

#### **Unit 2**

Students are required to submit a single, substantial project for assessment (coursework). The project should consist of a design folder presented on A3 paper and the associated outcome(s), and should represent 50 hours of supervised time (50% of total AS marks).

### **A2 Level**

#### **Unit 3**

This will be assessed by a 2 hour written paper based on Design and Market influences, Processes and Manufacture and the Influence of Design Technology in Society. There is an expectation that candidates will have knowledge and understanding of Materials and Components gained as a result of studying the subject content at AS Level and developing this through their coursework at Unit 2 (50% of total A2 marks).

#### **Unit 4**

Candidates submit evidence of a single, substantial designing and making activity of approximately 60 hours duration (coursework). This is a design and make unit where knowledge of the AS and A2 subject content is applied to the design manufacture candidates own projects (50% total A2 marks).

## **SPECIFIC PERSONAL QUALITIES REQUIRED FOR THE COURSE**

- \* A real interest in product design, and the principles behind it.
- \* An ability to produce graphics of a high standard.
- \* A willingness to develop initiative.
- \* The ability to work to deadlines.

## **TIME AND OTHER DEMANDS ARE: COURSEWORK & ASSESSMENT**

Both Units (2 and 4) of Coursework are expected to show about 50 hours of work and take place between September and March of Year 12 and Year 13. Continuous assessment takes place through the submission of essays, usually weekly.

## ***ANY QUESTIONS?***

***Contact Mr Ainsworth, the Head of Department, who will be happy to provide further advice.***

# ECONOMICS

## PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE

An A grade in Higher Level GCSE Mathematics is required. It must be noted that students **do not** need to have studied GCSE Business Studies in order to take AS Economics as the two subjects are very much different. Students will also be expected to write detailed essays and hence literacy skills should be well developed. An interest in current affairs is really important too because this is a qualification in which examples are used to actually develop students' understanding.

## WHAT IS ECONOMICS?

- Economics asks the question *how can we make the best use of our scarce resources (e.g. labour)?*
- It is a *social* science, halfway between the arts and the sciences.
- It has a theoretical component, but the subject is driven by a need to explain the real world.
- Above all, economics is a *technique of thinking*.

## EXAMINATION BOARD AQA

To do well in studying Economics you should have:

- A **grade A** in GCSE Mathematics (higher tier)
- Well developed essay writing skills
- An interest in current affairs
- An ability to relate to theoretical models and an ability to express yourself well, both in discussion and on paper

Issues that economists examine are varied, interesting and exciting. They include:-

- Why are footballers' wages so high?
- What is a recession?
- What is the credit crunch and how did it all start?
- Why have house prices and oil prices changed so much recently? What are the implications?
- Should students pay for their higher education?
- How can we improve the NHS?
- What is the future of the euro?
- How do policy makers, such as the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Bank of England, manage the economy?

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE COURSE**

### **AS Level**

There are two exams at AS, each one hour and fifteen minutes long and consisting of multiple choice and data response questions.

The AS Level course comprises two modules; each of which will be assessed in June of Year 12;

- Markets and Market Failure (ECON 1) examines the way markets function and the way in which firms behave and compete in different market structures.
- The National Economy (ECON 2) concentrates on understanding the way economies as a whole function and how national governments can reduce inflation and unemployment.

### **A2 Level**

At A2 the exams are longer and involve data response and essay questions. Also at A2 Level, one of the examination questions in both units will have a European Focus.

The A2 course involves the study of two modules;

- Business Economics and the Distribution of Income (ECON 3) . students will be entered for this exam in the January of Year 13.
- The National and International Economy (ECON 4) . students will be entered for this exam in the June of Year 13.

### **WILL I ENJOY THE COURSE?**

You will enjoy this course if you want to study a subject that;

- challenges you academically and is highly thought of by Oxbridge Universities.
- is relevant to the world in which you live and to your future, focusing on explaining recent economic news.
- encourages you to discuss current affairs and issues.
- focuses on real world issues and problems.
- is studied through investigation, not just listening and reading.
- develops a full range of skills that will be useful in other subjects you study and in employment.
- examines issues logically and systematically.
- Puts emphasis on independent research, analysis and evaluation of information and allows you to utilise ICT resources such as spreadsheets, the internet, and presentation packages (PowerPoint).

## HIGHER EDUCATION AND CAREERS

- A Level Economics is highly respected by all universities for a wide range of courses, including Oxford, Cambridge and the London School of Economics (PPE, Economics, Social and Political Sciences).
- Economics is also an education for life because you will understand much more of the world around you, and why it is as it is.
- Employment opportunities where your economics skills will be particularly valued include business management and consultancy, banking, journalism, media, the law, marketing, the civil service, politics, insurance and accountancy.
- It is important to note that Economics degree courses often will require Mathematics A level in addition to Economics.

## HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

- Visit the Economics section on the common drive on the school's computers and download some sample worksheets
- Speak to students currently studying Economics or speak to Mr. Jamieson who will be happy to help.

***“Economics has given me the ability to construct an argument and take a critical view. The teaching staff are extremely supportive, and I would recommend it to anyone because the programme provides essential skills to make students more competitive in a ever globalising market.”***

Alex Casimo, Former Head Boy, received a first class Honours Degree in Economics from London School of Economics in 2011.

## **ANY QUESTIONS?**

***Contact Mr Jamieson, the Head of Department, who will be happy to provide more guidance, support and information.***

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

You must have grade B or above in English Literature GCSE. An enjoyment of literature and a willingness to read, discuss and write about a wide variety of texts are also required if you are to enjoy the course and find it stimulating.

## **EXAMINATION BOARD: AQA Specification B**

### AS Level

#### Unit 1: Texts in Context

**Written Paper: 2 hours**  
**Weighting: 60% of total AS marks**  
**30% of total A Level marks**

#### **Area of Study: Aspects of Narrative**

Unit 1 gives you the opportunity to study a range of texts including Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love*, Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* plus other works by Sebastian Faulks and Jane Austen. You will also study poetry by Hardy or Keats. The focus is upon stories and how they are told. Expect to be gripped by fantastic tales of war, cultural revolution, madness and love against the odds! In the exam, you will answer two questions assessing the texts you have studied.

#### Unit 2: Comedy

**Coursework Weighting: 40% of total AS marks**  
**20% of total A Level marks**

Learn about the often subtle, sometimes bawdy delights of Shakespearean comedy such as *Much Ado About Nothing* or *Twelfth Night*. Enjoy the more modern delights of Tom Stoppard, Dario Fo and Michael Frayn. You will be producing a portfolio of two pieces of coursework, totalling 2500-3000 words. In negotiation with your teacher, one piece could be a creative response where you explore the tragic elements of your study texts in narrative form. There are no prescribed set texts for this Unit, but you must study one Shakespearean comedy and one other comedy. Your teacher will select the texts.

### A2 Level

#### Unit 3: Elements of the Gothic

**Written Paper: 2 hours**  
**Weighting: 60% of total A2 marks**  
**30% of total A Level marks**

Unit 3 takes you to the dark and mysterious realms of Gothic fiction. You will study 3 ground-breaking texts drawn from authors including Shakespeare, Marlow, Mary Shelley, Emily Bronte, Bram Stoker and Angela Carter. You will be transported to the deepest recesses of the imagination - to windswept moors, spooky castles and the border between Earth and Hell!

#### **Unit 4: Further and Independent Reading**

##### **Coursework**

**Weighting:                   40% of total A2 marks**  
**20% of total A Level marks**

Unit 4 will see you turning critic. You will read and study an anthology of critical texts and write two extended pieces of coursework. One piece of coursework will compare two texts, and depending on your progress up to that point in your studies, you may be able to negotiate the choice of texts with your teacher. Further details of text pairings will be given nearer the time but examples could include:

*Brave New World* (Huxley) and *1984* (Orwell)  
*Jane Eyre* (C. Bronte) and *The Wide Sargasso Sea* (Rhys)  
*Rebecca* (Du Maurier) and *Brideshead Revisited* (Waugh)

You may also choose to compare a novel with a play  
e.g. *Top Girls* (Churchill) and *The Bell Jar* (Plath).

The second piece of coursework will ask you to take critical ideas from a pre-release anthology and apply them to further texts of your own choice, or chosen in negotiation with your teacher. This will give an insight into the fascinating world of literary criticism, offering you the kind of intellectual rigour well suited to university and later life.

Task One:           1500-2000 words  
Task Two:           1200-1500 words

#### **ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Mr Kershaw, the Head of Department, who will be happy to help and advise.**

**Specimen papers to be found at [www.aqa.org](http://www.aqa.org).**

# **ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

You must have a grade A or above in English Language GCSE. An enjoyment of fiction and non-fiction texts and a willingness to read, discuss and write about a wide variety of texts are also required.

**EXAMINATION BOARD**      **AQA Specification B**

## ***WHY STUDY THIS COURSE, AS OPPOSED TO ENGLISH LITERATURE?***

The English Language and Literature Combined Course is designed for those who not only want to carry on with their study of Literature but also want to understand how language affects the way we act and communicate with one another. It is just as academic as English Literature, but contains an analytical element about language use that is less high profile in the English Literature course.

## **AS Level**

### **Unit 1: Introduction to Language and Literature Study**

Written Paper: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Weighting: 60% of total AS/30% of total A Level marks

There will be a compulsory question on an anthology, produced by AQA as a set text. The anthology will contain stimulating poetry, prose and drama as well as non-fiction texts and transcripts of spoken English.

The question will address thematic and stylistic issues, with a focus on:

- a) writers' or speakers' use of language; and
- b) their attitudes towards a particular theme.

### **Unit 2: Genres in Language and Literature**

#### **Coursework**

**Weighting: 40% of total AS/20% of total A Level marks**

Assessment will be by two-part assignment.

The first part will focus on your ability to structure a comprehensive and informed discussion of a set theme, by appropriately using selected extracts from a studied text pairing.

The second part will focus on your ability to write creatively and demonstrate skills in a way which also provides evidence of your understanding of the texts as a whole. The text pairings will be chosen by your teachers from the following list:

Thomas More - *Utopia* and George Orwell - *1984*  
Charlotte Brontë - *Jane Eyre* and Jean Rhys - *Wide Sargasso Sea*  
Edgar Allan Poe - *Selected Tales* and Raymond Chandler - *The Big Sleep*  
Mary Shelley - *Frankenstein* and Truman Capote - *In Cold Blood*  
Robert L. Stevenson - *Travels with a Donkey* and Bill Bryson - *The Lost Continent*  
Lewis Carroll - *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and J. K. Rowling - *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

## **A2 Level**

### **Unit 3: Talk in Life and Literature**

**Written Paper: 2 hours and 30 minutes**  
**Weighting: 30% of total A Level marks**

Ever wondered why people talk the way they do? Do men talk differently to women? How do we adapt our talk to suit social contexts? Does speech actually have the power to perform actions? All these questions and many more will be investigated in this fascinating unit.

Your teachers will select one play from the following list for this unit:

*Hamlet* (William Shakespeare), *The Rivals* (Richard Brinsley Sheridan), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Tennessee Williams), *Translations* (Brian Friel).

### **Unit 4: Text Transformation**

**Coursework Weighting: 20% of total A Level marks**

Text transformation is an exciting unit, which allows you to fill the gaps and silences presented by other texts. Jean Rhys famously produced such a transformation with her novel *The Wide Sargasso Sea* telling the story of Rochester's first wife who is only a shadowy presence in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. In this unit, you are given the opportunity to re-tell stories from the point of view of other characters or to update and change the perspective of an existing text. You will choose your text to transform from a list prescribed by the Board and in negotiation with your teacher.

Assessment will be by the production of a coursework folder that includes the transformed texts and associated commentary.

### **SPECIFIC PERSONAL QUALITIES NEEDED FOR THE COURSE**

It is important to note that combined Language and Literature course is as demanding, and in some aspects more so, than the pure Literature course. Interest in analysis of fiction and non-fiction texts and concern to master critical vocabulary and style of writing (so that quite subtle effects can be described with the greatest possible precision) are crucial. Pleasure in reading both fiction and non-fiction, and willingness to read widely and write essays on a regular basis is essential.

### **ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Mr Kershaw, the Head of Department, who will be happy to help and advise. Specimen papers to be found at [www.aqa.org](http://www.aqa.org).**

## **AS / A2 at a glance...**

- Unit 1 (GENA1) AS Culture and Society (30 objective test questions and source analysis)
- Unit 2 (GENA2) AS Science and Society (30 objective questions and structured writing exercise)
- Unit 3 (GENA3) A2 Culture and Society (source evaluation and two essays)
- Unit 4 (GEN4) A2 Science and Society (questions on pre-release case study material and one essay)

## **SUBJECT COMBINATIONS**

General Studies is an A Level subject in its own right and for many it constitutes a 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> A Level. Due to its broad curriculum content this subject integrates knowledge from a wide range of subjects.

*I didn't think General Studies mattered to Universities, but it was part of my offer to study medicine at Sheffield.*

*On A Level results day I didn't have the grades required for my course, but they took me because I had a B in General Studies even though it was not part of my initial offer and the University had previously said it did not take General Studies into consideration. In reality, on the day, I got into my course because I had this A Level and others didn't."*

## **ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Mr. Frost, the Head of Department, who will be happy to help.  
The AQA website provides more information too.**

# GEOGRAPHY

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR STUDING THIS COURSE**

A grade B or above in GCSE Geography is a course requirement.

**EXAMINATION BOARD      AQA**

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

### **AS Level**

**There are 2 Modules to study at this level:**

#### **Module 1: Human and Physical Geography (GEOG1)**

(70% of AS, 35% of A2 level) to be assessed by a two hour examination.

The power of rivers can produce a variety of major landforms such as waterfalls and deltas. As part of this module we shall undertake a residential field visit to the Lake District to study upland rivers and flood defences in Keswick.

We shall also look at the impressive features produced by glaciation, including a day of exploring glaciated scenery in the Lake District. Human exploitation of cold environments will concentrate on Alaska and Antarctica.

Human Geography will focus on topical issues of population change and migration. We shall see why populations grow more rapidly in some countries than others and how the balance between population and resources can be managed.

We shall look at health issues involving HIV / AIDS together with the modern disease of affluence. Why does life expectancy vary in Liverpool by ten years depending in which district you live? Issues studied will include malnutrition, obesity, tobacco and the response of pharmaceutical industries.

#### **Module 2: Geographical Skills (GEOG2)**

(30% of AS and 15% of A2 level) to be assessed by an hour examination. Taken in January of Year 12.

Throughout the year we shall be constructing various types of maps and graphs, as well as using ICT and statistical skills. These practical methods will be assessed in the examination together with questions based on our rivers fieldwork.

## A2 Level

The 2 Modules in this course cover the following topics:

### Module 3: Contemporary Geographical Issues (GEOG 3)

Module 3 consists of four major topics:

**Plate tectonics and associated hazards:** we shall study the landforms (such as oceanic trenches) found at plate boundaries. A study of major volcanic eruptions will be undertaken from contrasting parts of the world.

**Weather and climate and associated hazards:** why is Britain's climate so unpredictable? The answer lies in the complex system of air masses, depressions and anticyclones affecting our island. The impact and responses to hurricanes will be looked at in the USA and Bangladesh.

**World Cities:** why are British cities losing population, while those worldwide continue to grow? Will Liverpool's population grow in the next thirty years? A day's field trip to Liverpool's CBD, Woolton and Hale village will help provide some of the answers.

### Module 4: Geographical Issue Evaluation

(20% A2 Level) to be assessed by a one and a half hour written examination. Taken in January of Year 13.

An advanced information booklet is provided for candidates prior to the examination. Containing text extracts, maps, graphs and tables on a relevant geographical topic. Structured short and extended questions will then be based on the booklet.

### **ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Mr Lamb, the Head of Department who will be pleased to provide any further information that you require. The AQA website is another source of useful information and guidance.**

# GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE

A grade B or above in English **and** a Grade B in History or Geography or a Humanities subject is needed. An interest in current affairs, TV news and newspapers is vital too because it is a qualification where valuable examples that can be used to illustrate concepts in the exams actually develop during the course itself.

## EXAMINATION BOARD

AQA

## SUBJECT MATTER

### AS Level

You have to take **TWO** modules in May of the first year. Each Modular examination is 1 ½ hours in length. Each module carries an equal weighting of marks. The AS Level is assessed as **HALF** the overall A level.

### Module 1: People, Politics and Participation

In this module you look at what makes people take part in voting and politics, especially in the UK. We analyse various factors that make people vote, and vote in different ways. Over time, for example, the influence of social class has declined, and now people seem influenced more by the image of a political party, and especially its leader. The unpredictable nature of voting behaviour will be studied in the context of Britain's economic difficulties since 2008, where opinion polls showed varying signals about Gordon Brown's handling of the banking crisis, but analysis of the 2010 General Election and poll ratings for the coalition government's leaders and government parties, and Labour under Ed Milliband, will ensure that the course is very up to date.

By re-working the recent General Elections using computer analysis of different voting systems we see how Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair might never have become as powerful as they did.

Students study three main political parties, their ideas, how their leaders are elected, their different traditions and where their ideas on issues like crime and the environment have come from.

Students also look at the factors that make some pressure groups much more successful than others, why they are different from a political party, and analyse whether pressure groups and protest movements help or hinder past and present governments. Specific pressure groups, unions and protest movements studied include ~~Planestupid~~ Stonewall, Greenpeace, the BMA, teachersunions, RMT, and Fathers4Justice.

# **GENERAL STUDIES**

**EXAM BOARD**      **AQA specification, syllabus A**

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

The content is organised into two discrete areas of:

- Culture and Society
- Science and Society

The four unit assessment structure is modular with the Advanced Level examination in two parts:

- Advanced Subsidiary (AS) . 50% of the total award
- Advanced Level (A2) . 50% of the total award

## **AS/A2 Level**

### **Modules 1 & 3: Culture and Society**

(A2 covers the same topics but in greater depth and additional detail)

- Beliefs, values and moral reasoning
- Religious belief and experience and connections between them
- Understanding and appreciation of changing nature and the importance of culture
- Creativity and innovation
- Examination of ideologies and values in society
- Political processes and goals
- Relationships between law, society and ethics

### **Modules 2 & 4: Science and Society**

- Characteristics of the sciences
- Scientific objectivity, methods and principles
- Moral responsibility and ethical issues of scientific/technological developments
- Spatial and mechanical relations
- Mathematical reasoning and application

## **Module 2: Governing Modern Britain**

In this module students study all the factors that make the effective power of the Prime Minister vary a great deal, and how many of the 'rules' that politics in Britain is governed by are not actually written anywhere, but have developed as powerful traditions or 'conventions'. Changes made by the Blair and Brown governments and those proposed and enacted by the Coalition Government too, will be studied. Students also examine the role and functions of Parliament - the House of Commons and the House of Lords - and see that power in Parliament depends too on many factors, and is constantly changing. The role and effectiveness of ministers and Prime Ministers is studied in detail too.

As Britain's political systems develop as a result of having a Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, local councils, as well as being a member of the European Union, the course examines the difficulties and changes that this can bring for UK citizens.

### **A2 Level**

**At A2 the course develops many of these themes, and expects you to build on knowledge of AS. There are a further two modules, each with examinations that last 1 hour 30 minutes. These form the second part of the A Level qualification.**

## **Module 3: Ideologies (GOV 3B)**

In this module students explore in depth the ideas behind politicians and political parties, looking at the various different forms of Conservatism, Socialism, Liberalism and Fascism that have developed over the last century. They discover in depth how and why David Cameron's form of Conservatism is developed from, but different to, the ideas of Conservatives like Margaret Thatcher, and how traditional socialist ideas have rarely been seen in the Labour Party - especially since the development of New Labour under Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. Students also investigate the policies and beliefs of the British National Party (BNP) to examine whether it can be classified as Fascist or Far Right. Fascism's ideology is studied in the context of Germany's and Italy's experience from the 1920s.

## **Module 4: The Politics of the USA (GOV 4A)**

This module concentrates solely on the USA and uses the latest events and news from the USA to develop understanding of the United States Constitution, how Congress works, and the roles and powers of the President. The role and influence of the Supreme Court in the United States is also an essential part of this module. Analysing the early successes and failures of the *recent* American President will be part of this course.

*I have found it really interesting actually watching the news and being able to apply it to a theory about politics I learned that day in the classroom. In some ways it's like History, only it's actually right now. Teaching it certainly keeps the teachers on their toes.*

### **ANY QUESTIONS ?**

**Contact Mr. Cox, the Head of Department, who will be happy to help.**

**Specimen papers and mark schemes are available at [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk), so take a look and see the types of questions you are asked and how they are marked.**

# **HISTORY**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

Students are required to have achieved a grade B or above at GCSE History. If History has not been studied at GCSE then students must have achieved a grade B or above in either English or Religious Studies (Full Course).

## **EXAM BOARD**

AQA

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

### **AS Level and A2 Level**

The study of History at AS Level is divided across two core modules. Both modules concern themselves with the Early Modern period and students are required to engage with sets of values, concepts and ideas that are very different from our own.

#### **Unit 1: HIS1B - Britain, 1483-1529**

The British side of the course begins in 1483 with the death of Edward IV. Against the civil unrest of the Wars of the Roses that have plagued much of the 15th century, Richard, Duke of Gloucester usurped the English throne and acted ruthlessly to suppress both legal claimants and any potential opposition. The stage was set at Bosworth for the triumph of an obscure Welsh nobleman and the course follows Henry VII's progress as he looks to procure security, prosperity and recognition for the nascent Tudor dynasty, culminating in a study of the early years of Henry VIII's reign.

#### **Unit 2: HIS 2E - The Reign of Peter the Great of Russia, 1682-1725**

The European aspect of the course focuses on the charismatic figure of Peter the Great and his ambitious plans to transform Russia from a traditional, Muscovite backwater to a modern western state that is equipped for war.

#### **Unit 3: The Triumph of Elizabeth: Britain, 1547-1603, and Unit 4: Historical Enquiry: The Triumph and Destruction of the Bourbon Polity 1661—1789**

At A2, students complete their journey through Tudor History by studying the triumph of Elizabeth I, whilst the European focus rests on France and the making of the Sun King, Louis XIV. The latter is completed as coursework (20% of the overall result) as students undertake their own independent study within a hundred year period of French history. The course requires students to explore not only key personalities, but also the societies in which they operated. Conscious that History is an interpretative discipline we consider a range of historical views and perspectives in order to reach balanced and effective judgements about the significance of what we have studied.

History A Level also provides students with an effective framework from which to understand current affairs, as we look to study the past to inform the present. A range of political views, religious values, social concerns and philosophical ideas are all discussed throughout the duration of the course and many students opt to continue their studies into further education. Many students go on to study History at University, including Oxbridge, and we believe that all students who opt for this subject will benefit from the analytical skills that they develop and the diverse ideas they entertain over the course of their studies.

### **ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Any general enquiries can be directed to Mr Pearson, the Head of Department, who will be only too happy to offer guidance and support.**

# LATIN

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

You need to have secured at least a grade A at GCSE level and to have a firm grasp of Latin grammar, including the terminology associated with it.

**EXAM BOARD**

**OCR**

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

### **AS Level**

Language work consists of reading extracts from a variety of authors and practising translation techniques. There is little new grammatical input as most Latin grammar is covered at GCSE.

We practise English to Latin translation which is an optional element at both AS and A2, to provide support for the development of linguistic understanding.

You will need to learn a prescribed vocabulary list of about 900 words.

You will study one prose **and** one verse set text, of about 250 lines each, in detail.

There is no coursework.

**Examination – TWO papers are sat in May / June.**

### **L1: Language**

This tests unseen translation of Latin prose and incorporates an optional element testing the translation of English sentences into Latin.

### **L2: Verse and Prose Literature**

This tests your knowledge of the set texts through comprehension . type questions and mini-essays.

### **A2 Level**

This forms a natural progression from AS. You will need to learn a further 900 words of vocabulary and add the translation of unseen Latin verse to your repertoire.

**Examination – TWO papers are sat in May / June.**

### **L3: Verse**

This tests your knowledge of the A2 verse set text through questions and essay. Your ability to translate unseen verse is also tested.

### **L4: Prose**

This tests your knowledge of the A2 Prose set text. You must also translate some unseen Latin prose OR translate a short passage of English into Latin.

## **PERSONAL QUALITIES**

The study of Latin is intellectually demanding. Strong self-motivation is essential and, although much assessment is informal, you must be prepared for regular tests on vocabulary and set texts.

### ***ANY QUESTIONS?***

***Contact Mr Watson, the Head of Department, who will provide more information and guidance to help you make your decision.***

# MATHEMATICS

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

A grade A or above at GCSE is the minimum level required to continue studying Mathematics in the Sixth Form. However, just as important is a firm desire to work hard and willingness to put in extra work outside lesson time to ensure you succeed in this subject.

## **WHY CHOOSE MATHEMATICS?**

A-Level Maths is an important and useful subject in its own right and is highly desirable for many courses. However, there are several degree courses where Maths A-Level is usually a requirement. These include Physics, Engineering, Computer Science, Finance and Economics.

## **EXAM BOARD    OCR**

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

In Mathematics you will study three modules (C1, C2, S1) during Year 12 with a 90 minute examination in each. Core 1 is examined in January of Year 12 and Core 2 and Statistics 1 in the Summer. There are then three further modules (C3, C4 and M1) that are studied during Year 13. The C3 exam is taken during January of Year 13 and the C4 and M1 modules are taken at the end of Year 13. Again, each of the modules are assessed by a 90 minute examination.

## **AS Level**

### **Core Mathematics 1 (C1)**

Core 1 consolidates and builds upon several topics studied at GCSE including surds, indices and co-ordinate geometry (lengths of lines and applications of simultaneous equations). In addition, it introduces new topics such as differentiation.

### **Core Mathematics 2 (C2)**

Again, this module builds on work covered at GCSE, in particular trigonometry and the trapezium rule. However, more new topics are introduced including logarithms and integration.

### **Statistics 1 (S1)**

Several of the statistical diagrams and terms in S1 will be familiar from GCSE such as histograms, box plots, mean and standard deviation, and median and interquartile range. Probability is revisited and extended and permutations and combinations are looked at in detail - why is it that there is approximately a 1 in 14 million chance of winning the National Lottery? New topics, such as the Binomial and Geometric distributions are also introduced.

## **A2 Level**

At A2, the remaining two Core modules develop further many of the ideas already introduced in C1 and C2. You will also be introduced to mechanics.

### **Core Mathematics 3 (C3)**

This extends the work covered in C1 and C2, particularly with regard to trigonometry and logarithms. Functions and their graphs are also dealt with in more depth in this module.

### **Core Mathematics 4 (C4)**

Differentiation and integration are extended in this module and differential equations are introduced. Vectors, studied in basic form in GCSE, are developed and new algebraic methods, such as partial fractions, are introduced. Parametric equations are introduced and compared with the Cartesian equations that have been used prior to this module.

### **Mechanics 1 (M1)**

The work covered in M1 may be familiar from Physics (GCSE or AS) but is still accessible to you if you have not studied Physics. It involves the application of Core Mathematics to problems involving forces, velocity, acceleration and momentum. Objects moving on an inclined plane or within a pulley system are among some of the situations explored, as are collisions between two objects.

# **FURTHER MATHEMATICS**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

This is a course suitable only for students of exceptional Mathematical ability. Students are expected to have achieved a grade A\* at GCSE or a grade A with an average of 85% on the written papers.

**EXAM BOARD            OCR**

## **WHY CHOOSE FURTHER MATHS?**

Many Universities recognise that Further Maths provides a better preparation for students following Maths or Maths dependent courses such as Engineering, some Finance based Courses (Actuarial Science, Economics), Computer Science and Physics. Many Universities offering these courses list Further Maths as desirable and some even make a lower offer to students offering Further Maths.

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

Further Mathematics is studied in addition to Mathematics and results in the award of two A Levels. Students opting to study this option will complete Mathematics A Level in Year 12 and then Further Mathematics A Level in Year 13. Students will therefore take six modules during Year 12 (C1-4, M1 and S1) and a further six modules in Year 13. In Year 13, FP1-3 will be studied along with M2, S2 and D1.

## **Further Pure (FP1-3)**

These modules build on the Core Mathematics studied at A Level and extend it significantly. Complex numbers, matrices, polar coordinates and groups are among some of the new topics to be covered whilst differentiation, integration and several algebraic methods are considerably extended.

## **Decision 1 (D1)**

In this module, you are introduced to new Mathematics; topics such as algorithms and graph theory are introduced. This module gives a good introduction to Decision Mathematics which has become more popular recently due to its applications to computer science. Many problems involve finding an optimal solution and are therefore applicable to real world situations.

## **Mechanics (M2)**

These modules develop earlier mechanical ideas, such as collisions and projectiles. However, new topics such as work, energy and power and circular motion are also introduced.

## **Statistics (S2)**

More probability distributions are introduced including the Normal and Poisson distributions. Sampling and hypothesis testing are also introduced, some sections of which have links to subjects such as Science and Geography.

Students opting to take Maths and Further Maths may not, under normal circumstances, drop Further Maths at the end of Year 12.

Additionally, students are not encouraged to drop two subjects at the end of Year 12 to leave them with only one other A-Level alongside Maths and Further Maths.

## **ANY QUESTIONS?**

***Contact Miss Wilson, the Head of Department, who will be happy to give you further guidance.***

# **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

A grade A or above at GCSE is required and a genuine interest in the countries where French and/or Spanish is spoken is also highly desirable.

## **EXAM BOARD**

**AQA**

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

### **AS Level**

Your AS course will extend initially from the skills you will have developed from GCSE. You will take two units in the May of Year 12.

**Unit 1** (FREN 1 or SPAN1) is a two-hour examination, testing listening, reading and writing.

**Unit 2** (FREN 2 or SPAN 2 ) is 15-minute oral examination.

### **Subject areas in more detail...**

- Media . television, advertising, communication and technology.
- Popular Culture . cinema, music, fashion and trends.
- Healthy living / lifestyle . sport, exercise, health and well-being and holidays.
- Family relationships . relationships within the family, friends, marriage / partnerships.

### **A2 Level**

The A2 course further develops the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired at GCSE and AS level. You will take a further two units in the June of Year 13.

**Unit 3** (FREN 3 or SPAN 3) is a two hour thirty minute examination testing reading, listening and writing.

**Unit 4** (FREN 4 or SPAN 4 ) is a 15 minute oral examination.

### **Subject areas in more detail...**

- Environment . pollution, energy, protecting the planet.
- The Multicultural society . immigration, integration and racism.
- Contemporary issues . wealth and poverty, law and order, the impact of science and technology..
- Two cultural topics from the following:
  - the study of a target language speaking region / community;
  - the work of an author from a target language country;
  - the work of a dramatist / poet from a target language country;
  - the work of a director / architect, musician, painter from a target language country;
  - a period of 20<sup>th</sup> Century history from a target language speaking country.

### ***ANY QUESTIONS?***

***Contact Mrs Jackson, the Head of Department, or any of the Modern Language Department who will be more than happy to advise you.***

***Specimen papers and mark schemes are available at [www.aqa.org](http://www.aqa.org).***

# **MUSIC**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

Students will need to:-

- Have passed GCSE Music at grade B or above; or
- Have passed Grade 5 practical examination **and** Grade 5 theory examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.

**EXAM BOARD**

**OCR**

**SUBJECT MATTER**

## **AS Level**

You have to take three modules of AS Music. These are: -

### **Introduction to Historical Study (90 Marks)**

This includes the study of three set works from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the study of Jazz from 1920 to 1960.

### **Composing (90 Marks)**

There are two parts to this:-

- The study of Western Tonal Harmony. For this part of the unit candidates will submit a folio of work done during the year. This consists of a minimum of 7 exercises set by the School.
- The expressive use of instrumental techniques. For this part students have to compose a piece of instrumental music for between 4 and 10 instruments.

### **Performing (120 Marks)**

- Candidates are required to prepare a solo recital of between 5 and 8 minutes.
- Take part in a *viva voce*: discussion about the music they have played (5 minutes).
- Any one of the following options:
  - Perform on a second instrument (Max. 4 minutes).
  - Perform on their recital instrument for section A as an ensemble or duet or as an accompaniment.
  - Perform one of their own compositions especially written for this section.
  - Improvise for two minutes on a given stimulus, with 10 minutes preparation time.

## A2 Level

**At A2 level the course follows a similar pattern. Candidates follow a course comprising of three more modules.**

**Historical and Analytical Studies:** For this there are a number of prescribed topics to choose from and the candidate must choose one. They range from 1500 to the present day. The paper also includes questions on aural extracts and essays based on topics covered throughout the course.

**Composing:** Candidates must submit a set of stylistic exercises (maximum of 8) e.g. harmonisation of Bach Chorale melodies. Candidates are required to submit **one** of the following types of composition lasting no more than four minutes:

**Vocal Composition:** a setting of a short poem or other text, normally of not more than four stanzas or 120 words.

**Programme music:** an instrumental composition for four or more instruments, interpreting a narrative text, character or visual image.

**Film / TV composition:** music to accompany a storyboard, DVD clip, TV title theme, cartoon or advertisement.

**Performing (assessed by a external examiner):**

- Candidates have to prepare a recital of between 12 and 15 minutes, for solo instrument, ensemble or as an accompanist.
- Sit a *viva voce* exam lasting 5 minutes to discuss their interpretative understanding of the music they perform.

### **TIME AND OTHER DEMANDS ARE: COURSEWORK / ASSESSMENT**

Beyond the timetabled lessons, students are expected to devote time to private study of set works and history in addition to maintaining a regular regime of practising and composing. This should amount to approximately five hours a week.

***Music students will be encouraged and expected to take a full part in the Musical Life of the School in order to extend their ability to work in a group and to consolidate their practical skills and understanding.***

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Mr. Emery, the Director of Music, who will be happy to give you further guidance.**

# **PHILOSOPHY**

## **PRE CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

A grade A or above in English Language or English Literature is required. An interest in the human condition is essential because this is a complex course where examples and issues covered will require sustained thought and examination of competing theories and ideas.

**EXAMINATION BOARD:           AQA**

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

### **AS Level**

You have to take TWO modules in May of the first year. Each modular examination is 1 ½ hours in length and carries an equal weighting of marks. The AS Level is assessed as HALF the overall A Level. There is a question on each theme but students have a choice of questions to answer.

#### **Module 1: An Introduction to Philosophy**

In this module you look at how human reason and experience interact to inform decision making and opinion forming. We conduct an investigation into what constitutes knowledge and look at what contrasting rationalist and empiricist approaches claim to be the ultimate source of our ideas. This topic provides strong foundations for the study of Philosophy.

We then examine the concept of ~~God~~ and investigate whether it is coherent. We study the ontological argument, in depth, and analyse the theories of Descartes, Hume & Marx, amongst others as to what is the origin of our idea of God.

#### **Module 2: An Introduction to Philosophy II**

In this module many of the initial ideas from module 1 are extended. We examine in depth concepts concerning free will and determinism, raising questions such as ~~can~~ human beings act freely?  
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We strengthen understanding of ultimate origin of concept of God, scrutinising various philosophical arguments for the existence of God and how they respond to the problem of evil.

## A2 Level

The syllabus allows students at A2 to further develop their understanding of key philosophical concepts, themes, texts and techniques. You can specialise, selecting two themes to study in depth, focusing your work around a key philosophical text.

### Module 3: Key Themes in Philosophy

You can choose any TWO of the following themes:

- The Philosophy of the Mind
- Political Philosophy
- Epistemology and Metaphysics
- Moral Philosophy
- The Philosophy of Religion

There will be a two hour paper with five questions. You, the student, have considerable flexibility in terms of which area to focus on. This paper is worth 60% of the A2 mark overall.

### Module 4: Philosophical Problems

This is an opportunity for you, the student, to gain an insight into how great philosophers over the centuries have grappled with, and tried to find solutions to, the great problems of how society should be governed, how we should treat each other, and the role (if any) that a government or state should play.

You get to examine the work of the following five philosophers:

**Hume:** (C 18th) philosopher who steadily developed ideas about the origins of what people thought of as moral obligations which he argued were functions of human passions.

**Plato:** (C 4th BC) His views on family, knowledge (justified true belief) and government have formed the basis of Western philosophy.

**J S Mill:** (C 19th) philosopher who developed the concept that liberty should be maximised, arguing that most people work in their own best interests and that, collectively, that is the generally best interest for society as a whole.

**Descartes:** (C 17th) philosopher famous for 'I think therefore I am' but there is a lot more to him than that.

**Nietzsche:** (C 19th) a fierce critic of Christianity. 'God is Dead' he developed theories about what would replace God. the concept of a Super Man or strong leader. This part of his philosophy inspired Hitler in his Fuhrer concept.

### **ANY QUESTIONS?**

**See Mrs Forster, who will be happy to help. In the meantime, why not research on the Internet where there is a wealth of information, or at [www.aqa.org](http://www.aqa.org) where you can see what examination papers are like.**

# **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES NEEDED FOR THIS COURSE**

### **Either:-**

- Grade B in GCSE P.E. (if taken); **or**
- Grade B or above in any GCSE Science (Biology or Chemistry or Physics) **or** grade B or above in Core **and** Additional Science.

All students **must** have a teacher's report indicating a high level of competency in all areas of the Physical Education Curriculum throughout Years 7-11.

### **Examination Board**

### **OCR**

### **AS Level**

There is a 2 hour written paper worth 90 marks or 60% of total GCE marks covering the following three sections (three compulsory questions):

#### **1. Anatomy and Physiology**

We look at the muscles in the human body and how they work in sporting movements. We investigate the effect of exercise on your heart rate. You will be wired up with heart rate monitors and cycle/run. We look at the benefits of warming up and cooling down and the impact of different types of physical activity on the skeletal and muscular systems with reference to lifelong involvement in an active lifestyle.

#### **2. Acquisition of Skill**

Skill Acquisition looks at how we learn, acquire, and are taught skilled techniques. It involves descriptive definitions of skill and ability. Students investigate how we process information looking at memory, perception and reaction time. Learning skill takes into account phases of learning (Beginners through to Experts), Psychological Theories and the influences of Motivation and Appraisal on performance. Focuses on the impact of movement skills upon young peoples participation and performance in physical activity as part of a balanced, active and healthy lifestyle.

#### **3. Contemporary Studies in Physical Education and Sport**

This module is a sociological and philosophical analysis of physical activity and sport. We identify and characterise different forms of physical activity: from physical activity to sport. We look at physical activity, the benefits and constraints and methods of organisation and initiatives to increase participation and excellence in the U.K.

Other topics include drugs in sport, media, sponsorship and the Olympic Games, past and present.

Sport and culture . comparing sport in different countries and cultures (including USA and Australia), surviving traditional sports. Nineteenth Century Public Schools influence on sport is assessed. Amateur and professional sports are compared.

## **Practical Component**

Students are assessed in two chosen activities. This is worth 40% of the AS Level. Performing, Coaching/Leading and Officiating. Also tested in an Oral Response evaluating and improving performance.

### **A2 Level**

At A2 level there is a 2½ hour written paper worth 70% of the A2 Level. Students have to answer one question from each section and one other.

#### **SCIENTIFIC**

##### **1. Exercise and Sport Physiology**

This section focuses on how the body changes as a result of physical activity and how physical competence may be improved as a result of sustaining a balanced, active and healthy lifestyle.

**2. Sports Psychology** - is a continuation of the AS course Acquisition of Skill. It addresses the important mental processes that work together to facilitate effective performance in sport.

We look at individual differences and group dynamics that effect participation, e.g. personality, attitude and aggression. Students will develop psychological concepts such as achievement motivation. We study topics such as leadership, social facilitation and stress. Students learn methods to assist performance in physical activity such as mental preparation, goal setting and strategies to improve confidence and concentration.

#### **SOCIO-CULTURAL**

##### **3. Comparative Studies**

This section focuses on the factors that affect participation and improve competence in physical activity as part of a balanced, active and healthy lifestyle in the USA and Australia, as then compared to the United Kingdom.

#### **Practical Assessment at A2**

Roles of Performing, Coaching/Leading and Officiating can be assessed in one chosen activity including analysis/observation and improvement of performance. This is worth 30% of the A2 Level.

#### **SPECIFIC PERSONAL QUALITIES NEEDED FOR THE COURSE**

Students should have demonstrated a high level of competency in all areas of the Physical Education Curriculum throughout Years 7 . 11.

**This course has limited places available so students may have to be selected in accordance with the qualities and criteria listed above.**

#### ***ANY QUESTIONS ?***

***Contact any of the PE staff who will be happy to help. If you are an external candidate, contact Mr Rees, the Head of Department, who will be happy to help.***

# PHYSICS

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

A grade B or above in GCSE Physics is needed, or at least a grade A in Core and a grade A in Additional Science **and** a grade B or above in Mathematics. Students wishing to take the course should also be comfortable with the mathematical demands of Higher GCSE but need not be taking AS Level Mathematics. Some of the most successful of our previous students were not studying Mathematics but did find that this made the course somewhat harder. Those who come through the Additional Science GCSE course should also be prepared to do the extra work needed to catch up.

**EXAM BOARD**                      **AQA Physics Specification A**

## AS Level

AS Level consists of three modules, all taken in spring/summer of Year 12. Two of the modules are examined with a 1¼ hour theory paper. The third Unit is assessed using Practical Skills Assessment (PSA) in which performance in regular practical work is assessed. This is carried out at a more formal level than in GCSE. There is also a two stage externally marked practical assessment (EMPA) similar in character to the ISA carried out at GCSE.

### Module 1

This begins with the most new and different of the material encountered in AS Physics. First we review what was known about the structure of matter up until the Rutherford model of the atom which is covered in GCSE. Following on from this we look at the advances in our understanding of the fundamental structure of all matter and its inter-changeability with energy (using the famous Einstein mass-energy relationship  $E=mc^2$ ).

The fundamental particles which emerge from this theory and the story of their detection leads to the so-called standard model of matter.

The behaviour of electrons in the atom and the origin of fluorescence are also covered. The last part of the unit enters more familiar territory with a review of work covered in GCSE on the topic of electricity.

### Module 2

This module more closely resembles the kind of Physics you have seen before at GCSE. It is a Mechanics Unit and deals with the description of, and explanation for, patterns of motion and the relationship between the forces acting on objects in equilibrium. Physical properties of materials are then addressed. The concept of density and the concepts of stress and strain, are discussed and investigated experimentally. The concept of waves is then re-introduced and GCSE work is extended.

### **Module 3: Practical Work**

At AS Level a comprehensive range of experimental techniques and measuring skills are developed through a full programme of practical activities. These are monitored and a Practical Skills Assessment conducted. There is also the EMPA which involves completing a prescribed investigation under examination conditions. This is followed by a theory paper, which includes questions on the analysis of the results obtained in the first section and evaluation of both this and other experiments. Unlike the GCSE ISA, this is sent to the exam board for marking.

## **A2 Level**

### **Module 4: Fields and Further Mechanics**

This module builds on the key ideas and knowledge covered in AS Physics. The first section advances the study of momentum. It introduces circular and oscillatory motion and covers gravitation. Electric and magnetic fields are covered, together with basic electromagnetic induction electric and magnetic fields.

### **Module 5: Nuclear Physics, Thermal Physics and an optional topic**

This unit consists of a compulsory section (A) together with an optional section (B, detailed below). Section A looks at the character of the nucleus, the properties of unstable nuclei, and how energy is obtained from the nucleus and used to generate electricity. In the second part of Section A, the thermal properties of material and the properties and behaviour of gases is studied in depth.

Section B offers an opportunity to study an optional topic to gain deeper understanding and awareness of a selected branch of Physics. The option covers key concepts in modern Physics such as the discovery of the electron, quantum mechanics and photoelectric effect and the special theory of relativity.

### **Module 6**

This is a practical module and is identical in format to module three, though the demands are, of course, more detailed and complex.

## **PERSONAL QUALITIES REQUIRED**

The most important quality needed here is independence of mind. You will need to be motivated and tenacious if you are to be successful in this demanding and therefore rewarding subject. It will help if you like Mathematics but it is by no means necessary as long as you are reasonably competent and are prepared to work at this.

## ***ANY QUESTIONS?***

***Contact Dr. Wilde, the Head of Department, or your Physics teacher who will be happy to help and provide individual advice.***

# PSYCHOLOGY

## PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE

A grade B or above in English Language **and** Mathematics is required. An interest in social processes and child development is really important, as these are studied alongside more contemporary psychological concepts and traditional (or classical) Psychology.

## EXAM BOARD

**AQA (Specification A)**

## AS Level

You have to take two modules in May of the first year. Each modular examination last 1 hour and 30 minutes. The AS Level accounts for 50% of the overall A Level.

### Module 1: Cognitive Psychology, Development Psychology and Research Methods (PSYA1)

In **Cognitive Psychology** we study traditional theories and concepts relating to the human memory. We also study memory in everyday life including eyewitness testimony and strategies for memory improvement.

In **Developmental Psychology** we look at human infant attachment behaviour including cross-cultural variations and disruption of the attachment bond through parental work patterns and other forms of maternal deprivation.

In **Research Methods** we undertake practical and theoretical research activities including qualitative and quantitative analysis and interpretation of data.

### Module 2: Biological Psychology, Social Psychology and Individual Differences (PSYA2)

In **Biological Psychology** we look at the body's response to stress and also look at the stressors in everyday life (including methods of coping with stress). Finally, how different personality types respond in different ways to stress.

In **Social Psychology** we look at how themes of conformity and obedience, deviance and independence operate in everyday life.

**Individual Differences** help us to explain psychological abnormality as a distinct contrast to normality. We also learn about psychological therapies and treatments.

## A2 Level

The scope of study widens and expects you to develop knowledge and skills learnt during AS Level. There are TWO further modules making up the remaining 50% of the A Level. Module 3 is 1 hour and 30 minutes long and Module 4 is 2 hours long.

### Module 3: Topics in Psychology (PSYA3)

In this module **three** essay style questions are chosen from eight topics. We will be looking at two socially based topics and one biological topic.

- **Relationships**- this covers formation, maintenance and breakdown of romantic relationships as well as human reproductive behaviour and the effects of early socialisation process on our relationships.
- **Biological Rhythms and Sleep**- this covers internal and external influences on our sleep . wake cycle and also looks at the nature and function of sleep.
- **Eating behaviours**- biological and psychological explanation of various eating behaviours.

### Module 4: Psychopathology Psychology in Action and Research Methods (PSYA4)

- **Psychopathology**- here we cover the aetiology (that's causes of), explanations and treatment of depression.
- **Psychology in action**- this is a new and exciting area. The choice has been made to study Addictive behaviour.
- **Research Methods**- this challenging area requires an ability to understand the scientific method, design psychological investigations and develop an advanced knowledge of mathematic and statistical analysis.

### **ANY QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Miss Murphy, Head of Department, who will be happy to help and advise you. Specimen papers are available at [aqa.org.uk](http://aqa.org.uk)**

# **RELIGIOUS STUDIES**

## **PRE-CONDITIONS FOR TAKING THIS COURSE**

Students taking GCSE Full course Religious Studies should have a minimum grade A **OR** a grade A in English or a Humanities subject is acceptable.

An interest in culture, and understanding philosophy, historical theology and the world around us is vital in today's world. An analytical and critical mind is highly desirable too. Students are not required to hold a particular religious faith. The course is about understanding philosophical ideas, scriptures and religious cultures, not about making someone religious. This course is open to those of any particular religious culture and of any particular religious persuasion from theist to atheist and everything in between.

Candidates may answer with reference to any religious or non-religious stance, provided the material is relevant to the question. EdExcel AS/A2 Syllabus

## **EXAM BOARD**

**EdExcel**

## **SUBJECT MATTER**

### **AS Level**

There are two units. The AS Level is the first half of the GCE A Level course and contributes 50% of the total advanced GCE marks.

### **Unit 1: Foundations**

This Unit explores the foundations of the Philosophy of Religion and the New Testament. Whilst studying Philosophy of Religion students will consider: the existence of God, design and cosmological arguments, the problem of evil and suffering and a philosophical approach to miracles.

This part of the course also provides students with an excellent opportunity to study of John's gospel of the New Testament and to learn and apply Biblical criticism techniques. Many creditable skills are acquired throughout. In particular we look at women, discipleship, miracles and Jesus's sayings.

### **Unit 2: Individual Research**

This is an enquiry-based approach to teaching and learning, giving the students an opportunity to undertake individual research. Students can study one topic from many possible areas of study.

One of the most exciting components of the course is the opportunity for all students to research and present an extended essay on a particular area of interest. There will be something to suit every possible area of interest as the exam board provides many subject and topic areas from which to choose.

**The extended essay will be completed in examination conditions at the end of the AS level course.**

## **A2 Level**

At A2 Level we develop our knowledge and understanding acquired at AS Level. The A2 consists of a further two units assessed by written examinations with a total examination of three hours.

### **Unit 3: Developments**

Philosophy . This unit has been designed to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in Unit 1: Foundations. A study of Philosophical arguments about the existence of God; Religious Experience; Ontological; arguments for the existence of God; Non-existence of God; Life after death; re-incarnation; re-birth; Resurrection; immortality of the soul; Religious language; myth and analogy.

New Testament . The prologue of John (Jn 1: 1-18), authorship date and purpose of the Gospel, conflicts between Jesus and the political authorities and his crucifixion and resurrection. (Jn 18-21)

### **Unit 4: Implications**

Students will consider implications in terms of how far particular beliefs and values might affect people's understanding, including their own, of religion and human experience. The course also gives students an opportunity to explore how other people's lives might be affected if a certain belief were widely held or if a certain value were widely applied. As with Unit 2 there will be a choice of topic areas to study with teaching and learning very much like a University Seminar. Traditionally the R.S. department has studied the Hinduism anthology as it adds breadth and depth to the students' knowledge and understanding of a World Religion.

### ***ANY QUESTIONS?***

**Mrs McDonnell, the Head of Department, or Mrs Treharne will be happy to assist if contacted. The Edexcel website provides more detail, including sample examination materials and an advice section.**

[www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)

You may also want to go to Oxford University's web-site and read the section [What can I do with a degree in Religious Studies?](#) as it details many of the skills covered during the AS/A2 course.

**SUMMARY SHEET FOR SUBJECT PRE CONDITIONS**  
**FOR A LEVEL STUDY**

SUBJECT	PRE-CONDITION	ALTERNATIVES	IN ADDITION
ART	GCSE grade B or above in Art		
BIOLOGY	GCSE grade B or above in Biology	A grade A in Core <b>and</b> a grade A in Additional Science	Grade B or above in Mathematics
CHEMISTRY	GCSE grade B or above in Chemistry	A grade A in Core <b>and</b> a grade A in Additional Science	Grade B or above in Mathematics
COMPUTING	GCSE grade A or above in ICT or equivalent <b>and</b> GCSE grade A or above in Mathematics		
ICT	GCSE grade A or above in ICT or equivalent	GCSE grade B in ICT <b>and</b> grade B in higher level Maths	
DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY	GCSE grade A or above in D & T		
ECONOMICS	Grade A in Higher level Mathematics		
ENGLISH LITERATURE	GCSE grade B or above in English Literature		
ENGLISH LANGUAGE and LITERATURE	GCSE grade A or above in English Language		
GEOGRAPHY	GCSE grade B or above in Geography		
GOVERNMENT & POLITICS	GCSE grade B or above in English <b>and</b> a grade B in History, Geography or a Humanities subject		
HISTORY	GCSE grade B or above in History	If GCSE History has not been studied, a grade B or above in either English or Religious Studies (full course) is required	
LATIN	GCSE grade A or above in Latin		Recent experience of translation of English into Latin
MATHEMATICS	GCSE grade A or above in Mathematics		
FURTHER MATHEMATICS	GCSE grade A* in Mathematics	A grade A in GCSE Mathematics with an average of 85% on the written papers	
MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES	<b>FRENCH</b> GCSE grade A or above in French <b>SPANISH</b> GCSE grade A or above in Spanish		
MUSIC	GCSE grade B or above in Music	Associated Board of Royal School of Music Grade 5 theory <b>and</b> Grade 5 practical	
PHILOSOPHY	GCSE grade A or above in English Language or English Literature		
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	GCSE grade B or above in Physical Education	A grade B or above in any GCSE Science (either Biology or Chemistry or Physics) or grade B or above in Core <b>and</b> Additional Science	A report from teachers indicating a high level of all round practical competency
PHYSICS	GCSE grade B or above in Physics	A grade A in Core <b>and</b> a grade A in Additional Science	GCSE grade B or above in Mathematics
PSYCHOLOGY	GCSE grade B or above in English Language <b>and</b> Maths		
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	GCSE grade A or above in Full course Religious Studies	GCSE grade A or above in English or a Humanities subject	