



Two-Year A level Course Outlines

Cambridge

2023/2024



Dear Student

The Sixth Form is an exciting and important stage of your academic journey.

For the first time, you are fully in control of your courses, given the opportunity to select subjects that inspire you, the study of which will help you grow academically and form the foundation for your immediate and long term future.

Your A levels present you with the chance to immerse yourself in the subjects that interest you. You will be developing your knowledge and skills as a young and aspiring academic.

To do well, you will have to learn to become an independent learner, master new approaches and acquire the ability to integrate ever wider and more complex pieces of information into a coherent whole. You will need energy and enthusiasm as well as commitment and tenacity to succeed. MPW will have high expectations of you, and you will have them of yourself. It is therefore paramount that you do the right research and receive the right advice in order to make the right choices. This guide will help you in planning the next steps of your own, personal academic endeavour, and we will assist you in this process.

In line with leading schools in the independent sector, we pursue a '3 A levels' model for our students, with the added option of the EPQ. This means that students will study three subjects in their Lower Sixth year, with the chance alongside those courses to follow a programme designed specifically to develop independent study and research skills required for a successful Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), as well as for study at A level generally and beyond. All students will complete the taught component of the EPQ programme in the Autumn Term with the option of continuing with the assessed EPQ course.

This model provides students with breadth as well as an opportunity to prove research skills beyond the normal scope of A levels through a successful EPQ. Indeed, the latter is why universities assign a successful EPQ so much weight, and indeed it can provide half the UCAS points of a full A level.

The tradition at MPW has always been to design programmes of study around the individual needs of each student, offering students the study programme that suits them best. Those who wish to study a more bespoke programme, for example a mixture of courses differing in level or duration, will be catered for, subject to our academic advice, as indeed they always have been.

I hope that you enjoy using this guide and that we can assist in deciding your very own, personal sixth-form pathway with you.

Tom Caston
Principal

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At MPW, we want to help you translate your academic dreams into reality.

For over forty years we have been the UK's leading independent sixth-form college, enabling thousands of students to achieve their best in their GCSE and A level examinations.

However, we believe a good education should go further than this: it should prepare you for life at university and beyond. In an increasingly competitive environment, a strategic approach to subject choices and university application is necessary to achieve the desired outcome.

At MPW we offer maximum flexibility on subject combinations, effectively giving each student a tailor-made academic programme. Our commitment to small class sizes ensures that all our students receive the individual attention they deserve. Careful consideration is always given to career guidance and we offer expert advice and help with your UCAS application.

Which course is right for me?

MPW offers A level courses in over 30 subjects. This may seem to present a bewildering number of options and you may feel that it is hard to make the right choices. Below are a few helpful hints that you might find useful but the best advice of all is, "Talk to us!"

Take proper career advice

If you have a career in mind and want to know what subjects to take, speak to one of us and make use of our careers information. This will mean that you will not find yourself in the upper-sixth year realising that you have not studied the correct subjects for the career or university degree that you want to pursue. Please contact the person who interviewed you. Students currently at MPW can talk to their Personal Tutor.

Choose subjects that you really enjoy

You are more likely to do well if you enjoy what you are studying rather than doing something because you feel you are good at it. Make sure you really know what the course entails and read the whole syllabus carefully.

Beware when choosing new subjects!

If you have not studied a subject before, make sure you really understand what it is about. Again, the best thing to do is to let our tutors help you to understand the details of the course and ensure you know what you are letting yourself in for.

Consider subject combinations carefully

You need to find out exactly what the workload of each subject is like in terms of coursework, essay-writing and reading before finalising your combination of subjects. You should also consider what you might want to study at university and whether there are any essential or recommended requirements. Some guidance is offered in the chart overleaf but you should research universities' individual websites for definitive answers.

Be prepared to change your mind after you get your GCSE results

If an A level subject has a GCSE counterpart, then you will typically need a good grade in the GCSE to continue it to A level. A levels may also demand high GCSE grades in other subjects too. When your results come through, you need to be flexible.

Should I consider whether subjects are linear or modular when making my subject choices?

You should not. The universities have been involved in the changes and are well aware of how the reforms are taking place. They will not be treating students who have chosen linear over modular subjects any differently.

Frequently asked questions

Where can I get help in choosing the right courses for me?

Our Admissions Team can give you advice wherever you feel confused. Read through the course descriptions in this guide and then ask us for further advice.

Can I take any combination of subjects I like at MPW?

The answer is almost certainly yes, but again, we are here to give you the best guidance we can. It is worth discussing your choices with us before you decide.

I don't know what I want to do after the sixth form and I would like to keep my options open. What A levels should I choose?

You need to have a good think about the sort of person you are and the sort of course you are likely to want to study. Whilst many university courses have no specific A level requirements, many do and many say that certain subjects are advisable. For example, if you want to study a science, it is likely you will need to have studied it up to A level. Below is a table with more information. If you still find yourself with no clear idea of your future in mind, that is not a problem. The best general advice is that the broader the range of subjects you choose, the more room for manoeuvre you will have when you do make your university applications.

I really enjoy Art and Design and think I want to go to Art School. What other A level subjects should I choose?

Whilst you will only require a couple of A levels to get into Art School, you may change your mind over the two years of the course. Once again, it is worth keeping your options open.

I need Physics to do Engineering but I struggled with it at GCSE. My teachers do not think I will do well at A level. What should I do?

If you really have limited aptitude for a subject, then you have to ask yourself if a career in which it features strongly is right for you. On the other hand, if you know you have underachieved in Physics because you have not worked hard, having a goal might motivate you to put in the effort needed. Our tutors can advise you on making a realistic decision.

Before your decide – a final checklist

- Do I really like this subject?
- Do I know what the course entails? Be honest.
- Have I read the syllabus thoroughly?
- Do I have a natural aptitude for this course?
- If it is a new subject, do I really know what I am letting myself in for?
- Have I considered my subject combinations?
- Have I taken proper career advice?

Which careers and courses need specific A levels?

Some courses at some universities normally require you to have studied certain A levels. To the right is a table indicating which courses typically ask for which subjects.



DEGREE COURSE	A LEVEL COMBINATIONS NORMALLY REQUIRED
ACCOUNTANCY	Many universities require Maths.
ANCIENT HISTORY	History.
ARCHITECTURE	An arts/science mix is advisable. Art or an Art portfolio plus Maths and/or Physics for some universities.
ANTHROPOLOGY	None.
ARCHAEOLOGY	History, Geography and a science subject are relevant but not necessary.
BIOLOGY	Chemistry is essential. Biology is increasingly becoming essential. Maths and/or Physics is desirable.
BUSINESS STUDIES	Some universities require Maths.
CHEMISTRY	Chemistry essential. Maths essential at some but otherwise desirable. Another science is often desirable as well.
CLASSICS	Latin and/or Greek are required by many universities.
CLASSICAL CIVILISATION	None.
COMPUTER SCIENCE	Many universities require Maths.
DENTISTRY	Chemistry is essential and Biology increasingly so at the majority of universities. One of Maths and Physics is desirable.
ECONOMICS	Maths is usually required.
ENGINEERING (CHEMICAL)	Maths, Physics and Chemistry.
ENGINEERING (OTHER)	Maths and Physics.
ENGLISH	English Literature.
GEOGRAPHY	Geography.
GEOLOGY	Two from Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology.
HISTORY	History or Ancient History.
HISTORY OF ART	None. History of Art, English Literature and History are all useful, though.
LAND MANAGEMENT	Generally no preferred subjects. Maths and Geography are advisable.
LAW	None.
MATERIALS SCIENCE	Two from Maths, Physics, Chemistry and Biology.
MATHS	Maths, and Further Maths is strongly advised.
MEDICINE	Chemistry is essential and Biology increasingly so at the majority of universities. One of Maths and Physics is desirable.
MODERN LANGUAGES	Relevant modern language (two languages studied at A level gives more flexibility).
ORIENTAL LANGUAGES	A modern foreign language.
PHARMACY	Chemistry. Biology is highly desirable along with one from Maths and Physics.
PHILOSOPHY	None. Philosophy and Maths are both helpful though not essential.
PHYSICS	Maths and Physics.
POLITICS	None.
PSYCHOLOGY	Maths is desirable. A few courses will ask for one of Biology, Chemistry, Maths and Physics.
SOCIAL SCIENCE	None.
THEOLOGY	None.
VETERINARY SCIENCE	Chemistry and Biology and one from Physics and Maths.

“The system of book-keeping by double entry is, perhaps, the most beautiful one in the wide domain of literature or science. Were it less common, it would be the admiration of the learned world.”

Edwin T. Freedley, American manufacturer

ACCOUNTING

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Accountancy is often described as “the language of business”. It is an ancient art whose history is intertwined with the development of numeracy and writing. Records of trade and debts stretch back many thousands of years, as accountants were needed even in the earliest civilisations to maintain the well-being of the people.

A level Accounting helps you to develop knowledge and understanding of the purposes of accounting and to apply this to a variety of accounting problems. It is an introduction to the principles of accounting that are applied worldwide, teaching you to understand the fundamentals, the breakdown of financial statements and the interpretation of changes to them.

Lower sixth

In your first year, you study the double entry model and accounting principles and concepts as these form a foundation of the financial accounting techniques. This will progress to the preparation of income statements and statement of financial position of both unincorporated and internal statements of incorporated businesses. You will acquire knowledge of formulae used for computations and also carry out computations to use the results to make judgements, solve problems and make decisions. You will further develop your ability to write effectively so that you report, making logical arguments and providing sound judgements, taking account of financial and non-financial matters. You will study management accounting as a means of planning and decision making. This will include an appreciation of the benefits and limitations of budgeting and budgetary control.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will develop your understanding of financial accounting techniques which can be applied where a business does not maintain a complete accounting system. You will also develop an understanding of partnership and study accounting for limited companies. There will also be a study of the issues of share capital and the requirement to publish accounts. You will focus on the use of marginal costing in decision making together with standard costing and variance analysis. You will then learn about the use of absorption and activity based costing as well as capital investment appraisal and you will develop an understanding of how accounting techniques, measures and ratios are used. Finally, you will consider how principles of ethical behaviour impact the practices of accounting professionals and organisations.

“You have to understand accounting and you have to understand the nuances of accounting. It’s the language of business and it’s an imperfect language, but unless you are willing to put in the effort to learn accounting – how to read and interpret financial statements – you really shouldn’t select stocks yourself.”

Warren Buffett,

American business magnate, investor and philanthropist

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

An A level in Accounting is an excellent foundation for further study of accountancy at pre-professional and professional level. This subject will enable you to develop a capacity for methodical and critical thought. This serves as an end in itself, as well as a basis for further study of accounting and other subjects.

Accounting fits in very well with a variety of business-related fields – Management, Finance, Business Studies itself and Economics. This subject brings an appreciation of the effects of economic, legal, ethical, social, environmental and technological influences on accounting decisions. A level Accounting develops transferable skills of numeracy, communication, interpretation and presentation in an accounting context.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

For the study of A-Level Accounting, you should have at least a grade 5 in GCSE English Language, and at least a grade 5 in GCSE Maths, but a grade 6 is more desirable; especially if you wish to pursue this subject at degree level. Therefore, you should be confident in your addition, subtraction, multiplication and division skills and generally enjoy working with numbers. You will not need to write essays but will be required to write about your interpretation of calculations, often in a report or memorandum. Approximately 40 per cent of the exams marks are for written content.

How is the course assessed?

A level

The A level is examined in two separate papers. Paper 1 is 3 hours in length and worth 120 marks in total which are distributed as follows: Section A is worth 30 marks; Section B carries 40 marks; and Section C is worth 50 marks. Paper 2 is structured in exactly the same manner, being 3 hours in length and worth 120 marks in total, distributed over Sections A, B and C identically to Paper 1. However, Paper 2 focuses on the more advanced topics and accounting practices covered in the second half of the A level course. Papers 1 and 2 are equally weighted at 50% of the A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

Accounting for AQA: AS and A level Year 1

By D. Cox
Published by Osborne Books,
ISBN 978-1911198123

Accounting for AQA: A-level Year 2

By D. Cox
Published by Osborne Books,
ISBN 978-1911198253

Accounting for AQA: AS and A level

Question Bank

By D. Cox
Published by Osborne Books,
ISBN 978-1911198130



Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7127

ART AND DESIGN: FINE ART

“The aim of art is not to represent the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance.”

Aristotle



ART AND DESIGN: FINE ART

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Are you creative and imaginative? Do you enjoy exploring ideas and looking at things in different ways? If so, you should consider a course in fine art. Fine art is about looking, learning, thinking and communicating. You will enjoy developing your understanding of the visual world, learning practical skills and responding to ideas and issues in ways that are personal to you.

Both Lower Sixth and Upper Sixth courses are practical courses in which you learn by doing, so you will be able to create imaginative personal work. You will find out about a whole range of media, techniques and processes. You will develop your creativity and independent thought, learn to express yourself visually and let your imagination flourish. Fine art is a great companion to all other subjects as creativity, imagination and problem solving skills can give you great ideas for your other subjects.

Fine Art is for you if you have a passion for Art as well as self-motivation and commitment. Students are expected to spend a significant amount of time producing artwork outside of lesson time.

Lower sixth

At lower sixth level, students begin with instruction in a variety of techniques, such as drawing and painting. They learn about the language of art and how to “read” and to analyse artwork. Students go on to learn how to explore their chosen projects from a series of initial studies, how to use sketchbooks and how to develop ideas. These are used to experiment, show concept development and to record visual experiences.

Upper sixth

At upper sixth level, students are required to build upon the knowledge, understanding and skills gained in the lower sixth with greater depth of study. Students continue to be given close technical instruction and supervision, but they are required to adopt a more independent approach. Encouragement is given to original and experimental ideas.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Fine art offers opportunities to use your creativity to express yourself. You will develop your understanding of creative processes, your ability to observe and to think, to solve problems and to communicate in a visual way. It will enable you to work independently and to make your own discoveries by exploring ideas, other artists’ work and different materials and techniques. Fine art gives you the skills and knowledge to create personal and imaginative work. If you have an adventurous, creative and enquiring mind and are excited by shaping and determining the visual world around us, there is a career opportunity waiting for you.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

Having a GCSE in the subject is preferable and/or a strong and diverse portfolio of work to demonstrate the necessary skills will be desirable. Enthusiasm, creativity, organisation and self-discipline will be important attributes. Commitment outside of lessons is crucial to success. Strong drawing ability and/or a good grade in Art GCSE are desirable.

How is the course assessed?

A level

At A level for component 1 you will develop work for a personal investigation into an idea, issue, concept or theme supported by written material (3,000-word essay). This will count for 60% of your total A level. In component 2 you will produce personal work in response to one of eight exciting starting points. Component 2 is an external assessment set by AQA and concludes with a supervised time of 15 hours. It is marked out of 96 and carries 40% weighting. The work is marked at MPW and externally moderated in June.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

History of Modern Art

By H. Arnason

Published by Pearson, ISBN 9780136062066

The Story of Art

By E. Gombrich

Published by Phaidon Press,

ISBN 9780714832470

The Story of Modern Art

By N. Lynton

Published by Phaidon Press,

ISBN 9780714824222

General reference books for research and influence. Specific books for individual projects.



“Inhale possibility, exhale creativity.”

Laura Jaworski

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7202

ART AND DESIGN: PHOTOGRAPHY

“To me, photography is an art of observation. It’s about finding something interesting in an ordinary place... I’ve found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them.”

Elliott Erwit



ART AND DESIGN: PHOTOGRAPHY

What is it about at sixth-form level?

This course is based on Photography as an art form. The course is designed to help you explore and understand Photography creatively. You will be taught technical aspects of Digital Photography and encouraged to develop your own concepts and ideas. You will be set regular homework, which will take the form of written work, taking shots and presenting your work.

You will learn how to use your camera and compose effective pictures; how to be selective with your images; a range of Photoshop skills; experimental and creative techniques such as collage; how to analyse the work of other photographers; and how to present your work. The course is designed to encourage you to reflect on both the historical and contemporary elements of Photography and be creative and ambitious with your images, both in and out of the classroom.

Photography is for you if you have a passion for taking pictures as well as self-motivation and commitment. Students are expected to spend a significant amount of time taking photos outside of lesson time.

Lower sixth

At lower-sixth level, students begin with instruction in the various digital techniques of camera use and Adobe Photoshop. They learn about the language of photography and how to “read” and analyse photographs. They begin to photograph a variety of themes including landscape, portrait, architecture, still-life and abstract. Students go on to learn how to develop their chosen projects from a series of initial studies, how to use sketchbooks and how to keep journals. These are used to experiment, show idea development and to record visual experiences.

Upper sixth

At upper-sixth level, students are required to build upon the knowledge, understanding and skills gained in the lower sixth with greater depth of study. Students continue to be given close technical instruction and supervision, but they are required to adopt a more independent approach. Encouragement is given to original and experimental ideas.

“If a photographer cares about the people before the lens and is compassionate, much is given. It is the photographer, not the camera, that is the instrument.”

Eve Arnold

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Photography will help you to work independently and be self-motivated during photographic shoots. The knowledge you gain through researching other photographers will enrich your understanding and improve your ability to analyse other photographs, as well as your own. It will enable you to develop your practical photographic skills as well as exploring your own creative voice. It will enhance your ability to think visually and communicate your ideas through imagery. Photography is also a useful addition to any student’s portfolio of qualifications and can help secure admission to Art colleges and universities. Beyond higher education, it can lead to a variety of careers within the creative industries.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

Having a GCSE in the subject is preferable and/or a strong and diverse portfolio of work to demonstrate the necessary skills will be desirable. Commitment outside of lessons is crucial to success. Good grades in Art and/or Photography GCSE are desirable.

How is the course assessed?

A level

At A level for component 1 you will develop work for a personal investigation into an idea, issue, concept or theme supported by written material (3,000-word essay). This will count for 60% of your total A level. In component 2 you will produce personal work in response to one of eight exciting starting points. Component 2 is an external assessment set by AQA and concludes with a supervised time of 15 hours. It is marked out of 96 and carries 40% weighting. The work is marked at MPW and externally moderated in June.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading



To be confirmed at start of course.

The Photograph

By G. Clarke

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0192842008

20th Century Photography

By S. Klotz

Published by Tashen, ISBN 978-3836541022

Art and Photography

By A. Scharf

Published by Penguin, ISBN 978-0140131321

Phaidon ‘55’ Series

By Various

Published by Phaidon

Photography: A Critical Introduction

By L. Wells

Published by Routledge, ISBN 978-0415854290

Other texts will be recommended to students specific to their chosen themes.

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7206

“DNA is like a computer program but far, far more advanced than any software ever created.”

Bill Gates, *The Road Ahead*



BIOLOGY

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Biology involves the study of a wide range of exciting topics, ranging from molecular Biology to the study of ecosystems and from microorganisms to mammoths. Biology is never far from the headlines either...

The human genome has been sequenced and we know the complete arrangement of the three thousand million bases that make up human DNA. In Kenya, 350 people die every day from AIDS and in South East Asia the skies are dark with smoke as the last Bornean rainforests are burned to grow oil palms. Biologists are concerned with all these issues. They work in the fields of cell Biology, medicine, food production and ecology.

Biology is one of the most popular A level subjects in the country, attracting students studying a wide range of other subjects. Many of these students enjoy the subject so much they eventually choose a Biology-related degree course. Others go on to careers in law, computing, accounting or teaching. So, whatever field you will eventually work in, you will find Biology a very rewarding and challenging course.

Lower sixth

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Biology: Practical skills assessed in a written examination; Practical skills assessed in the practical endorsement. Module 2 – Foundations in Biology: Cell structure; Biological molecules; Nucleotides and nucleic acids; Enzymes; Biological membranes; Cell division, cell diversity and cellular organisation. Module 3 – Exchange and transport: Exchange surfaces; Transport in animals; Transport in plants. Module 4 – Biodiversity, evolution and disease: Communicable diseases, disease prevention and the immune system; Biodiversity; Classification and evolution.

Upper sixth

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Biology: Practical skills assessed in a written examination; Practical skills assessed in the practical endorsement. Module 5 – Communication, homeostasis and energy: Communication and homeostasis; Excretion as an example of homeostatic control; Neuronal communication; Hormonal communication; Plant and animal responses; Photosynthesis; Respiration. Module 6 – Genetics, evolution and ecosystems: Cellular control; Patterns of inheritance; Manipulating genomes; Cloning and biotechnology; Ecosystems; Populations and sustainability.

“There is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed into a few forms or into one: and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.”

Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Biology A level students will develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other; develop and demonstrate a deep appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific methods; develop competence and confidence in a variety of practical, mathematical and problem solving skills; develop their interest in and enthusiasm for the subject, including developing an interest in further study and careers associated with the subject; understand how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You will need to have obtained 5 GCSEs at 9-4 including a grade 4 in English. You will need to have gained a grade 6 or above in GCSE Biology and GCSE Chemistry, GCSE Double Science or their equivalent. Students should also have gained grade 6 or better in GCSE Maths.

How is the course assessed?

A level

Biological processes (Component 01) assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 3 and 5. Biological diversity (Component 02) assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 4 and 6. Both include multiple choice, short answer (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions. Unified Biology (Component 03) assesses content from across all teaching modules 1 to 6. Question styles include short answer and extended response questions. Practical endorsement in Biology (Component 04) is a separately reported non-exam assessment component which rewards the development of practical skills. Students may work in groups but must be able to demonstrate and let teachers record independent evidence of their competency. The activities will take place throughout the lower sixth and upper sixth.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

A Level Biology A for OCR Student Book
By A. Fullick, J. Locke, P. Bircher
Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0-19-835192-4

A Level Biology A for OCR Year 1 and AS Student Book
By A. Fullick, J. Locke, P. Bircher
Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0-19-835191-7

A Level Biology for OCR Year 2 Student Book
By A. Fullick, J. Locke, P. Bircher
Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0-19-835764-3



Business



“To open a shop is easy; to keep it open is an art.”
Chinese proverb

BUSINESS

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Business is about the nature of business activity, how it operates and makes a profit, how it matches strategies to corporate objectives, and the internal and external influences upon business decision-making.

In other words, if you study Business at sixth-form level you will learn all about how and why businesses can become successful and how and why they can fail. The focus in Year 12 is on improving business performance and the decisions needed to achieve this aim. In the full A level you will study strategic decision making.

Lower sixth

In the AS year you will study business in different contexts and consider the importance of decision making and how to evaluate decisions, the competitive environment and markets as well as other issues related to external business planning. You will look at the importance of leadership, operational management, marketing actions, financial issues and human resources. Business analytical models are studied and used to evaluate real business contexts. Calculation work includes calculating break-even, profits, costs and cash flow, as well as price and income elasticity of demand. Management decision making tools, such as Decision Tree Analysis are also included.

Upper sixth

Building on what you have learned in the lower sixth, you will look at the impact of technology, Corporate Social Responsibility, and ethical and environmental issues related to strategic decisions. You will also explore the difficulties in forecasting future trends, the ideas of feasibility and risk and how strategic decisions impact on the stakeholders of a business as well as assessing financial calculation (such as Ratio Analysis and Investment Appraisal) to support decision making. Theoretical analysts are also studied in depth.

“Business is more exciting than any game.”

Lord Beaverbrook

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Studying Business at A level will allow you to engage with the business world by following business developments and thinking critically about contemporary business issues. Most of the assessment material is based on real business situations. By examining and thinking critically about real business situations as you study the subject, you will gain an insight into different contexts which will help you to understand the key issues in any situation and compare and contrast this with other situations, as well as knowledge of key business theorists.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

For the study of A Level Business, you should have at least a grade 5 in GCSE English Language, and at least a grade 5 in GCSE Maths, but a grade 6 is more desirable; especially if you wish to pursue this subject at degree level. If you studied GCSE Business you will need to have achieved a grade 4. Students that are knowledgeable about current affairs and keep up to date with business news will particularly enjoy this course.

How is the course assessed?

A level

Papers 1 and 2 will last 2 hours and are each worth 100 marks. In Paper 1 there will be three compulsory sections. Section A has 15 multiple choice questions worth 15 marks. Section B has short answer questions worth 35 marks. Sections C and D have two essay questions worth 25 marks each. In Paper 2 there will be three data response compulsory questions worth approximately 33 marks each and made up of three or four part questions. Paper 3 will also incorporate all the A level content. It will also last 2 hours and be worth 100 marks. This exam will consist of one compulsory case study followed by approximately six questions. Each exam contributes 33.3% to the overall A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

AQA A-level Business Year 1/AS 3rd edition

By Wolinski & Coates

Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978-1471836091

AQA A-level Business Year 2 3rd edition

By Wolinski & Coates

Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978-1471836114

AQA Business for A-level (Marcou  ) (covers full A-level)

By I. Marcou  , A. Hammond, N. Watson

Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978-1471835698

Students are also expected to keep up with the daily business news channel, such as BBC Business.



“ Well technically, Chemistry is the study of matter, but I prefer to see it as the study of change. ”

Walter H. White



CHEMISTRY

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Have you ever wondered why ice floats, why people put salt on icy roads, why onions make you cry, how aspirin stops pain in your body or whether you can turn lead into gold? Study A level Chemistry to find out the answers.

Everything you hear, see, smell, taste, and touch involves Chemistry and chemicals. Hearing, seeing, tasting, and touching all involve an intricate series of chemical reactions and interactions in your body. With such an enormous range of topics, it is essential to know about Chemistry at some level to understand the world around us.

A level Chemistry will give you an exciting insight into the contemporary world of Chemistry. Key concepts and practical skills are integrated throughout the course. This combination of academic challenge and practical focus makes the prospect of studying the A level highly appealing. You will learn about Chemistry in a range of different contexts and the impact it has on industry and many aspects of everyday life. You will learn to investigate and solve problems in a range of contexts.

Lower sixth

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Chemistry: Practical skills assessed in a written examination; Practical skills assessed in the practical endorsement. Module 2 – Foundations in Chemistry: Atoms, compounds, molecules and equations; Amount of substance; Acid–base and redox reactions; Electrons, bonding and structure. Module 3 – Periodic table and energy: The periodic table and periodicity; Group 2 and the halogens; Qualitative analysis; Enthalpy changes; Reaction rates and equilibrium (qualitative). Module 4 – Core organic Chemistry: Basic concepts; Hydrocarbons; Alcohols and haloalkanes; Organic synthesis; Analytical techniques (IR and MS).

Upper sixth

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Chemistry: Practical skills assessed in a written examination; Practical skills assessed in the practical endorsement. Module 5 – Physical Chemistry and transition elements: Reaction rates and equilibrium (quantitative); pH and buffers; Enthalpy, entropy and free energy; Redox and electrode potentials; Transition elements. Module 6 – Organic Chemistry and analysis: Aromatic compounds; Carbonyl compounds; Carboxylic acids and esters; Nitrogen compounds; Polymers; Organic synthesis; Chromatography and spectroscopy (NMR).

“The hydride of oxygen, the first Group VI element, one might predict by analogy, would be a foul-smelling, poisonous, inflammable gas, condensing to a nasty liquid around -100°C . And instead it was water, H_2O .”

Oliver Sacks, Uncle Tungsten

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Chemistry A level students will develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other; develop and demonstrate a deep appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific methods; develop competence and confidence in a variety of practical, mathematical and problem solving skills; develop their interest in and enthusiasm for the subject, including developing an interest in further study and careers associated with the subject; as well as understanding how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You will need to have obtained 5 GCSEs at 9–4 including a grade 4 in English. You will need to have gained a grade 6 or above in GCSE Chemistry, GCSE Double Science or their equivalent. Students should also have gained a grade 6 or better in GCSE Maths.

How is the course assessed?

A level

Periodic table, elements and physical Chemistry (Component 01) assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 3 and 5. Synthesis and analytical techniques (Component 02) assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 4 and 6. Both include multiple choice, short answer and extended response questions. Unified Chemistry (Component 03) assesses content from across all teaching modules 1 to 6. Question styles include short answer and extended response questions. Practical endorsement in Chemistry (Component 04) is a separately reported non-exam assessment component which rewards the development of practical skills. Students may work in groups but must be able to demonstrate and let teachers record independent evidence of their competency. The activities will take place throughout the lower sixth and upper sixth.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

A Level Chemistry A for OCR Student Book

By D. Gent, R. Ritchie

Published by OUP, ISBN: 978-0-19-835197-9

A Level Chemistry A for OCR Year 1 and AS Student Book

By D. Gent, R. Ritchie

Published by OUP, ISBN: 978-0-19-835196-2

A Level Chemistry A for OCR Year 2 Student Book

By D. Gent

Published by OUP, ISBN: 978-0-19-835765-0

What is Chemistry?

By Peter Atkins

Published by OUP, ISBN13: 978-0199683987

Why Chemical Reactions Happen

By Kames Keeler and Peter Wothers

ISBN-13: 978-0199249732



Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: OCR-A H432



“I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”

In the School of Confucius

CHINESE

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Learning a modern language for GCSE is a matter of taking your first steps to learn rudimentary grammar and vocabulary that leave real conversations still beyond your reach. It is at the sixth-form level that you will deepen your grammatical competence and broaden your vocabulary so that you can converse about and debate real-world issues, and immerse yourself into the culture, literature and arts of the country. Even though we live in an age where it seems English is spoken everywhere and where Google Translate will help you where it is not, there is nothing like the experience and satisfaction of being able to step inside a different way of speaking and seeing the world.

Learning a language spoken by one fifth of the world's population will open the door to one of the world's oldest and richest cultures. Exposure to Chinese, a language which is entirely different to all European languages, will provide one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of your life. By looking at media, books and film you will develop the knowledge and skills to enable you to understand the unique values, struggles, sensibility, joys and sorrows of the Chinese people.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will begin developing your oral fluency and accuracy in a range of predictable and unpredictable situations, as well as your ability to produce long essays and reports. You will also be increasing your intercultural knowledge and understanding of contemporary Chinese society. You will focus on two themes. Theme 1 (Changes in Contemporary Chinese society) looks at firstly at family structure and the generation gap, family planning and China's ageing population. It then takes in education, the world of work, and how to maintain a good work-life balance. Theme 2 (Chinese Culture) looks at traditions and customs. You will look at the importance place of festivals, such as the Spring festival and Dragon boat festival. You will also look at film, music, books alongside social issues and trends.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will keep working on your oral and written skills whilst enlarging your knowledge of Chinese society through the study of two more themes. Theme 3 (Evolving Chinese Society) looks at economic, political and social issues, ranging from communications and the use of the internet to economic policies and environmental protection. Theme 4 (post-1978 China on the World Stage) looks at key political figures in the last fifty years, the changes to and contrast between urban and rural life, and China's relationships with Europe and America. You will also broaden your knowledge of Chinese through looking at more books and films.

“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

Laozi, philosopher

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Knowledge of a foreign language is ever more valuable in an increasingly connected world. Many employers look for knowledge of at least one other language across a wide range of jobs. Understanding a language is a first step to understanding a people and a culture. Another language enables you to enjoy everything from a casual conversation to a classic novel as it was meant to be read. It also provides a means by which to reflect upon your own culture and gain a deeper understanding of your mother tongue. An A level is typically a prerequisite for studying the language at university.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You should ideally have a grade 7 or higher at GCSE. Whether it is your mother tongue or a second language, you will need to be able to speak and write it proficiently. You will also need an interest in other cultures and a willingness to work hard on a language which is totally different to all European languages.

How is the course assessed?

A level

There are three exams. The Paper 1 exam (Listening, Reading and Translation into English) will test your listening comprehension skills, your ability to read and respond to a variety of texts. It is worth 40% of the A level and lasts for 2 hours. The Paper 2 exam (Written Response to Works and Translation) will test your understanding of two works you will study in Chinese (either two books or a book and a film). It is worth 30% of the A level and lasts 2 hours 40 minutes. The Paper 3 exam (Speaking) will test your ability to analyse and summarise research findings, elaborating on key points of interest, through oral presentation and discussion. It is worth 30% of the A level and lasts about 21-23 minutes.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

Chinese for A-Level

By Xiaoming Zhang

Published by Cypress Book Co, ISBN 978-1845700119



CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

“It is a Thinkery for intellectual souls. That’s where the people live who try to prove that the sky is like a baking pot all around us and we’re the charcoal inside it.”

Strepsiades,

in Aristophanes’ *The Clouds*



CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

What is it about at sixth-form level?

The classical world of the Greeks and the Romans is the bedrock of our civilisation today. They have provided us with everything from plays and philosophy to art and aqueducts. Like our immediate predecessors, we find it hard not to look back upon their times without a sense of awe at what they achieved. We bear the fruits of the Greeks' enquiries into the world around us in the names of the subjects we study today, such as maths, history, and physics. We have the Romans to thank for the urban and social infrastructure we take for granted, such as our streets, sanitation and law courts.

By studying Classical Civilisation at A level, you will become familiar with many aspects of the ancient world. You will look at them as they saw themselves, through epic poems, tragedies, and art and architecture. In studying them, you will come to understand the historical, political and social context in which they are set. Even though you will not be working in Latin or Greek, you will also come to appreciate the beauty of the language in which they wrote.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will study two components. In Component 1 (The World of the Hero), you will study Homer's *Odyssey*, one of the founding texts of Greek culture. You will examine the concept of a hero through the values and behaviour that are displayed. You will look at the wider social, cultural and religious context and the relationships between gods, men, women and slaves. In component 2 (Culture and the Arts), you will look at Greek theatre. You will examine three plays, Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, Euripides' *Bacchae* and Aristophanes' *Frogs*. You will consider what meanings the ancient Greeks drew from their drama, their styles of performance and the literary techniques they used to create their narratives.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will study two more components. You will study a second text in Component 1 (The World of the Hero): Virgil's *Aeneid*. Drawing upon your knowledge of Homer, you will consider the influence of the Greek epic on the Roman epic. In component 3 (Beliefs and Ideas) you will study the ancient attitude to love and relationships through the works of two fascinating writers, Sappho and Ovid, and two philosophers, Plato and Seneca. You will look at their literary style, their representation of gender and social norms and their beliefs about love and desire, elements of which will seem surprisingly modern.

“Do Greeks come this stupid?”

Socrates, in Aristophanes' *The Clouds*

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

An A level in Classical Civilisation represents a broad portfolio of skills and knowledge. The course is focused on classical works but in coming to understand them, you will have learned about the history of the ancient world along with political, social and philosophical ideas. You will develop a sensitivity to language and the art of literary criticism. The essay-based nature of the course means that you will develop your writing skills.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

There are no formal entry requirements. A good grade in GCSE English (or equivalent) would be an advantage. You will need a love of literature, art and history. It is an essay-based course, so you will need to have good writing skills.

How is the course assessed?

A level

For the A level, there are three examinations. The first is on Component 1 (The World of the Hero), in which you will answer questions on Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. The second is on component 2 (Culture and the Arts) in which you will answer questions on Greek theatre. The third is on component 3 (Beliefs and Ideas), you will answer questions on Sappho, Ovid, Plato and Seneca. All papers contain a range of questions, from those requiring short answers to longer essay questions. Paper 1 is worth 40% of the marks and lasts 2 hours 20 minutes. Papers 2 and 3 are each worth 30% of the marks and last 1 hour 45 minutes.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

Homer - The Odyssey

Translated by Emily Wilson, W. W. Norton and Company
ISBN 978-0-393-33625-0

Virgil - The Aeneid

Translated by Sarah Ruden
Published by Yale University Press,
ISBN 978-0-300-15141-1

Bacchae by Euripides

Translated by D. Franklin
Published by CUP, ISBN 978-0521653725

Oedipus the King by Sophocles

Translated by Judith Affleck
Published by CUP, ISBN 978-0140444254

Bacchae by Euripides & Frogs by Aristophanes

Translated by J. Affeck & C. Letchford
Published by CUP, ISBN 978-0521172578

Sappho and Ovid

Published by OCR



Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: OCR H408

COMPUTER SCIENCE

“What a computer is to me is the most remarkable tool that we have ever come up with. It’s the equivalent of a bicycle for our minds.”

Steve Jobs, inventor and entrepreneur



COMPUTER SCIENCE

What is it about at sixth-form level?

One of Microsoft's early dreams was a computer in every home and on every desk. Today, around a quarter of the world's population carries around daily a computer in the form of a phone and more and more people are embracing the "internet of things", allowing them to interact remotely and intelligently with their domestic appliances. Impressive as the hardware is, it is nothing without well-written software. What makes the modern world work are computer programs.

In this course, you will study the conceptual framework of computational thinking and begin learning the skills of programming. You will learn to analyse a problem by identifying its component parts, use algorithms to describe problems, identify the components of a solution to a problem and determine the order of the steps needed to solve a problem. Alongside the study of formal aspects of computing, you will also examine a range of legal and moral issues such as how social media has led to concerns being raised over privacy and whether computers will make too many people redundant.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will study two areas of computer science. The first, Computing Principles, focuses on the contemporary systems architecture. You will look at the characteristics of hardware and software. You will look at different types of data, data structures and data exchange including compression, encryption, databases, web technologies and networks. The second, Algorithms and Problem Solving, concentrates on the concept of computational thinking. At the heart of computer science is the idea of an algorithm, or step-by-step process, each step being basic but the whole potentially incredibly complex. You will learn how to think abstractly about problems and decompose them into simpler elements.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will continue to study the areas you began in the first year. You will additionally take on a major programming project which will include analysing a problem, designing a solution, implementing and testing the solution and thoroughly evaluating your work. The programming project will be completed in a language such as Pascal or Python.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

The course will develop your skills across a broad range of areas. Through learning the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science you will develop the ability to thinking creatively, innovatively and analytically about how to solve computational problems. The challenge of writing a program in the upper-sixth year will then give you valuable practical experience of problem-solving. The study of the moral and legal opportunities and risks of digital technology will give you a good understanding of important issues that are of relevance across a wide range of other subjects and future workplaces.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

The course requires a good grounding in computer science. It is not suitable for beginners. You either need GCSE Computer Science or good experience programming in languages such as Python, Pascal, Visual Basic, and so on. The abstract and logical nature of the course means that students will also need to have a grade 7 or higher in (!)GCSE Maths.

How is the course assessed?

A level

For the A level, there are two exams and a project. Paper 1 is worth 40% and is examined by an on-screen paper of 2 hours 30 minutes. There are a mix of short and long answer questions, as well as programming tasks dealing with the skeleton program provided. Paper 2 is worth 40% and is examined by a written paper of 2 hours 30 minutes. Likewise, there are a mix of short and long answer questions dealing with computational thinking and algorithms, as well as broader questions touching on the ethics and impact of computing. The project is internally assessed and externally moderated. It is worth 20% of the A level and will be worked on over the Autumn and Spring terms of the upper-sixth year.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

AQA AS and A Level Computer Science

By PM Heathcote and RSU Heathcote

Published by PG Online, ISBN 978-1910523070



“The Internet is the first thing that humanity has built that humanity doesn't understand, the largest experiment in anarchy that we have ever had.”

Eric Schmidt, Executive Chairman of Google

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7517

“It is no crime to be ignorant of economics, which is, after all, a specialized discipline and one that most people consider to be a ‘dismal science.’ But it is totally irresponsible to have a loud and vociferous opinion on economic subjects while remaining in this state of ignorance.”

Murray N. Rothbard, Economist

ECONOMICS

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Economics is everywhere. Each and every day people are making economic decisions – what to have for lunch and where to have it. Whether to save or to spend; whether to change job or not; whether to build a new school or a new hospital; each of these choices affects not only the entity making the decision but also others. It affects their incomes, their employment and their wellbeing. Economics is the study of how and why we make choices and what impact those choices have, right across the world.

It is a challenging subject at any level. You should have an interest in the world, enjoy debate and differences in opinion, and should not seek ‘right’ answers. You should be willing to keep a sharp eye on real world developments, be prepared to have a view on issues, and to challenge the views of others. If you wonder what is going on in the Eurozone, why the high street is closing down, or why 40% of adults are obese whilst 2 billion people are malnourished, then Economics is for you.

Lower sixth

Lower sixth will introduce students to the main distinction in economics: Microeconomics and Macroeconomics. Theme 1 will cover microeconomics. Why do people buy things? How do they value them and what determines what they will pay? The same ideas apply to apples, houses and even workers. However, there is a supply element too. Firms must be willing and able to supply goods and services at the right price. You will learn what determines that willingness. Yet sometimes markets go wrong. What, if anything, can governments do when markets fail? Theme 2 will look at basic macroeconomic topics with reference to the UK. You will learn about the causes of unemployment, the dangers of inflation, the benefits and costs of economic growth, how a national economy works, and how things link together. You’ll discover what might influence an economic variable and suggest possible solutions. Economic policy is thus a major aspect of this theme.

Upper sixth

In the second year you will explore further into microeconomics and macroeconomics. Theme 3 will look at market and business behaviour. You will use your understanding of how markets work to explore business behaviour. How do firms make, and keep making, profit? What determines how easy it is to enter a market? How does competition and firm behaviour differ between industries? Theme 4 will further explore macroeconomics from a global perspective. This takes the analysis of how economies work into the international arena. You will explore the causes and effects of poverty and under development in the less developed world before considering what can be done to tackle these problems. We will also consider developments in international trade and the roles of multinational companies and organisations such as the I.M.F.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Economics is vital as a tool for understanding the world. Everything we do is based in Economics. Every choice we make has an economic cause and an economic impact. If we want to see how the world works then we need to have some understanding of economic principles. The subject is far more than just ideas however. We will be observing events in the real world as they unfold and reacting to and offering comment and analysis of the news. It is thus an exciting and vibrant subject.

Economics builds analytical skills and the evaluation of source materials and data. You will learn how to analyse the real world, how to build and construct arguments and express ideas clearly in both written and oral forms.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

Whilst GCSE in the subject itself is not a requirement, for students who have done the subject at GCSE, a 6 would be evidence of the motivation and potential to perform well at A level. You will need to have obtained at least 5 GCSEs at 9-4 including a grade 6 in English Language and Maths. An ability to present complex data and ideas in written form is important. Quantitative and mathematical skills consist of 20% of the final grade, and so is crucial. Overall, you must have an interest in the wider world and in current affairs.

How is the course assessed?

A level

At the end of the course students will sit three exam papers. Each paper will last 2 hours and worth 100 marks each. Paper 1 will cover the microeconomic topics in Theme 1 and 3. Paper 2 will cover the macroeconomic topics in Theme 2 and 4. Paper 3 is the synoptic paper and will cover all 4 themes. Paper 1 and 2 follow the same structure. Section A is short response and multiple choice. This will include data interpretation and calculations. Section B is data response and includes a 5, 8, 10, 12, and 15 mark questions. All questions from Section A and B are compulsory. Section C consists of two 25 mark essays. Students must answer only one of these essay questions. Paper 3 comprises of two sections; A and B. Both of these sections contain an extract and four exam questions of 5, 8, 12, and 25 marks. All questions are compulsory. Papers 1 and 2 are both worth 35%, whilst Paper 3 is worth 30% of the A Level grade.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

Edexcel AS/A Level Economics 2015

By A. Anderton, D. Gray

Published by Edexcel, ISBN 978-1447990550

Other texts will be recommended to students as required.



“There are no solutions, only trade-offs.”

Thomas Sowell, Economist

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: Pearson-Edexcel 9EC0

“No dictionary of a living tongue ever can be perfect, since while it is hastening to publication, some words are budding, and some falling away.”

Dr Samuel Johnson

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

What is it about at sixth-form level?

If you could go back in time and eavesdrop on a conversation in the England of Chaucer's time, it might be hard to follow what is being said and if someone told a funny story, you might not get it. Perhaps the same will be true for any visitors to our present time from 700 years in the future. The English language, like fashions in clothes, undergoes continuous modification. Just think about text-speak or street slang, the flood of new words associated with technology, or from immigrant communities. Our course explores these linguistic changes in detail and the reasons for them.

Many of us share a fascination with the way toddlers speak. One feature of language acquisition is that children master English by making mistakes until they fully acquire all the skills. You will learn how a "wug" is used to research this, what a "virtuous error" is and you will be amazed at how we achieve fluency in such a brief time span. When it comes to literacy, you will study how we learn to read and write, realising what complex skills these are.

We begin the course by introducing you to the terminology used by linguists and you will learn about aspects such as phonetics, lexis and morphology. You will consider the diversity of English found in different regions and social groups: if you went to an interview in the USA wearing a vest and pants it would be perfectly acceptable; and, if you wanted to buy thongs in Australia, you would go to a shoe shop!

Lower sixth

You will analyse texts with specific emphasis on mode: speech, computer-mediated communication and genre. You will then be introduced to the topic of language diversity, considering language and the individual, social groups and regional variation, as well as specific focus on gender, occupation and ethnicity. An important part of this year is evaluating different attitudes to language use.

Upper sixth

Additionally, for A level you will firstly examine the stages and theories of children's language development and all aspects of their language acquisition: speaking, reading and writing. Secondly you will explore language diversity and issues linked to world 'Englishes'. Thirdly, you will study the reasons why language changes, developing your ideas about attitudes towards language change.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Language is a powerful tool; the sharper and cleaner we make it, the more effective it will be for us. As you pursue the course, you will learn how to adapt your English to suit different purposes and audiences, both in speech and in writing. You will learn how to write evaluative essays and how to model your creative writing on a variety of style models. A deeper knowledge of how and why our language has evolved will enrich your use of it and enhance your understanding of a wider range of texts. The usefulness of this skill will last your whole life.

Moreover, an awareness of how children learn to speak, read and write will be beneficial to you in years to come, equipping you to shape positively the linguistic development of our next generation.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

For UK based students, a good GCSE grade in English language or Literature is needed. This should be 6 or higher. For international students, an in-house diagnostic will be required for entry into the course. An overall grade 6 will be the criteria for entry. An interest in the everyday use of English in all its forms and across all media would be very desirable. You will be expected to read a lot and collect your own examples of English for in-depth study.

How is the course assessed?

A level

Paper 1 and 2 will be similar to those sat in the lower sixth but will include all the A level content. In addition to the lower sixth topics, Paper 1 will cover children's language development. In Paper 2 language discourses is an additional topic to those covered in the lower sixth. Each paper will last 2 hours 30 minutes and is worth 40% of the whole A level. The remaining 20% is accessed via coursework for which you will need to produce a language investigation of about 2,000 words and a piece of original writing and commentary of 1,500 words.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading



To be confirmed at start of course.

AQA English Language A level and AS

By D. Clayton, A. Goddard, B. Kemp and F. Titjen

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-019833402

How Language Works: How Babies Babble, Words Change Meaning and Languages Live or Die

By D. Crystal

Published by Penguin, ISBN 978-0141015521

“Language is the key to the heart of people.”

Ahmed Deedat

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7702

ENGLISH LITERATURE



“Literature is news that stays news.”

Ezra Pound

ENGLISH LITERATURE

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Primarily, the study of English Literature at A Level can offer you a rich and very rewarding reading experience. You will have the opportunity to study all three major literary forms: prose, poetry and drama, and to read a range of texts, from the ‘classics’ to more modern texts written in the 21st century. You will be encouraged to read widely, to learn about the contexts in which the texts were written and to consider how those texts have been received by different readers over time.

Studying literature is not a factual process designed to find the ‘truth’. There are many different ways in which texts can be interpreted and you will be able to discuss and develop your own ideas, informed by the views of others. English Literature is for those who love to read and re-read, to unpick layers of meaning and who enjoy discussion and debate.

Lower sixth

In your Year 12, you will focus on genre study but also begin to explore the ways in which literary texts can be connected and how the reading experience can be enhanced by the study of literary theory. You will study Hosseini’s acclaimed social protest novel, *Kite Runner*, Blake’s *Songs of Innocence and Experience* and Shakespeare’s political drama, *Henry IV Part 1*. This will be alongside the opportunity to study the genre of political and social protest writing within a wider framework extending to exciting literary bodies of World War and dystopian literature. You will also complete a non-examined unit in which you study prominent literary theories (feminism, Marxism, post-colonial theory, eco-critical theory, the literary canon and narrative theory) and apply them to two texts of your own choice.

Upper sixth

The second year of the course continues its focus on genre with Aspects of Tragedy. Tragedy has a long tradition in literature, with its origins in the ancient world and with a specific emphasis on drama. You will study 2 Shakespearean dramas; *Othello* and *Richard II* and Arthur Miller’s, *Death of a Salesman*. Having learned about tragic conventions and the principles of tragedy, you will be asked to explore to what extent you can locate elements or aspects of the genre in your chosen texts.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

English Literature will introduce you to new authors and reading experiences and help you to become a more confident, autonomous reader. It will develop your thinking skills, powers of analysis and creativity. You will also become a more fluent user of the language with a wider vocabulary and an ability to write accurately and coherently in order to argue a point of view. In addition, you will acquire a deeper understanding of historical, social and cultural developments through your study of literature. In discussion and in writing, you will develop more confidence in your own judgements.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

For UK based students, a good GCSE grade in English language or Literature is needed. This should be 6 or higher. For international students, an in-house diagnostic will be required for entry into the course. An overall grade 6 will be the criteria for entry. You should be aware that the course requires a lot of reading, both in class and independently. Most of the assessment is based on the ability to write good essays.

How is the course assessed?

A level

The A Level is assessed by two written exams and one non-exam assessment: Paper 1 is divided into three sections with two questions on Shakespeare and one essay question linking two other texts. To test your knowledge and understanding of social and political protest writing, Paper 2 requires a response to an unseen passage and two essays. For the non-exam assessment, you will produce two responses of 1,250 – 1,500 words, each relating to a different text and linking to a different aspect of the critical anthology.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading



To be confirmed at start of course.

Lower-sixth Genre:

The Songs of Innocence and Experience
By William Blake
Henry IV Part 1 By W. Shakespeare
The Kite Runner By Khaled Hosseini
Beginning Theory By Peter Barry

Upper-sixth Genre:

Othello By W. Shakespeare
Death of a Salesman By A. Miller
Richard II By W. Shakespeare / **Tess of the d’Urbervilles** By Thomas Hardy

“Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.”

Richard Steele



*“Photography is truth. Cinema is truth
24 times a second.”*

Jean-Luc Godard, director

FILM STUDIES

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Film Studies A Level aims to enrich and develop your current enjoyment and appreciation of film. You will learn why film production is considered an art form as you study: the implicit and explicit meanings associated with specific settings and locations; why characters are represented in particular ways; how camera techniques and editing choices enhance or diminish the importance of the frame's content; and the importance of sound- including dialogue, ambient sounds, and musical soundtrack- throughout the film. The course explores how the film industry has developed and evolved from the days of the Hollywood Studio System; and teaches you why film is one of the main cultural innovations of the 20th century. You will also learn about influential film styles such as la nouvelle vague (French New Wave), realism, and silent cinema; as well as gain an understanding about why these film styles continue to influence film productions today.

Lower sixth

The first year of the course introduces you to the different film form techniques that filmmakers consider and use when making a film. These are cinematography, mise-en-scène, editing, sound, and performance.

You study films produced in Hollywood between 1930-1990; as well as British and American films produced since 1995 and 2005 respectively.

You also learn about the institutional context. You study Hollywood as a multi-billion dollar global industry which promises pleasure and escapism for the masses. These expectations associated with Hollywood are contrasted with traditional independent films that focus on taboo subjects, and/or political issues; and feature people marginalised by society due to their gender, race, ethnicity, and/or class.

Upper sixth

The second year of the course builds on the knowledge and understanding gained in year one as the studied content broadens. You will learn about global cinema and documentary, as well as explore silent cinema and experimental film.

As part of the documentary section of the course, you study key theories relating to this genre which explore different approaches to documentary film and filmmaking. You will examine and evaluate how the documentary film studied directly embodies or strongly challenges aspects of these theories.

You will submit a practical filmmaking project (the non-exam assessment/NEA). This allows you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of film form. You will also develop your evaluation skills as you compare your own production to professionally produced films.

“*Film as dream, film as music. No art passes our conscience in the way film does, and goes directly to our feelings, deep down into the dark rooms of our souls.*”

Ingmar Bergman, director

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Film Studies is one of the most relevant subjects today. Moving image/video is a powerful marketing tool in the digital age, whilst entertainment platforms such Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Disney+ are constantly expanding their content.

Film Studies is an interdisciplinary subject which helps you develop many transferable skills relevant to further education, the workplace, and life in general. You will develop your critical skills of analysis; your creative powers of expression; and your ability to articulate your thoughts on paper and visualise your ideas on screen. This course supports career paths in film-making, directing, producing, and editing. It also provides a good foundation for more theoretical and analytical pathways such as film criticism, journalism, education, and humanities-based subjects at degree level.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You must have a wide-ranging interest in cinema, an inquisitive nature, and a desire to learn more. The course requires you to question how filmmakers create meaning, as well as how meaning can vary between different spectators, and across time and place. A good grade in GCSE English (or equivalent) is essential to meet the comprehension, analytical and writing demands of the course.

How is the course assessed?

A level

The course is assessed by two written exams and a non-exam assessment. Component One: Varieties of film and filmmaking. This paper assesses your knowledge and understanding of six feature length films relating to mainstream and independent American and British films from different periods of cinema. This written exam is 2.5 hours and is worth 35% of the qualification. Component Two: Global filmmaking perspectives. This paper assesses your knowledge and understanding of five feature length films (or their equivalent). The different film types examined are: silent, documentary, experimental, and world. This written exam is 2.5 hours and is worth 35% of the qualification. Component Three: Production. Students produce either a short film or a screenplay for a short film and digital storyboard of a key section from the screenplay. This section of the course is worth 30% of the qualification.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

A Level Film Studies: The Essential Introduction Third Edition

By Sarah Casey Benyahia et al.
Published by Routledge,
ISBN: 9780415520898

WJEC Eduqas Film Studies for A Level and AS

By Lisa Wardle et al
Published by Illuminate Publishing,
ISBN: 9781911208440

Additional articles about the films studied and videos on technical codes will be recommended to students throughout the two-year course to enhance their knowledge and understanding.



Exam Board and Specification Codes

WJEC Eduqas GCE A Level. Ofqual Qualification Number: 603/1147/2



“The most intimate temper of a people, its deepest soul, is above all in its language.”

Jules Michelet

FRENCH

What is it about at sixth-form level?

The A level specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. The focus is on language, culture and society. French, along with English, is one of the only two languages spoken on every continent in the world. Therefore, this course is suitable for students who may wish to work abroad in a new and exciting environment, or undertake a modern language degree.

French encourages students to develop their linguistic abilities and their critical thinking on the basis of their knowledge and understanding of French language, culture and society. Other skills developed in French, such as communication, research skills and creativity are transferable to many forms of employment and, as such, are highly valued by employers.

Students develop their ability to interact effectively with users of the language in speech and in writing. The course includes communication strategies to build fluency and confidence. Students use authentic spoken and written sources in French to develop their understanding of themes relating to Francophone cultures and societies.

Lower sixth

We focus on how French-speaking society has been shaped, socially and culturally, and how it continues to change. In the first year, aspects of the social and artistic life of French-speaking countries are studied. For example, students will look at the changing nature of family and 'cyber-society' as well as contemporary francophone music and cinema as the seventh art form. Alongside these themes students work on grammatical structures such as relative pronouns, comparatives and superlatives in order to express themselves accurately.

Upper sixth

In the second year of the course further aspects of the social background are covered, such as life for those on the margins of French-speaking society, as well as looking at the positive influences that diversity brings. Students also study aspects of the political landscape in a French-speaking country, looking at immigration from the political perspective and at the way in which political power is expressed through action – for example strikes and demonstrations. Grammar such as dependent infinitives and the subjunctive mood is studied for greater accuracy.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Discovering a different culture gives a new dimension to the world around you and is a valuable learning experience. Students develop their oral and written competencies and become increasingly confident, accurate and independent users of French. They begin to engage critically with intellectually stimulating texts, films and other materials in French, enabling them to appreciate sophisticated and creative uses of the language. Critical thinking will be developed alongside the four language skills. This course will stretch the learner both cognitively and linguistically. Furthermore it will foster his or her ability to learn other languages.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

A 7 grade or higher in GCSE French is desirable with a 6 as a minimum as the jump from GCSE to A level is considerable. Whether it is your mother tongue or a second language, you will need to be able to speak and write it proficiently. You will also need an interest in other cultures and a logical mind to cope with the grammar.

How is the course assessed?

A level

For the A level, there are three exams that cover all four general topic areas together with the film and literary text. Unit 1 (Listening, Reading and Writing) will check your comprehension of a variety of texts and extracts, with all the questions being in French. You will also have two translations of 100 words each: one into French and one into English. Unit 2 (Writing) consists of two 300-word essays in French with questions set on the film and the text studied. Unit 3 (Speaking) will be a discussion of a theme based on a stimulus card followed by a presentation and a discussion of an individual French research project. Unit 1 lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and is worth 40% of the A level. Unit 2 lasts 2 hours and is worth 30% of the A level. Unit 3 lasts 21-23 minutes and is worth 30% of the A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

AQA French A Level Year 1

By R. Pike, C. Povey and P. Shannon
Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366881

AQA French A Level Year 2

By R. Pike, C. Povey and P. Shannon
Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366850



“To have another language is to possess a second soul.”

Charlemagne

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7652

GEOGRAPHY



“*Geography is an earthly subject, but a heavenly science.*”

Edmund Burke

GEOGRAPHY

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Geography is a constantly changing discipline that reflects, describes and explains the dynamic world around us. It examines the interaction between people and the places in which they live in the context of technological change and social upheaval. Geographers have to think about social, economic and physical issues and how they conspire to shape the different environments and ecosystems on earth. They are involved in trying to think, understand and work towards the resolution of problems of global concern. Are the most socio-economically deprived societies best helped with aid or trade? Do we have a moral imperative to ensure genetic diversity or can we permit extinction and the destruction of environments if it raises our standards of living?

These are deep and fascinating questions. The subject will be particularly attractive to those who wish to find out more about them and similar issues, such as the development gap, the effects of globalisation on national economies, global warming and the severe risks to human activity posed by natural events.

Lower sixth and upper sixth

Over the two-year course students will study two components.

In Component 1: Physical Geography students will learn about Water and carbon cycles, followed by two optional units. The first being one from: Hot desert systems and landscapes; Coastal systems and landscapes; or Glacial systems and landscapes. The second will be one from either Hazards or Ecosystems under stress.

In Component 2: Human Geography students will learn about Global systems and global governance, as well as Changing places. In addition, they will study an option from either: Contemporary urban environments; Population and the environment; or Resource security.

Students will also produce an independent geographical research investigation, for which they will devise, develop and carry out their own fieldwork research on an area of a topic they have studied. This element requires both primary and secondary fieldwork data to be collected.

“Next to ignorance of the grammar of one’s native language, nothing betrays want of information so soon as ignorance in matters of geography, without which it is almost impossible to carry on conversation long on any general subject.”

William Playfair, engineer and political economist

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Geography is a broad subject which asks students to see connections and explore links between social, political, economic and geographical factors. These synoptic skills will be extremely valuable across a wide range of university subjects and careers beyond. To perform well in Geography, students must be able to write fluently, manipulate numerical information and interpret maps, charts, photographs and satellite imagery. The acquisition and development of these skills is therefore a primary focus of the teaching. We provide students with fieldwork experience, which helps with the understanding of many of the concepts covered in the classroom.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

A grade 6 or above at (I)GCSE Geography is desirable. You should also have an interest in a broad range of geographical issues.

How is the course assessed?

A level

At the end of the course students will sit two written exams - Paper 1: Physical Geography and Paper 2: Human Geography. In each paper, students will answer questions on the topics they have studied. Question types include short answer questions, resource stimulus, and extended prose in the form three 20-mark essays per paper. Each exam lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and is worth 40% of the A-Level.

In addition, there is a non-exam assessment whereby students are required to complete a Geography fieldwork investigation whereby they produce and submit a 3000 to 4000-word write-up of their independent designed and developed geographical investigation. This comprises 20% of the final A-Level grade.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading



To be confirmed at start of course.

AQA Geography A Level Physical Geography Student Book

By S. Ross, T. Bayliss, L. Collins and A. Griffiths

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366515

AQA Geography A Level Human Geography Student Book

By S. Ross, T. Bayliss, L. Collins and A. Griffiths

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366546

GERMAN



“ I found my smattering of German very useful here; indeed, I don't know how I should be able to get on without it. ”

Jonathan Harker, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*

GERMAN

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Learning a modern language for GCSE is a matter of taking your first steps. You learn rudimentary grammar and vocabulary that enable you to get by but real conversations are still beyond your reach. It is at the sixth-form level that you will deepen your grammatical competence and broaden your vocabulary so that you can converse about and debate real-world issues, and immerse yourself into the culture, literature and arts of the country. Even though we live in an age where it seems English is spoken everywhere and where Google Translate will help you where it is not, there is nothing like the experience and satisfaction of being able to step inside a different way of speaking and seeing the world.

The German A level will introduce you to real German in real situations. You will develop the knowledge and skills to enable you to step inside another culture and enjoy the long and rich history of German art, literature and cinema.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will focus on two major topic areas, grammar and translation, and the study in depth of a film. The first topic is *Aspects of German-speaking Society*, which will cover everything from family values to the digital world and youth culture. The second is *Artistic Culture in the German-speaking World* where you will be talking about Berlin's cultural life, art and traditions. The film you will study will be one taken from this list: *Good bye, Lenin!*, *Das Leben der Anderen*, *Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei*, *Almanya – Willkommen in Deutschland*, *Sophie Scholl* and *Lola rennt*.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will revise your knowledge of the two Year 12 topics and the film, and you will cover two more topics, as well as undertaking a detailed study of a literary text and its themes and context. You will also be required to research a German topic for your speaking exam. The new topics are *Multiculturalism in German-speaking Society* in which you will look at various issues such as immigration, racism and integration; and *Aspects of Political Life in the German-speaking World*, where you will look at political issues; the re-unification of Germany and its consequences. The study of a literary text will be a short novel or play drawn from the AQA prescribed list.

“How charmed I am when I overhear a German word which I understand!”

Mark Twain, author and humourist

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Knowledge of a foreign language is ever more valuable in an increasingly connected world. Many employers look for knowledge of at least one other language across a wide range of jobs. Understanding a language is a first step to understanding a people and a culture. Another language enables you to enjoy everything from a casual conversation to a classic novel as it was meant to be read. It also provides a means by which to reflect upon your own culture and gain a deeper understanding of your mother tongue. An A level is typically a prerequisite for studying the language at university.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

A grade 7 or higher in GCSE German is desirable with a 6 as a minimum as the jump from GCSE to A level is considerable. If it is your mother tongue or a second language, you will need to be able to speak and write it proficiently. You will also need an interest in other cultures and a logical mind to cope with the grammar.

How is the course assessed?

A level

For the A level, there are three exams that cover all four general topic areas together with the film and literary text. Unit 1 (Listening, Reading and Writing) will check your comprehension of a variety of texts and extracts, with all the questions being in German. You will also have two translations of 100 words each: one into German and one into English. Unit 2 (Writing) consists of two 300-word essays in German with questions set on the film and the text studied. Unit 3 (Speaking) will be a discussion of a theme based on a stimulus card followed by a presentation and a discussion of an individual German research project. Unit 1 lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and is worth 40% of the A level. Unit 2 lasts 2 hours and is worth 30% of the A level. Unit 3 lasts 21-23 minutes and is worth 30% of the A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

Practising German Grammar

By Martin Durrell

Published by Taylor and Francis,
ISBN 978-1138187047 [PB 2017]

AQA A Level Year 1 German Student Book

By E. Klingler, D. Sauer, K. Sydenham,
C. Schicker

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366898

AQA A level Year 2 German Student book

By M. McCrorie, D. Sauer, C. Schicker, K.
Sydenham, E. Klingler

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366867

The literary text will be specified at the beginning of the course.



HISTORY



“Europe today is a powder keg and the leaders are like men smoking in an arsenal... a single spark will set off an explosion that will consume us all.”

Otto von Bismarck, German statesman

What is it about at sixth-form level?

History is fundamentally the study of the past. It examines past individuals, societies, cities and other structures, as well as the causes that shaped their development and demise. The A Level History course focuses on nineteenth and twentieth-century Europe. The themes of ideology and imperialism are considered during this tumultuous period. Focus will also be given to social and cultural aspects, so that students acquire a comprehensive understanding of these pivotal years. The course will also concentrate on source-evaluation and the importance of presenting clear and defined arguments in a coherent and concise fashion.

The study of these topics will allow students to understand Mark Twain's famous maxim that "History does not repeat itself, but it rhymes." History allows us to understand the context in which events happened, and – through knowledge of the historiography of the era – to analyse how interpretations have been subsequently altered or validated.

Lower sixth

The exams are taken at the end of the second year and teaching for both is divided into 2 parts, with the AS component taught in year 1. The first focuses on 'Tsarist and Communist Russia, 1855-1964', studying patterns of continuity and change as well as cause and consequence across the successive periods of Tsarist and Communist rule. You will look at how political authority and its opposition changed in Russia and the Soviet Union, as well as economic, social and cultural developments throughout this period. Furthermore, the roles of individuals, ideas and ideologies will be considered. The second focuses on 'Wars and welfare; Britain in Transition 1906-1957'. You will look at the development of a Britain, welfare reform and universal suffrage by 1929, after the first World war.

Upper sixth

In the second year the A2 component is taught. 'Tsarist and Communist Russia, 1855-1964' now focuses on the results of the Revolution and the Communist State, again causing both practical and ideological change. 'Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition, 1906-1957', now focuses on a key period in British history in which successive democratic governments faced a series of internal as well as external challenges; and in which British society underwent fundamental change. Alongside this, you will look at your coursework topic which must be placed from about 1750 and spanning one hundred years. This will follow your specific interests in this period.

“Revisionism is a healthy historiographical process, and no one, not even revisionists, should be exempt from it.”

John Lewis Gaddis, historian

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

History is a venerable and rigorous academic subject that is respected by every university. It will develop your analytic and evaluative skills through confrontation with both source material and the competing historical explanations it has led to. It will teach you how to articulate coherent arguments in a clear written form. These are skills that will benefit you across a range of subjects and beyond.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

A GCSE in History is not a prerequisite. You will need to have obtained at least 5 GCSEs at 9-4 including a grade 6 in English Language. You will need the ability to read substantial quantities of text with a critical eye and to write clearly and concisely. It is important to bear in mind that at this level it is not a matter of retaining and deploying a lot of information but rather a matter of drawing upon it selectively to construct a persuasive argument.

How is the course assessed?

A level

For the A level in History, students must take three components: two examinations (Components 1 and 2) of 2 hours 30 minutes and worth 40% of the overall A level each; and an independently researched and written 3500 to 4500-word 'Historical Investigation', which is worth 20% of the overall A level. In exam component 1 (the 'Breadth Study'), students must answer a compulsory question linked to historical interpretations in Section A and two of three essay questions in Section B. In exam component 2 (the 'Depth Study'), students must answer a compulsory question linked to primary or contemporary sources.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

Oxford AQA History for A Level: Tsarist and Communist Russia 1855-1964

By S. Waller

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198354673

Oxford AQA History for A Level: Wars and Welfare: Britain in Transition 1906-1957

By M. Willis, J. Thomas and S. Waller

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198354598

Imperial Island: A History of Britain and Its Empire, 1660-1837

By Paul Kleber Monod

Published by Wiley-Blackwell,
ISBN 978-1405134453

Revolutionary Russia, 1891-1991: A Pelican Introduction

By Orlando Figes

Published by Pelican, ISBN 978-0141043678





“Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts, the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art. Not one of these books can be understood unless we read the two others, but of the three the only trustworthy one is the last.”

John Ruskin, art critic and artist

HISTORY OF ART

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Consider the image on the previous page. What do you see? Who are these men? What are they doing? What are these objects? What do they reveal to us about their personalities? What has the image to do with politics, religion, science and music? All of these questions and more are of interest to us, as well as how it was made and what it tells us about identity and ideas at the time. As we investigate further we will address issues concerning contemporary politics, religious issues and even why the work is in the format of a marriage portrait.

Works of art are layered and structured things like poems and stories. By studying History of Art A level, you will ask questions of visual works, explore the evidence and learn how to decode them. You will decipher the images, including the differing styles, techniques, materials and processes that have gone into their construction. Alongside this analytical approach, you will evaluate works of art from new perspectives, such as considering gender, global and ethnicity issues or the social context in which the works existed. History of Art is a wide-ranging subject that raises many questions as it is a point of intersection between many subjects including History, Languages, English and Philosophy.

Lower Sixth

Students will begin by studying formal aspects of art and architecture and how they contribute to meaning. They will study in detail two topics from the following three: (i) Nature in Art; (ii) Identities in Art; and (iii) War in Art.

Upper Sixth

They will then study two art historical periods from a choice of the following five: (i) Invention and Illusion (The Renaissance in Italy 1420-1520); (ii) Power & Persuasion (The Baroque in Catholic Europe 1597-1685); (iii) Rebellion & Revival (The Avant-Garde in Britain & France (1848-1899); (iv) Brave New World (Modernism in Europe 1900-1939) and (v) Pop Life (Contemporary Art & Architecture in Britain & the USA 1960-2015).

“History has remembered the kings and warriors, because they destroyed. Art has remembered the people, because they created.”

William Morris, textile designer, poet and activist

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

History of Art develops analytical and research skills, equipping students with the ability to write, developing and presenting an argument. These academic skills and an understanding of our global visual culture are of great benefit to many careers including film, media, museums, publishing, advertising, art and architecture. In a world that increasingly uses visual ways to communicate History of Art develops skills of analysis, writing and interpretation that you can use throughout life as well as being vital to a wide range of subjects at university.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

Students who achieve higher grades in the subject will have a love of Art, an interest in historical context and be able to write extended analytical answers in English. A good GCSE English or equivalent is essential. You will have an inquiring mind and willing to ask questions as the course considers the meaning of works from a variety of angles and different contexts.

How is the course assessed?

A level

For the A level there are two examinations. In Paper 1 (Visual Analysis and Themes) you will analyse three images and then write answers on two of the three themes on the question paper. It lasts 3 hours and is worth 50% of the A level. For Paper 2 (Periods) you will write on two periods out of five providing two short answers and one longer answer for each period. This paper lasts 3 hours and is worth 50% of the A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

A World History of Art
By Honour, Fleming
Published by Laurence King,
ISBN 978-1856695848

**Thinking About Art:
A Thematic Guide to Art History**
By Huntsman, Penny
Published by Wiley-Blackwell,
ISBN 978-1118904978



INTEGRATION

$f(x)$

$$\int \sin 2x \cos 2x = -\frac{1}{8} \cos 4x$$

$$\cos x e^{\sin x} = e$$

“The pleasure we obtain from music comes from counting, but counting unconsciously. Music is nothing but unconscious arithmetic.”

Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz,
philosopher and mathematician

MATHS

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Maths can be described as the formulation and application of both numerical and abstract concepts. This definition, however, barely scratches the surface of a subject that can easily be considered as an art, a language or a science. If you choose to pursue the subject to A level, you will build upon the knowledge you have gained at GCSE but, through the focus on Pure Maths, begin to develop a profound understanding and respect for its power and beauty. Nowhere is this more evident than in the differential and integral calculus developed by Newton and Leibniz in the 17th century. You will examine some of the many applications to which it is put today, such as calculating areas and models of exponential growth and decay in the natural world. In the mechanics module, you will look at how to create mathematical models of objects in equilibrium and those in motion. You will also consider the Mathematics of statistics and probability.

Lower sixth

Much of the first year of the course builds the foundations of the subject, starting with familiar topics from GCSE such as indices, quadratic functions, trigonometry and coordinate geometry. Later the fundamentals of calculus are introduced together with some of its applications. The first year also covers some basic principles of applied Maths. Mechanics examines the ideas of forces and motion and the applications of Newton's Laws while statistics looks at ways of analysing data and the concept of probability.

Upper sixth

The second year of the course builds on this knowledge by revisiting the Pure Maths topics in greater detail. Calculus is covered in considerable depth and the emphasis is on extended problem solving that draws on a range of mathematical concepts. Various methods of proof are also met which can be used to answer some interesting questions such as why must there be an infinite number of prime numbers. Both mechanics and statistics are explored in depth and we will consider more advanced techniques such as statistical hypothesis testing.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Maths is a much-respected subject that develops numerical, logical and analytical thinking. It is a prerequisite for the study of Maths and disciplines at university that require a high degree of numerical competency, such as Physics, Engineering and Economics. It is highly valued by employers across a wide range of jobs.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

A 7 grade or higher at (!)GCSE Maths is required. If students have a grade below 8 they will need to attend the Mathematical Bridge.

How is the course assessed?

A level

The course is assessed entirely in three written examination papers, which test both pure (two-thirds) and applied (one third) Maths. These papers are equally weighted and each is 2 hours in duration. Progression to the second year of the course is determined by a satisfactory performance in an internally assessed exam at the end of the lower sixth.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

Edexcel AS and A level Mathematics Pure Mathematics Year 1/AS Textbook + e-book
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781292183398

Edexcel AS and A level Mathematics Statistics & Mechanics Year 1/AS Textbook + e-book
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781292183282

Edexcel A level Mathematics Pure Mathematics Year 2 Textbook + e-book
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781292183404

Edexcel A level Mathematics Statistics & Mechanics Year 2 Textbook + e-book
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781446944073



“*The difference between the poet and the mathematician is that the poet tries to get his head into the heavens while the mathematician tries to get the heavens into his head.*”

G.K. Chesterton, writer and poet

FURTHER MATHS

What is it about at sixth-form level?

The mathematical family does not grow without labour pains. According to the Greek philosopher Iamblichus, the discovery of irrational numbers by Hippasus so shocked the followers of Pythagoras, who believed that all numbers could be expressed as fractions, that he was drowned at sea. It took a long time before zero was mathematically acceptable and negative numbers were not dismissed as imaginary. But what of their square roots? The laws of Maths seemingly dictate that a negative squared is a positive. Yet they too are now embraced, even though they have inherited the label imaginary numbers. The level of abstraction here is indicative of the progression towards degree level Maths that you will find in the Further Maths A level, which will build on the knowledge of the single A level in Maths to introduce new and fascinating areas of the subject.

Lower and upper sixth

This course builds on the skills and knowledge developed in single subject A level Maths. Students take exam units in Further Pure Maths and Applied Maths. Many of the ideas met in these pure modules build on those encountered in A level Maths, while others are entirely new. Topics include complex numbers, matrices, polar coordinates, hyperbolic functions and differential equations. Statistics investigates the idea of hypothesis tests in more depth and introduces the students to additional distribution functions, including the Poisson distribution and the notion of the quality of tests. Theoretical aspects of statistics are studied through discrete random variables and probability generating functions. Mechanics extends the basic ideas met at A level to include momentum and impulse, energy and power, elastic strings and springs and collisions in one and two dimensions.

“Perfect numbers like perfect men are very rare.”

René Descartes, philosopher

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Further Maths is a second A level in Maths and regarded as a subject in its own right. The aim is to build on skills developed in A level Maths and increase depth and breadth of subject knowledge. Further Maths is an academically rigorous and demanding subject and is suited to those who are considering Higher Education courses in Maths, Engineering, Physics, and other highly numerate disciplines or simply for those who really enjoy Maths!

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

Further Maths is a self-contained course. Students should be realistically aiming at least at a grade A in single subject A level Maths in considering an A level in Further Maths.

How is the course assessed?

The course is assessed entirely by written examinations at the end of the upper sixth year: two papers on Further Pure Maths and one paper each on Statistics and Mechanics. Each of the four papers is 90 minutes long and they all carry the same weight in the final grade.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading



To be confirmed at start of course.

Edexcel AS and A level Further Mathematics Core Pure Mathematics Book 1/AS Textbook
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781292183336

Edexcel AS and A level Further Mathematics Further Statistics 1 Textbook + e-book
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781292183374

Edexcel A level Further Mathematics Core Pure Mathematics Book 2 Textbook
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781292183343

Edexcel AS and A level Further Mathematics Further Mechanics 1 Textbook + e-book
Published by Pearson, ISBN 9781292183312



“All of us who professionally use the mass media are the shapers of society. We can vulgarise that society. We can brutalise it. Or we can help lift it on to a higher level.”

William Bernbach,

American advertising executive

MEDIA STUDIES

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Media Studies A Level provides you with a broad understanding of many different aspects of the media that you encounter daily. You are given the opportunity to explore and analyse the different ways in which the media shape your perceptions of the world.

This course enables you to develop an informed understanding of how the media creates meanings through its selection of specific codes and representations. You will also explore the interaction between media institutions and their audiences, and the different social and cultural possibilities of these interactions. The course also provides you with the opportunity to develop your media production skills through the creation of a foundation portfolio and advanced portfolio in year one and year two of the course respectively.

Lower sixth

The first year of the course introduces you to the four key concepts of media studies: media language, representation, industry, and audience as you analyse different media texts across a range of platforms. You learn how the media communicates meanings using visual, technical, and audio codes. You examine how the media constructs the social world, portrays ideas and dominant ideologies, as well as how individuals and groups are represented, misrepresented, or under-represented to construct particular versions of reality. Within media contexts you investigate and discuss the processes of production, distribution, and circulation in relation to media institutions. You also learn how audiences are categorised and addressed by media industries; as well as how they respond to media texts, and become actively involved in media production. You produce a Foundation Portfolio from a choice of two set briefs. You must also include digital evidence of the process and critical reflection in this piece of coursework.

Upper sixth

The second year of the course builds on the knowledge and understanding gained in year one. You will expand your knowledge about: media regulation; issues of morality and decency; accuracy of content; and how media ownership influences the representations of individuals and groups to either reinforce or challenge dominant ideologies. You also consider the language used in the media linked to democracy and rhetoric. In preparation for the Critical Perspectives exam paper, you will study postmodern media and media ecology. You also produce an Advanced Portfolio which requires you to create a media campaign from a choice of four set briefs. This also includes digital evidence of the process and a critical reflection of your work in the form of an evaluative essay of around 1000 words.

“Television knows no night. It is perpetual day. TV embodies our fear of the dark, of night, of the other side of things.”

Jean Baudrillard, philosopher

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

The media is the most dynamic, innovative, and influential method of mass communication of modern times. It is vital that you can evaluate competing sources of information and communicate effectively within a fast-changing digital environment; and A Level Media Studies provides you with these skills. The course encourages you to gain a deeper insight into how the media works; develop critical knowledge of media texts, audiences, and digital culture; and understand the complex political economy and technology which underpin them.

As an interdisciplinary subject you develop many transferable skills relevant to further education, the workplace, and life in general. These include critical skills of analysis; creative powers of expression; and an ability to articulate your thoughts on paper and visualise your ideas on screen and/or in print. This course supports practical career paths such as tv production, photography, and video game design. It also provides a good foundation for more theoretical and analytical pathways such as cultural studies, journalism, education, and humanities-based subjects at degree level.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

A good grade in GCSE English (or equivalent) is essential to meet the comprehension, analytical and writing demands of the course.

How is the course assessed?

There are 4 assessment components on this course. Component 1: Foundation Portfolio. This is a coursework component. It is worth 50 marks and is 25% of the A Level qualification. Component 2: Media texts and contexts. This is a 2-hour exam which has 2 sections. Section A: Media texts is worth 25 marks and requires you to analyse an unseen extract from a TV drama to establish how meaning is created. Section B: Media Contexts is worth 25 marks and requires you to answer one question exploring either audiences or institutions. Overall, the exam is worth 50 marks and is 25% of the A Level qualification. Component 3: Advanced Portfolio. This is a coursework component. It is worth 50 marks and is 25% of the A Level qualification. Component 4: Critical Perspectives. This is a 2-hour exam which has 2 sections. Section A: Media debates is worth 30 marks and requires you to answer two questions from a choice of three on media regulation, postmodern media, and power and the media. Section B: Media ecology is worth 30 marks and requires you to synthesise your knowledge and understanding of the key media concepts studied throughout the course. You are expected to explore at least two contemporary media forms to explore evolving media environments. Overall, the exam is worth 60 marks and is 25% of the A Level qualification.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

A level Media Studies: The Essential Introduction

By Pete Bennett et al.

Published by Routledge, ISBN 9781138285897

Additional articles on specific case studies and videos on technical codes will be recommended to students throughout the two-year course to enhance their knowledge and understanding.



Exam Board and Specification Codes

Cambridge Assessment International Education AS and A Level Media Studies 9607

“Philosophy is like trying to open a safe with a combination lock: each little adjustment of the dials seems to achieve nothing, only when everything is in place does the door open.”

Ludwig Wittgenstein, philosopher



PHILOSOPHY

What is it about at sixth-form level?

What is real? How should we live? What can we really know? Questions as broad and deep as these have fascinated people for centuries. As a philosophy student, you will start thinking about them and explore ideas and thinkers from across the ages. In one lesson, you might be walking with Socrates in ancient Athens as he argues that we are born with knowledge; in another, you might be back in the modern day wondering whether computers could ever experience love or sadness. You will meditate with Descartes on what sort of thing you are and you will address in detail what philosophers have said about the perennial puzzle of whether God exists.

Philosophy attracts those who like journeys, not destinations. This does not mean that philosophical questions have no answers. For whether they do or do not is itself a philosophical question! The questions are fascinatingly simple yet profound and they invite us to explore what they mean and what the 'philosophical landscape' looks like in which we would hope to find the right path.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will study two units. In Unit 1 (Epistemology) you will look at whether, when we perceive the world, we see it as it is or just how our mind makes it appear. You will consider a question first raised by Plato about how knowledge differs from belief. You will then consider where our ideas and knowledge come from: are they gained from experience or are we born with them? In Unit 2 (Moral Philosophy), the central issue is how to decide what the right thing to do is. Three theories will be considered and how they relate to some interesting real-life issues, such as telling lies, and violence in computer games. We will then ask what it means to say that something is wrong or right.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will study topics in two other areas of philosophy. In Unit 3 (Metaphysics of God), you will start by examining the concept of God. You will then consider famous arguments for God. You will finish by considering whether it is even possible to talk meaningfully about God. In Unit 4 (Metaphysics of Mind) we will try to explain how the subjective conscious mind fits into the objective physical world. Is the mind nothing more than the brain? Could there be 'zombies' who are physically identical to us but lack consciousness?

“The point of philosophy is to start with something so simple as not to seem worth stating, and to end with something so paradoxical that no one will believe it.”

Bertrand Russell, philosopher, mathematician
and political activist

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Philosophy is an old and much-respected discipline, attracting thinkers from around the world and from a spectrum of backgrounds. Their contemplations and debates upon the nature of our reality are at once both abstract and personal, shedding light upon the nature of our thoughts and our status as thinkers. Philosophy will introduce you to new ways of thinking about both new and familiar subjects as well as providing tools for examining the theories and presuppositions underpinning other academic subjects. We will explore classic questions such as the existence of the external world, what it means to know something, and whether or not these questions can be meaningfully answered.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You will need to have obtained at least 5 GCSEs at 9-4 including a grade 6 in English Language. You should be aware that the course requires a lot of reading, a lot of writing and a capacity for logical thought and open-mindedness.

How is the course assessed?

A level

The A level is assessed by two three-hour end-of-year examinations. The first is on the Epistemology unit and the Moral Philosophy unit. The second is on the Metaphysics of God unit and the Metaphysics of Mind unit. For each unit, there will be a set of compulsory questions requiring answers of different length: three short-answer questions, one medium-answer question and one long-answer question. Each paper is worth 50% of the A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading



To be confirmed at start of course.

AQA A-level Philosophy Year 1 and AS: Epistemology and Moral Philosophy

*By Jeremy Hayward, Gerald Jones,
Dan Cardinal*

Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978-1510400252

Meditations on First Philosophy

By R. Descartes

Published by CUP, ISBN 978-0521558181

Philosophy: Themes and Thinkers

By J.W. Phelan

Published by CUP, ISBN 978-0521537421

AQA A-level Philosophy Year 2: Metaphysics of God and Metaphysics of Mind

*By Jeremy Hayward, Gerald Jones,
Dan Cardinal*

Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978-1510400269

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7172

*“All science is either Physics
or stamp collecting.”*

Ernest Rutherford



PHYSICS

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Physics is crucial to understanding the world around us, the world inside us, and the world beyond us. It is the most basic and fundamental science. Physics challenges our imaginations with concepts like relativity and string theory, and it leads to great discoveries, like computers and lasers, that lead to technologies which change our lives—from healing joints, to curing cancer, to developing sustainable energy solutions.

A level Physics teaching uses a flexible approach where the specification is divided into topics, each covering different key concepts of Physics. As you progress through the course, you will build on knowledge of the laws of Physics, applying your understanding to many areas.

Science began with Physics: Physics encompasses the study of the universe from the largest galaxies to the smallest subatomic particles. Moreover, it is the basis of many other sciences, including Chemistry, Oceanography, Seismology, and Astronomy.

Lower sixth

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Physics: Practical skills assessed in a written examination; Practical skills assessed in the practical endorsement. Module 2 – Foundations of Physics: Physical quantities and units; Making measurements and analysing data; Nature of quantities. Module 3 – Forces and motion: Motion; Forces in action; Work, energy and power; Materials; Momentum. Module 4 – Electrons, waves and photons: Charge and current; Energy, power and resistance; Electrical circuits; Waves; Quantum Physics.

Upper sixth

Module 1 – Development of practical skills in Physics: Practical skills assessed in a written examination; Practical skills assessed in the practical endorsement. Module 2 – Foundations of Physics: Physical quantities and units; Making measurements and analysing data; Nature of quantities. Module 5 – Newtonian world and astrophysics: Thermal Physics; Circular motion; Oscillations; Gravitational fields; Astrophysics and cosmology. Module 6 – Particles and medical Physics: Capacitors; Electric fields; Electromagnetism; Nuclear and particle Physics; Medical imaging.

“Every carbon atom in every living thing on the planet was produced in the heart of a dying star.”

Brian Cox, Wonders of the Universe

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Physics A level students will develop essential knowledge and understanding of different areas of the subject and how they relate to each other; develop and demonstrate a deep appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific methods; develop competence and confidence in a variety of practical, mathematical and problem solving skills; develop their interest in and enthusiasm for the subject, including developing an interest in further study and careers associated with the subject; as well as understanding how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy and society.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You will need to have obtained 5 GCSEs at 9-4 including a 4 grade in English. You will need to have gained a grade 6 or above in GCSE Physics, GCSE Double Science or their equivalent. Students should also have gained a 6 grade or better in GCSE Maths.

How is the course assessed?

A level

Modelling Physics (Component 01) assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 3 and 5. Exploring Physics (Component 02) assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 4 and 6. Both include multiple choice, short answer (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions. Unified Physics (Component 03) assesses content from across all teaching modules 1 to 6 with compulsory questions. Question styles include short answer and extended response questions. Practical endorsement in Physics (Component 04) is a separately reported non-exam assessment component which rewards practical skills. Students may work in groups but must be able to demonstrate and let teachers record independent evidence of their competency. The activities will take place throughout the lower sixth and upper sixth.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

A Level Physics A for OCR Student Book

By G. Bone, N Saunders

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0-19-835218-1

A Level Physics A for OCR Year 1 and AS Student Book

By G. Bone, G. Chadha, N. Saunders

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0-19-835217-4

A Level Physics A for OCR Year 2 Student Book

By G. Bone, N Saunders

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0-19-835766-7





“Wise men speak because they have something to say; fools because they have to say something.”

Plato, philosopher

POLITICS

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Politics students are expected to be aware of subsequent developments, such as results of general elections, the appointment of new Prime Ministers, the impact of minority, coalition and majority governments, and the election of new US Presidents, with Brexit falling into the same category. In 2019, Boris Johnson won an election victory with a surprisingly large majority and proceeded to 'get Brexit done', while Donald Trump survived his impeachment and trial to carry on as the 45th president of the USA. However, it still took the UK until 31 January 2020 to exit formally from the EU. Why did the June 2016 decision take so long to be finalised? In many senses Brexit is the biggest political event in recent history, and therefore EU remains a key contemporary political issue.

Moreover, the Republicans lost control of the House of Representatives and made narrow gains in the Senate in the 2018 mid-term elections. What does this show us about the state of dysfunctional, partisan and polarised American Politics? Both Johnson and Trump were elected with less than 50% of the popular vote which illustrates one of the main problems with using the Post electoral system. With an increase in voter apathy and the polarising politics of populism and nationalism, it will be interesting to see how the Conservative government having such a large parliamentary majority handles the new political landscape from Brexit negotiations and domestic policies to calls for another independence referendum for Scotland.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will be studying one complete unit and half of a second unit. In Unit 1 UK Politics, you will start by looking at democracy and participation. Legitimacy and the Lockdown – from health crisis to “democratic” crisis. You will then look at political parties: their changing identities and role in our political system. The role of pressure groups will be explored as well as voter behaviour and the media: Is the BBC biased and does it matter? Finally, you will also look at the electoral systems used in the UK and how they work. Devolution and the state of the union. You will also study Unit 2 on UK Government, focussing on the constitution, parliament including the House of Lords, Prime Minister and the cabinet and the relationship between these branches. Is PM Johnson an effective Prime Minister in a pandemic? You will further engage with the core ideas of Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism, as well as options such as Anarchism. How conservative is the UK Government's response to the Covid 19 pandemic?

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will move on to the Unit 3A option of US Government and Politics. This will invite you to look at the Constitution and Federalism, Congress, the Presidency, the Supreme Court, Civil Rights, Democracy and Participation. Discussion and probing on the interaction between these branches of the executive, as well as with wider US society, will draw on both historic cases and current affairs. 2020 Presidential Elections – Primaries, Caucuses, Conventions, Results and Aftermath. Covid 19 and the power of the executive and the presidency in dealing with the pandemic. The effectiveness of a hyper-partisan and polarised Congress since the 2018 midterm elections. Civil rights and race and voting rights in the US. Pressure Groups: BLM and the death of George Floyd case study example. The US Constitution: outdated or in tune with current social policies? The US Supreme Court: the effect of the three Trump nominees and appointments.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Whilst not a prerequisite, an A level in Politics is excellent preparation for pursuing the subject at degree level. It fits well with other humanities subjects, especially PPE, English, and Politics and International Relations. It develops your analytical and critical skills and will teach you how to write essays which highlight and illustrate the complex overlap and interplay among various ideologies. It will enhance your knowledge of the world around you and give you a deeper understanding of what it is to be a citizen.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You should have a keen interest in current affairs as well as in the politics of the recent past. The course involves a lot of reading and writing, so you should have good communication skills. All students are expected to read widely from the daily press to periodicals such as The Politics Review.

How is the course assessed?

A level

The A level is assessed by three examinations on the three respective units. Each paper lasts 2 hours and each is worth a third of the overall A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading



To be confirmed at start of course.

Pearson Edexcel A level Politics (Paperback):

By Sara Jenkins, David Tuck, John Jefferies
Published by Hodder Education
ISBN 978-1510449220

Pearson Edexcel A Level UK Government and Politics Sixth Edition:

By Neil McNaughton, Toby Cooper, Eric Magee
Published by Hodder Education
ISBN 978-1398311336

Pearson Edexcel A Level US Government and Politics Sixth Edition:

By Anthony J Bennett, David Tuck, Simon Lemieux
Published by Hodder Education
ISBN 978-1398311343

Political Ideas for A Level:

By Neil McNaughton and Richard Kelly
Published by Hodder Education
ISBN 978-1471889462

“Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

Abraham Lincoln, American president

Exam Board and Specification Codes
A level: Pearson Edexcel 9PLO

“After ten years in therapy, my psychologist told me something very touching. He said, “No hablo ingles”.”

Dennis Wolfberg

PSYCHOLOGY

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Psychology is the science of mind, brain and behaviour. As we grow up we all become experts in human behaviour. Is Psychology not all just common sense? Well yes and no: psychological understanding begins by formulating theories and looking for evidence to support or challenge them. Common sense can be found to both support and contradict what we find. As most students are new to Psychology the course aims to develop an appreciation of the variety of possible explanations. Aggressive behaviour for instance: do we learn it or is it in our genes? Is it caused by abnormal brain chemicals, playing violent computer games or our upbringing? How can we investigate these questions? Psychology uses a range of methods including laboratory experiments, natural observation in the field, surveys or interviews and case studies. Learning about these methods and their strengths and limitations is an important part of the course. You also learn about the different fields of Psychology in the 21st century, including social, cognitive, developmental, biological and abnormal Psychology.

Lower sixth

In addition to being introduced to a range of Approaches and Research Methods you also learn about four specific areas. A famous study in Social Influence investigated how far people would go to obey an authority figure: would they shock someone to death? We also research Memory: what techniques could improve your memory? How does information get into long-term memory? We investigate how memory can be corrupted in eyewitness accounts of crimes. Attachment is the emotional bond between two people. How do early attachments between parents and children form, and how do they influence relationships later on? Finally, Psychopathology looks at abnormal Psychology. What is 'normal'? What causes mental disorders and how can we treat them?

Upper sixth

In the upper sixth, you learn more about Biopsychology by studying the structure and processes of the brain and nervous system. We select three areas of Psychology for an exploration of such questions as: What is the difference between Sex and Gender? How do we classify and diagnose Schizophrenia? What are the effects of computer games on Aggression? You also consider Issues and Debates in Psychology, such as the relative importance of environment and heredity in determining behaviour, to what extent we might have free-will in how we behave, or the ethical issues involved in doing research on human behaviour. You extend your understanding of the scientific process and Research Methods, including the application of statistical tests to check the validity of research findings.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

If you are curious about people, what motivates their behaviour and what makes them who they are then Psychology should suit you. It might also help you to understand yourself! Through studying Research Methods in Psychology you will gain a very good awareness of the principles of science, as well as developing some of your maths skills. Critical analysis is another essential skill to be developed: you will learn to evaluate different explanations and understand strengths and limitations of different research methods. The variety of approaches covered reflects the different academic disciplines which Psychology has been influenced by, including Philosophy, Biology, Medicine, Anthropology and Sociology. It can therefore make a good fit with many other A level subjects.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

No prior knowledge of Psychology is required. Good passes in GCSE Maths and English are important and an aptitude for Biology would be an advantage.

How is the course assessed?

A level

Paper 1 and 2 will be similar to those sat in the lower sixth but will include both AS and A2 content. The A level is examined in three written exams of equal weight, each lasting two hours. Questions in Papers 1 and 2 build on topics covered at AS: Paper one includes Social Influence, Memory, Attachment and Psychopathology while Paper 2 covers Approaches, Biopsychology and Research Methods. Paper 3 has questions on Issues and Debates in Psychology alongside three sections on Options in Psychology, each offering a choice of three topics: students answer one from each section based on the particular options they have studied. There is a longer answer of between one and two sides of writing.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

AQA Psychology for A Level Year 1 & AS Student Book – 2nd Edition

By Cara Flanagan, Matt Jarvis, Rob Liddle
Published by Illuminate Publishing,
ISBN: 9781912820429

AQA Psychology for A level Year 2 Student Book – 2nd Edition

By Cara Flanagan, Matt Jarvis, Rob Liddle
Published by Illuminate Publishing,
ISBN: 9781912820467



“When you run into something interesting, drop everything else and study it.”

B. F. Skinner

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA (A) 7182

“Theological religion is the source of all imaginable follies and disturbances; it is the parent of fanaticism and civil discord; it is the enemy of mankind.”

Voltaire



RELIGIOUS STUDIES

What is it about at sixth-form level?

What does it mean to hold religious views? How are these views expressed can they be rationally supported? This course approaches these fundamental questions in a distinctively philosophical way. You will explore the ancient philosophical traditions and the resulting religious questions that arise, including the Mind-Body problem and the Problem of Evil. You will also critically compare different moral theories, both religious and secular, and apply these to contemporary ethical issues. You will then explore the historical, social and philosophical development of Buddhism. The course aims to encourage an enquiring, critical and empathetic consideration of some of the questions people ask about life, God and the universe. Wherever you stand, there is much to be learned and admired from the complexity and subtlety with which theists, agnostics and atheists have responded to questions that have been handed down across generations across the globe.

Lower sixth

In Year 12 there are three papers. In Paper 1 (Philosophy of Religion) you look at ancient philosophical influences on religion and the nature of the soul, mind and body. Three famous arguments for the existence of God: the teleological, cosmological and ontological arguments are examined. You then consider whether evil presents a challenge for theists and examine the nature and influence of religious experiences. In Paper 2 (Religion and Ethics) you study ethical theories: Kantian Ethics, Natural Moral Law, Situation Ethics and Utilitarianism. You then apply these theories to debates regarding Euthanasia and Business Ethics. In Paper 3 (Developments in Buddhist Thought) you study the Buddha, Taking Refuge, Samsara, The Three Marks of Existence, The Four Noble Truths and Meditation.

Upper sixth

The full A level qualification consists of the same three papers covered in Year 12, with added breadth of material. In Paper 1 (Philosophy of Religion) you examine issues concerning the nature and attributes of God and religious language. In Paper 2 (Religion and Ethics) you study Meta-ethics, conscience according to Aquinas and Freud, and Sexual Ethics. In Paper 3 (Developments in Buddhist Thought) you examine the development of Mahayana, Madhyamaka and The Prajnaparamita, Buddhism in the Far East and West, Engaged Buddhism and Gender.

“I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use.”

Galileo Galilei, philosopher, astronomer,
and mathematician

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Religious Studies is a much-respected subject. It introduces perennially fascinating theological and philosophical problems that engage you and develop your critical and analytical skills. You learn to think in abstract ways and to challenge your own beliefs. You develop the ability to read and understand complex ideas and the ability to articulate them clearly in essays. All of these are valuable skills across a wide range of disciplines, making it a subject universities look favourably on.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You will need to have obtained at least 5 GCSEs at 9-4 including a grade 6 in English Language. You should be aware that the course requires a good deal of reading and writing and a capacity for logical thought.

How is the course assessed?

A level

All three A level papers are assessed by 2 hour written exams, each worth a third of the overall qualification. Each paper will contain four essay questions of which you choose three essays to answer. Each essay will be worth 40 marks.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

OCR Religious Studies A level Year 1
By Campbell, Wilkinson & Wilcockson
Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978 147 186 6692

OCR Religious Studies A level Year 2
By Campbell, Wilkinson & Wilcockson
Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978 147 186 6746





“You will not grasp her with your mind
Or cover with a common label,
For Russia is one of a kind –
Believe in her, if you are able...”

Fyodor Tyutchev, poet

RUSSIAN

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Learning a modern language for GCSE is a matter of taking your first steps. You learn rudimentary grammar and vocabulary that enable you to get by but real conversations are still beyond your reach. It is at the sixth-form level that you will deepen your grammatical competence and broaden your vocabulary so that you can converse about and debate real-world issues, and immerse yourself into the culture, literature and arts of the country. Even though we live in an age where it seems English is spoken everywhere and where Google Translate will help you where it is not, there is nothing like the experience and satisfaction of being able to step inside a different way of speaking and seeing the world.

The Russian A level will introduce you to real Russian in real situations. You will look at the media, literature and film to acquaint you with and develop your knowledge of Russia, her language and culture from past to present.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will focus on two major topic areas. The first is *Developing Russian Society* which will focus society in post-Soviet Russia. The second is *Political and Artistic Culture in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan* where you will learn about media, festivals and traditions. As part of the course you will study Pushkin's novel "The Queen of Spades" in Russian.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will cover two more topic areas as well as undertaking a detailed study of the film, "Burnt by the Sun", by Nikita Mikhailov. The first of the new topics is *Population and the Russian Multi-Cultural Society* in which you will look at the variety of regions in the Russian Federation. The second new topic is *Russia in the post-Soviet World*. Here, you will look at political issues and the contemporary Russian state. Finally, you will have to work through improving your translation skills in a range of texts covering the four main themes.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Knowledge of a foreign language is ever more valuable in an increasingly connected world. Many employers look for knowledge of at least one other language across a wide range of jobs. Understanding a language is a first step to understanding a people and a culture. Another language enables you to enjoy everything from a casual conversation to a classic novel as it was meant to be read. It also provides a means by which to reflect upon your own culture and gain a deeper understanding of your mother tongue. An A level is typically a prerequisite for studying the language at university.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

You should ideally have a 7 grade or higher at GCSE. Whether it is your mother tongue or a second language, you will need to be able to speak and write it proficiently. You will also need an interest in other cultures and a logical mind to cope with the grammar.

How is the course assessed?

A level

There are three exams at A level, all testing your competency on the topics learned. Paper 1 (Listening Reading and Translation) tests your comprehension, your ability to respond to a variety of texts and to translate an unseen passage into English in a 2-hour exam worth 40% of the A level. Paper 2 (Written response and translation) examines you in Russian on 'The Queen of Spades' and a second text (or film) that you will have studied, as well as translate an unseen passage into Russian, in a 2 hour 40 minute exam worth 30% of the A level. Paper 3 (Speaking) is an oral exam consisting of a thematic discussion, plus a presentation and further discussion on independent research, in a 21-23 minutes exam worth 30% of the A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

A Comprehensive Russian Grammar

By T. L. B. Wade

Published by Blackwell, ISBN 978-1405136396

Ruslan Russian 3

By J. Langran

Published by Ruslan Ltd, ISBN 978-1899785407

Compact Oxford Russian Dictionary

Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0199576173

Details of the text(s) to be purchased will be specified at the beginning of the lower sixth.



“The Iron Curtain may be a thing of the past, but Mother Russia is as mysterious as ever.”

Robert Gottlieb, writer

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: Pearson-Edexcel 9RU0

“Our whole social environment seems to us to be filled with forces which really exist only in our own minds.”

Emile Durkheim



SOCIOLOGY

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Why does the average man living in Blackpool live 12 years less than a man living in the City of London? Why are there more young black men in prison in the USA than in college? Why do the richest 80 people in the world have the same amount of wealth as the poorest half of the world's population? These are the kinds of questions that a sociologist seeks to answer.

Sociology is extremely diverse in its content and at A level students will get a real taste of the range of different topic areas. You will study topics as varied as terrorism, educational inequality, mental illness and crimes committed by the state. The key to success at A level, however lies in developing a 'sociological imagination'; that is, to develop an appreciation of the unique perspective sociologists adopt when attempting to explain human behaviour and human societies. This will involve delving beyond common sense and through adopting a rigorous methodological and theoretical analysis of social issues. As a sociologist you need to be able to appreciate the limits of your own experiences and to construct explanations which are appreciative of the strengths and weaknesses of different viewpoints.

Lower sixth

Two areas of Sociology are studied in the first year. The first is Families and Household. This topic incorporates and draws on a range of sociological theories to explain the family in pre-industrial and modern society, raising questions on family diversity, power relationships and childhood. The second is Education. In this, you will investigate important questions about educational achievement, the roles of gender, social class and ethnicity. Looking at government policies, we ask whether one type of school is better than another. We examine how research methods are employed and we use social theory to enhance your conceptual and analytical skills.

Upper sixth

Three papers make up the full A level and are examined at the end of the upper sixth: Education, Families and Households in Section A; and Beliefs in Section B. The latter asks how we define and explain belief systems. You will look at organised religions and New Age Movements, again investigating the roles of age, class, gender and ethnicity in people's experience of beliefs. The third paper focuses on Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods. We investigate definitions and contrasting explanations of crime and deviance. We also try to determine whether crime statistics are reliable and why gender and ethnicity seem so important in official statistics. Social theory is used throughout and builds on the first year. The application of social research methods is studied specifically in relation to crime and deviance.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Sociology develops skills valued by both universities and employers, including critical analysis, independent thinking and research. Students gain a critical understanding of contemporary social processes and social changes, and develop skills that focus on their personal identity, roles and responsibilities within society. Successful students appreciate the significance of theoretical and conceptual issues in sociological debates, and are able to evaluate sociological methodology and a range of research methods through active research.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

The course assumes no prior knowledge of Sociology. As a social science, we would consider other relevant subjects at GCSE as good indicators of your ability to succeed on this course. Where GCSE Sociology has been studied, a 7 grade is required to continue to A level.

How is the course assessed?

A level

The A level is assessed by three papers, each lasting 2 hours. The first paper contains both short answer questions and extended writing responses. It assesses the topics of Education with Methods in Context and Theory and Methods. The second paper comprises extended writing questions and examines Families and Households in Section A and Beliefs in Section B. The third paper contains both short answer questions and extended writing responses. Its focus is Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods. Each exam paper is worth 80 marks and a third of the overall A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

Introducing Social Theory (2nd Edition)

By P. Jones, L. Bradbury, S. LeBoutillier
Published by Polity Press, ISBN 978-0745635231

AQA A level Sociology Book 1

By R. Webb, H. Westergaard
Published by Napier Press,
ISBN 978-0954007911

AQA A level Sociology Book 2

By R. Webb & H. Westergaard
Published by Napier Press,
ISBN 978-0954007928



“Sociology is the study of human social life, groups and societies. It is a dazzling and compelling enterprise, having as its subject matter our own behaviour as social beings.”

Anthony Giddens

Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7192



“He who reads much and walks much
sees much and knows much.”

Miguel de Cervantes

SPANISH

What is it about at sixth-form level?

Learning a modern language for GCSE is a matter of taking your first steps. You learn rudimentary grammar and vocabulary that enable you to get by but real conversations are still beyond your reach. It is at the sixth-form level that you will deepen your grammatical competence and broaden your vocabulary so that you can converse about and debate real-world issues, and immerse yourself into the culture, literature and arts of the country. Even though we live in an age where it seems English is spoken everywhere and where Google Translate will help you where it is not, there is nothing like the experience and satisfaction of being able to step inside a different way of speaking and seeing the world. Where possible we will undertake cinema, music and theatre trips/arts exhibitions and lectures in Spanish. There also exists the possibility of becoming a full member of Cambridge University's CU Hispanic Society.

The Spanish A level will introduce you to real Spanish in real situations. You will look at the media, literature and film to acquaint you with and develop your knowledge of Spain, her language and culture from past to present.

Lower sixth

In the first year, you will focus on two major topic areas, grammar and translation, and the study in depth of a film. The first topic is *Aspects of Hispanic Society*, which will cover everything from traditional family values to the cyberspace. The second is *Artistic Culture in the Hispanic World* where you will be talking about Spanish regional identity, music and culture. The film you will study will be one taken from this list: *Volver*, *El laberinto del Fauno*, *Ocho apellidos vascos*, *Maria llena eres de gracia*, *El bola* and *Las 13 rosas*.

Upper sixth

In the second year, you will revise your knowledge of the two AS topics and the film, and you will cover two more topics, as well as undertaking a detailed study of a literary text and its themes and context. You will also be required to research a Hispanic topic for your speaking exam. The new topics are *Multiculturalism in Hispanic Society* in which you will look at various issues such as immigration, racism and integration; and *Aspects of Political Life in the Hispanic World*, where you will look at political issues and the modern Spanish state. The study of a literary text will be a short novel or play drawn from the AQA prescribed list.

“I don't know if education can save us, but I don't know of anything better.”

Jorge Luis Borges, writer and poet

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Knowledge of a foreign language is ever more valuable in an increasingly connected world. Many employers look for knowledge of at least one other language across a wide range of jobs. Understanding a language is a first step to understanding a people and a culture. Another language enables you to enjoy everything from a casual conversation to a classic novel as it was meant to be read. It also provides a means by which to reflect upon your own culture and gain a deeper understanding of your mother tongue. An A level is typically a prerequisite for studying the language at university.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

A 7 grade or higher in GCSE Spanish is desirable with a 6 as a minimum as the jump from GCSE to A level is considerable. If it is your mother tongue or a second language, you will need to be able to speak and write it proficiently. You will also need an interest in other cultures and a logical mind to cope with the grammar.

How is the course assessed?

A level

For the A level, there are three exams that cover all four general topic areas together with the film and literary text. Unit 1 (Listening, Reading and Writing) will check your comprehension of a variety of texts and extracts, with all the questions being in Spanish. You will also have two translations of 100 words each: one into Spanish and one into English. Unit 2 (Writing) consists of two 300-word essays in Spanish with questions set on the film and the text studied. Unit 3 (Speaking) will be a discussion of a theme based on a stimulus card followed by a presentation and a discussion of an individual Hispanic research project. Unit 1 lasts 2 hours 30 minutes and is worth 40% of the A level. Unit 2 lasts 2 hours and is worth 30% of the A level. Unit 3 lasts 21-23 minutes and is worth 30% of the A level.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

To be confirmed at start of course.

AQA A Level Year 1 Spanish Student Book

By M. Bond, I. Kendrick, F. Mejias-Yedra and F. Villatoro
Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366904

AQA A Level Year 2: Spanish Student Book

By M. Bond, I. Kendrick, F. Mejias-Yedra and F. Villatoro
Published by OUP, ISBN 978-0198366874

AQA A Level Spanish: Grammar & Translation Workbook

By V. Everett
Published by OUP, ISBN 9780198415558

Ocho apellidos vascos:

Film Study Guide for AS/A-level Spanish
By T. Weston and J.A. Garcia Sanchez
Published by Hodder Education,
ISBN 978-1471891908

El Coronel no tiene quien le escriba

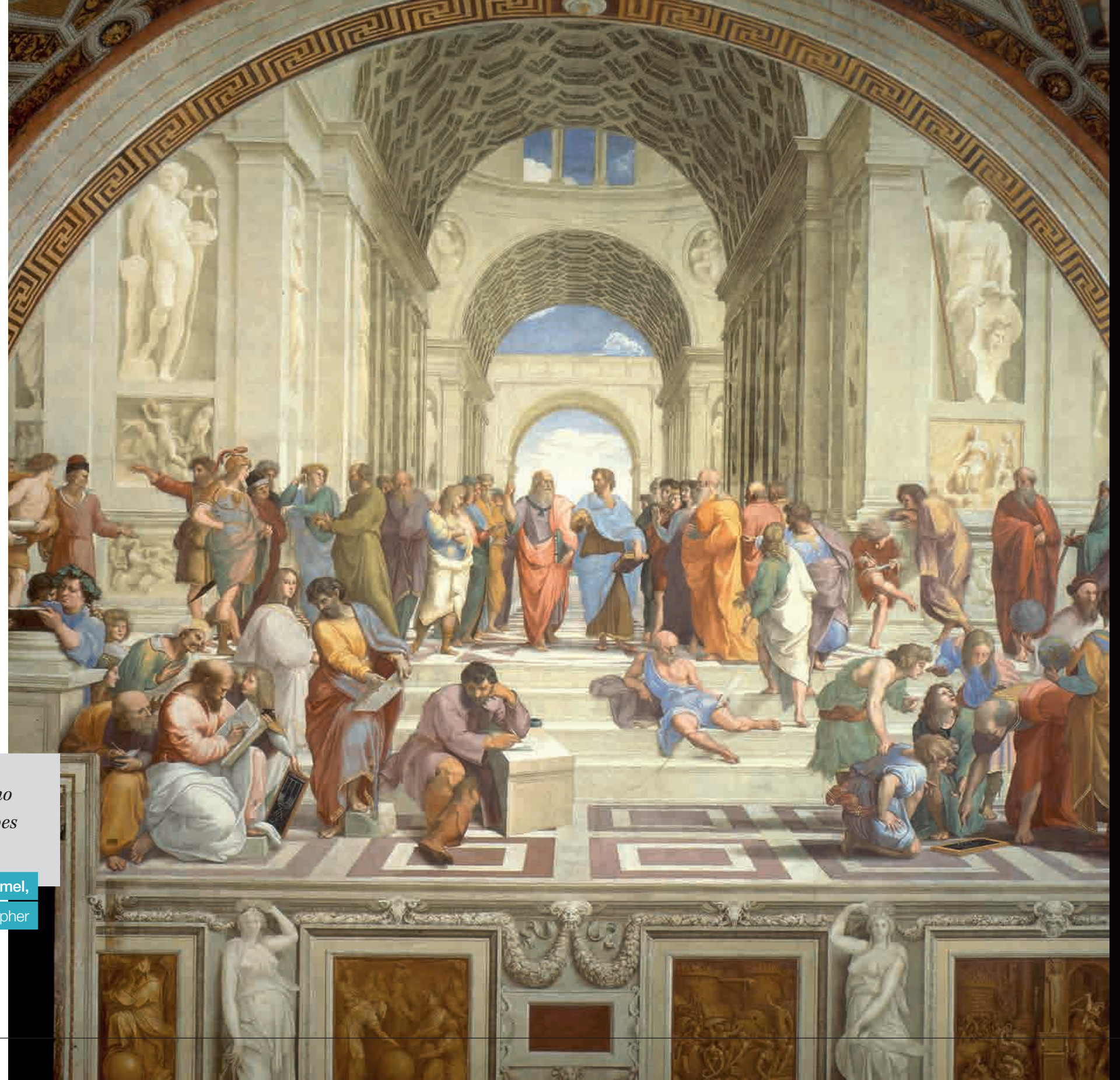
By Gabriel Garcia Marquez
ISBN 978-8497522352



Exam Board and Specification Codes

A level: AQA 7692

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION



“The educated person is one who knows how to find out what he does not know.”

George Simmel,

sociologist and philosopher

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

What is it?

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) enables you to develop your interests outside of your main subjects of study. In conjunction with your supervisor, you choose a topic and a format for the project. The format can be a research-based essay (of between 4-5,000 words), a creative piece (such as a short play or short story), an artefact (such as a model) or a presentation (such as a portfolio of photographs or a performance). The most popular option is the essay. As an indication of the range of possibilities, titles have included “What are numbers?”, “What was the cause of the Rwandan genocide?”, “Why do people join cults?” and “How does early Victorian literature portray female insanity and how accurate is the representation of ‘mad women’?”

The distinctive and valuable feature of the EPQ is that you research and develop your project largely by yourself. Your supervisor will guide you and give you feedback on your project along the way but they will not teach you. You will typically not meet them more than once a fortnight. The EPQ is designed to help you develop the independent study skills you will need at university and beyond.

Whilst the content of the project will be directed by you, you will receive tuition on how to research and develop your project. For example, you will learn about how to use the internet efficiently, how to compile footnotes and a bibliography, how to avoid plagiarism and how to manage your time properly.

After agreeing a title on the basis of some preliminary research, you will work on your project and receive tuition into research skills over a period of two terms. You will be required to keep a diary of your progress and to fill out a production log on the way. Once your project has been submitted, you will give a short (10 minute) presentation introducing your project and summarising your reflections on the challenges you faced and the skills you have developed as an independent researcher.

The EPQ is a special Level 3 qualification that is neither an A level nor an AS level. It is worth 50% of an A level in terms of UCAS points.

Why study it and what skills does it develop?

Universities are well aware of the attractions of the EPQ. It is an excellent way of developing a broad range of study skills that you will find invaluable at university, where you will increasingly be required to be an independent learner, and in the world of work beyond. It adds particular value to applications to Russell Group universities. This is especially so for Oxbridge applications, as it may become a discussion point in an interview. You will learn how to manage your time, how to prepare a professional-looking project and how not to get lost in the vast amounts of material in libraries and on the internet when undertaking research.

What prior knowledge and skills are required?

No prior knowledge is required. The most important skill you will need to have is self-motivation. This is a project you will be mainly managing yourself. Although your supervisor will provide an over-arching structure, you will need to set and keep to your own deadlines!

How is the course assessed?

The EPQ is internally assessed and externally moderated. Your project is assessed on the basis of four criteria. The first is how well you managed your project. The second is the extent of the resources you used and how well you used them. The third is quality of the final outcome, this being the final version of your essay, for example. The fourth is quality of your review of the project. This will be determined by the end-of-project presentation you give. Criteria one, two and four are worth 20% each and criterion three is worth 40%. It is very important to observe the relative importance of these figures. Put simply, the outcome of the project is worth 40% of the marks and the process of the project is worth 60% of the marks. If you produce a good essay at the last minute, but showing no resources and with poor reflection, you may struggle simply to pass.

Core Texts and Suggested Reading

The reading will be specific to your chosen project.



“If I go out into nature, into the unknown, to the fringes of knowledge, everything seems mixed up and contradictory, illogical, and incoherent. This is what research does; it smoothes out contradictions and makes things simple, logical, and coherent.”

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, biochemist



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