



HIGHSTED SIXTH FORM 2017-2019 COURSES AND ADMISSION

Courses Available for the 2017-2019

As a grammar school, Highsted offers a wide range of Advanced Level subjects, taught by exceptionally well-qualified, experienced staff. Subject to sufficient demand, we plan to offer the following courses in Year 12:

Art and Design	Government and Politics
Biology	History
Business Studies	Mathematics
Chemistry	Further Mathematics
Drama and Theatre Studies	Media Studies
Economics	Music
English Literature	Photography
Level 3 Extended Project	Physics
Film Studies	Psychology
French	Sociology
Geography	Sports Studies
German	

A range of Enrichment options are available, including:

Cultural Enrichment	Open University Course
Elective	Volunteering
Level 3 Extended Project	Work Experience

Plus a range of other courses in collaboration with Borden Grammar and Fulston Manor schools, including:

Certificate of Financial Services	Design Technology
Health and Social Care	Spanish

Details of these courses are available on request



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Choosing courses

You will be expected to choose **four subjects** for Year 12 and **one enrichment option**. You will be expected to continue with **at least three** of these subjects into Year 13 for completion of the full A Level, possibly picking up a new AS level course or enrichment option to complete your programme of study.

We are able to offer an extensive range of course combinations by working in partnership with Borden Grammar and Fulston Manor, so there should be few problems in meeting your needs. If there are concerns, then you should start discussions with Mr D Quinn or Key Stage 5 Learning Mentor as soon as possible.

Research your options carefully, using the careers provision and the advice of your subject teachers. There is no such thing as an easy A-level but some will suit your strengths and ambitions better than others. If in doubt, try to find a logical combination which includes subjects you excel at and enjoy as you are likely to work harder on these. Some careers need specific subjects, but others accept graduates and A-level students from a wide range of courses. Employers often mind less about the subject combination than they do about your total achievement and character.

Admission to courses

This is based on your needs and staff advice, but you should be aware of these points:

1. You will need to obtain a minimum of **six GCSE passes at grade C or above including Mathematics and English** (a minimum of a grade 5 in the reformed GCSE qualifications in English and Mathematics) and A*-B grades in their preferred A-Level subjects or nearest equivalents (9-6 in reformed GCSE qualifications).
2. Subjects have clear entry requirements. You will find these under the course details or from Subject Heads.

Sometimes it is possible to study a subject which you did not study at GCSE, although this is **exceptional**. If you are considering this, you must discuss it with the Head of Subject. This of course is not compulsory for subjects that are **new to everyone** in the Sixth Form, such as Psychology or Media Studies.

Please note: We aim to provide as broad a curriculum as possible to full A-level. On occasions it may be necessary to change to a different subject block in Year 13 or limit courses to AS Level only. Courses on offer are subject to minimum and maximum numbers and may not run if there is insufficient take up, or may become full and therefore unable to take further students. By working in partnership we have been able to resolve such problems in virtually every case.

With the changes to the organisation and examination of Advanced Level subjects, our standard expectation in Year 12 remains that you will study **four** subjects as well as an enrichment course. The **expectation** is that students will normally take their four subjects though to full A Level over two years. Individual programmes of study will be discussed and planned with students as appropriate to their progress on their courses over the two years.



ART AND DESIGN

What does the course involve?

The new A Level in Art and Design is a two year course, which has two components. Coursework which counts for 60% of the final grade and an exam which takes place at the end of the second year which counts for the remaining 40% coursework starts with an investigation into a range of media and techniques including painting, sculpture, photography, creative textiles and mixed media. Then, after selecting a personal starting point, they will research and gather relevant visual stimulus to enable them to develop and refine a range of ideas leading to a creative finished piece of work in a media of their choice. They will also undertake an in-depth written study and analysis of an aspect of artist's and designer's work that relates to their work. Candidates receive the exam paper at the beginning of February of the second year and after a planning and preparation time of approximately eight weeks undertake a fifteen hour exam during which they produce a finished piece of work.

Why study Art and Design?

Art and Design develops many creative and problem solving skills which are important in university courses such as fashion and textile design, graphic design, product design, painting, sculpture, interior design, animation, photography and ceramics. It is also helpful for careers in architecture, teaching, exhibition design, conservation, web design, marketing, television production and journalism.

Course entry requirements:

To study Art and Design at A Level, students are required to achieve a minimum of a B grade at GCSE Art and Design.

Success Rate:

In 2016 75% achieved A* - C grades at A Level.



BIOLOGY

What does the course involve?

Biology looks in depth at the processes underlying the functioning of living organisms, and the interactions of organisms, including humans. Biology emphasises the application and interpretation of factual information in different biological situations. It requires students to recall and use GCSE material as well as that learnt during A-Level teaching, in situations that may be unfamiliar. Practical work involves 12 detailed and assessed experiments carried out over two years. Students must attain competencies in five areas during these experiments. This involves researching, following methodology, recording data, reporting, referencing and communicating with others, as well as discussing current issues of ethical, medical and environmental research. There is an increased emphasis on the mathematical elements of biology. These skill areas enable students to develop essential knowledge and understanding of biological concepts and to apply these in novel situations.

Why study Biology?

There are a number of career opportunities that can be followed in diverse areas of the biological sciences, including medicine, ecology, biochemistry, biotechnology and molecular biology, food technology, forensic science, pathology, agriculture and animal behaviour. Lawyers and patent agents seek good biotechnologists with an interest in intellectual property.

Course entry requirements:

The examination board is AQA. Entry to the A-Level requires students to have an A grade in separate Biology and at least a B grade in separate Chemistry due to the challenging nature of the subject. At least an A grade in mathematics is beneficial. Students who have not taken the separate sciences will be considered on an individual basis, with work ethic being a strong determinant of entry success. It should be emphasised that the A-Level course builds on knowledge acquired, understood and remembered from GCSE science courses since much information is not re-taught. All exams are taken at the end of year 13.

Mathematical skills are an important part of the Biology course. Students will be expected to learn a great deal of detailed factual information and be able to describe and explain data and concepts concisely, using the relevant biological vocabulary. This subject requires high and consistent effort throughout both years.

Success rate:

In 2016 54% of students achieved A*- B grades and 96% of students achieved A*- E grades at A-level.



BUSINESS STUDIES

What does the course involve?

Business Studies is one of the first subjects to be part of the new specifications of A-Level. The course is a two year linear course and students are now examined over three examinations at the end of Year 13. In the first year, students will learn about the nature and purpose of business, management, leadership and decision making. They will then study decision making in further depth across all four business functions; marketing, operations, financial performance and human resources. In Year 2, students will learn about the strategic direction of business and the impact of the external environment on organisations and their strategies.

Why study Business Studies?

Business Studies can be combined with almost any other subject and over recent years a high proportion of Business Studies students have continued with a related subject at University. These have included; Accounting and Finance, Business Management, Marketing and Public Relations. Other subjects that combine well include Law, Psychology and Foreign Languages.

Course entry requirements

Grade B or above in both English Language and Mathematics at GCSE. Due to the change in specification requiring an increased focus on Quantitative Methods and an element of prior business knowledge, those students who have not studied Business at GCSE will be assessed on an individual basis. For students who have taken the subject at GCSE, they must have achieved Grade B or above.

Success rate:

In 2016, 56% of students gained A*-A grades, 100% of students gained A*-B grades. These figures relate to the legacy specification of examinations.



CHEMISTRY

What does the course involve?

Chemistry at A Level is interesting, stimulating and academically challenging. The course will enable students to appreciate the inter-linking patterns that are a distinguishing feature of Chemistry, recognise the value of the subject to society and how it may be used responsibly. The specification fosters imaginative and critical thinking, as well as the acquisition of knowledge, together with an appreciation of the intellectual discipline that the subject provides.

Why study Chemistry?

Advanced Level Chemistry is an essential qualification for students wishing to pursue a degree/career not only in medicine, veterinary science, chemistry, biological sciences, food technology, pharmacology and forensic science, but other non-science careers. A Level Chemistry is essential for certain career paths, but it is also valuable for students studying A Level Biology and can provide support for aspects of A Level Physics and Geography.

Course entry requirements:

Minimum entry requirements to A-level are a grade A in separate Chemistry especially in the C2 and C3 exams. Furthermore, grade A in Mathematics is expected. Chemistry at A-level is academically demanding. The students who perform best are those with good mathematical skills and an in-depth understanding of the fundamental principles of the science studied at GCSE level. Successful Chemistry students have good independent learning strategies and skills and tend to also work well in a group, benefiting from the strengths of others as well as making a positive contribution to the group dynamics. Attention to minute details and ability to recognise patterns is highly desirable.

Success rate:

In 2016 58% of students achieved A*- B grades and 100% of students achieved A*- E grades at A2 Level.



DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES

What does the course involve?

Theatre Studies enables students to pursue their interest in and enjoyment of drama and the theatre, exploring the practical and theatrical aspects of the subject at an academic level. The A-level course involves practical exploration of the subject through devised drama, play 'in production' and performance. This work is set alongside the study of set texts and theatre practitioners, such as Stanislavski, Katie Mitchell, Brecht, Frantic Assembly and Max Stafford Clark.

Why study Theatre Studies?

This course combines well with other arts and humanities subjects such as English, History and Sociology. It offers essential grounding for degrees and other courses in Drama and Theatre Studies and unlike Performing Arts courses is recognised by all universities and colleges.

During the courses there are opportunities for theatre visits and lectures to support the study of set texts.

Course entry requirements:

GCSE grade B or above in English Literature and preferably GCSE Drama (however, this is not essential. Many past students have successfully studied Theatre Studies without a GCSE in Drama).

Although no previous knowledge or experience of drama is required, it is essential that students have an enthusiastic, genuine interest in drama and the theatre, and to be prepared to participate in all activities in practical lessons.

Students will be required to attend at least three theatrical productions over the two year course.

Success rate:

In 2016 100% of students achieved A* - C grades at A-level.



ECONOMICS

What does the course involve?

Students with A-Level Economics gain access to a wide range of possible career and higher education opportunities. You develop and use a variety of transferable skills throughout the course, including:

- Collecting and analysing economic data from a variety of sources
- Communication and presentation
- Problem solving and evaluation
- Numerical skills
- Use of ICT

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

Why study Economics?

Economics is concerned with some of the most important issues which affect us all – employment, prices, housing, poverty, the distribution of income and wealth, the environment and pollution, leisure, government spending on services such as health, education and transport, competitiveness, investment, productivity and growth, international trade and finance. In the aftermath of the world financial crisis and Brexit economics has never been more relevant

Course entry requirements:

GCSE grade A or higher in Mathematics, and GCSE English Language at grade B or Higher, these are necessary as the style of assessment requires both mathematical skills including use of a calculator, as well as favouring those with skills in written communication.

Success rate:

In 2016 100% of students achieved A* - D grades at A2 level.



ENGLISH LITERATURE

What does the course involve?

At Highsted, we follow the Edexcel/Pearson A-Level course. It offers the rigour and challenge that suits our students, as well as a degree of flexibility and choice, so that teachers can match their expertise and interests to the programme followed. In the first year of the course, students will study two dramatic texts: Shakespeare's *Hamlet/Othello* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams. Also in the first year, with their other teacher, students will read fiction texts such as *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*; *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. In Year 13, we'll be looking at poetry (The Romantics, as well as some very recent works) and writing an extended coursework essay, probably focusing on F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

Why study English Literature?

English Literature A-Level is a credible, exciting and challenging subject to study. As one of the Russell Group facilitating subjects, the qualification carries a great deal of weight with universities and employers, whatever your degree subject. A good grade in A-Level English Literature says a number of valuable things about you: that you are a clear, concise communicator; that you are able to analyse and evaluate complex information and re-present it to others; that you add to your other skills a fascination for words, culture, ideas and history. It is important to realise that A-Level English Literature does not merely set you up for journalism, publishing or teaching. Many maths, science and business graduates have found A-Level English contributes well to their analysis and communication skills.

Course entry requirements:

GCSE grade 6 or above in English and English Literature.

It is essential to have a genuine interest in literature, to be able to express ideas clearly and effectively on paper and be willing to undertake extensive, personal research outside the classroom. Students must be prepared to read challenging set texts and to manage detailed, well-written responses.

Success rate:

In 2016 67% of students achieved A*-B grades and 100% achieved A*-D.



EXTENDED PROJECT

What does the course involve?

The Extended Project is a qualification which promotes the ethos of independent study in one of the four areas available for study. (Dissertation/ Investigation/ Performance/ Artefact) The qualification provides students with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of a selected topic in much greater depth and helps prepare students for the work demands at university.

Why study an Extended Project?

There are many reasons why the Extended Project is important to the academic development of students:

- Many universities like the qualification because it demonstrates a student's ability to work independently and in much greater depth in their chosen area of study.
- Students demonstrate that they can identify, plan and manage a project; they can undertake research, collect evidence, draw conclusions and write up results into a finished project at an academic level; they are able to present findings, conclusions and evaluate their work to an audience.

Course entry requirements:

Admission to Highsted Sixth Form will be the main requirement as it is expected that all students will study an enrichment route. Students will need to submit a project proposal form that is assessed by the self-directed learning tutor before agreement is given to continue with the Extended Project.

Success rate:

In 2016 72% of students achieved A*- A grades and 100% achieved A*- C grades.



FILM STUDIES

What does the course involve?

Film Studies is designed to encourage students to develop their interest in, appreciation and knowledge of film, specifically through studying the way film as an audio-visual form of creative expression constructs meaning, provokes varieties of spectator response and raises issues of personal, social, cultural, political and ethical significance. The course explores the relationship between the production and consumption of films, with particular reference to Hollywood, British and European films. From short films to feature length, from documentary to experimental, all forms of the medium are explored.

Why study Film Studies?

Film Studies enables students to pursue their interests in a dynamic and vibrant industry. Cinema was undoubtedly the most exciting art form to emerge in the 20th century. Now, at the beginning of the 21st century, film is surrounded and challenged by an array of new media. Film Studies offers the critical, historical, and theoretical tools needed to understand and appreciate the creative potential of cinematic and electronic images and to assess critically how they mediate our experience of the world.

Course entry requirements:

Students wishing to study Film Studies at AS level should have achieved grade 6 in English Language or English Literature.

Success rate:

In 2016 71% of students achieved A* - B grades at A2 and 66% of students achieved A* - B at AS.

All students met or exceeded their target grade.



FRENCH

What does the course involve?

The A level course in French is designed to help you develop your reading, listening, speaking and writing skills and to deepen your understanding of French culture and society. You will study topics relevant to contemporary life such as the changing role of the family, the multicultural society and aspects of political and artistic life in France. In addition, you will learn to translate both from and into French and will study a film and a literary text.

Why study French?

Research shows that languages graduates are more likely to find themselves in well-paid, high-status jobs than graduates in any other discipline except Medicine.

As well as degrees in French, many universities offer the opportunity to take up a different language, be it Spanish, Italian, Portuguese or Mandarin Chinese *ab initio*.

Course entry requirements:

The minimum entry requirement is a B at GCSE. You will need to work hard in the early stages of the course to build up your confidence in using and manipulating French grammar, in order to succeed in the translation and writing components. To achieve really good grades, you will also need to take an interest in wider aspects of life in France or other French-speaking countries. During Years 12 and 13, you should be starting to read articles from French newspapers and magazines regularly, to watch films or television and listen to the radio to broaden your knowledge both of vocabulary and of the society you are studying. You also need to develop the ability to use resource material such as a dictionary effectively.

Success rate:

Over the last three years, students achieved 39% A*-B grades and 89% A*-C grades at A level.



GEOGRAPHY

What does the course involve?

Geography is a dynamic and diverse subject which bridges the gap between the Arts and the Sciences. In examining the complex nature of people's interaction with the environment it encompasses political, economic and demographic studies with an understanding of physical and environmental processes. Geography develops the ability to combine scientific principles with economic awareness, environmental concern and an appreciation of people's attitudes and values. This gives students a more balanced and holistic approach to understanding the concerns of the world today from a local to a global scale and they become adept in the use of skills and new technologies both inside and outside the classroom.

Why study Geography?

Geography helps prepare students for the future by giving them the opportunity to develop the transferable skills of enquiry, data analysis, ICT, research, problem solving, decision making as well as oral and written communication. Some professions make direct use of geographical knowledge, such as tourism, business management, teaching, social work, town planning and environmental management whilst others such as medicine, law, banking, accountancy and architecture value the subject's synoptic insight and analytical rigour.

Course entry requirements:

The normal entry requirement is a grade B in Geography at GCSE standard but candidates who have not studied the subject before or have failed to attain this grade may be considered on an individual basis.

It is important that those students considering this subject have an enquiring mind and are willing to explore new ideas through individual research and discussion. Reading widely and keeping abreast of current developments applicable to the specification is also desirable.

Success rate:

In 2016 100% of students achieved A*- D grades with 6% at A* and 35% at A grade.

At AS 79% achieved A-B grades with 39% at A and 96% achieved A-E grades.



GERMAN

What does the course involve?

The A level course in German is designed to help you develop your reading, listening, speaking and writing skills and to deepen your understanding of German culture and society. You will study topics relevant to contemporary life such as the changing role of the family, the multicultural society and aspects of political and artistic life in Germany. In addition, you will learn to translate both from and into German and will study a film and a literary text.

Why study German?

Research shows that languages graduates are more likely to find themselves in well-paid, high-status jobs than graduates in any other discipline except Medicine.

As well as degrees in German, many universities offer the opportunity to take up a different language, be it Spanish, Italian, Portuguese or Mandarin Chinese *ab initio*.

Course entry requirements:

The minimum entry requirement is a B at GCSE. You will need to work hard in the early stages of the course to build up your confidence in using and manipulating German grammar, in order to succeed in the translation and writing components. To achieve really good grades, you will also need to take an interest in wider aspects of life in Germany or other German-speaking countries. During Years 12 and 13, you should be starting to read articles from German newspapers and magazines regularly, to watch films or television and listen to the radio to broaden your knowledge both of vocabulary and of the society you are studying. You also need to develop the ability to use resource material such as a dictionary effectively.

Success rate:

Over the last three years, students achieved 50% A*-B grades and 100% A*-D grades at A level.



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

What does the course involve?

This course is concerned with the study of the government and politics of the UK and the USA, the UK element also including a compulsory component involving the study of the European Union. It is important for anyone who wishes to have a better understanding of how they are governed (the UK), how the world's leading democracy is governed (the USA), and how the European Union is increasingly affecting the governance of the UK.

Students will be expected and encouraged to keep up-to-date with appropriate news stories and developments in contemporary UK, USA and EU politics.

Students should be willing to take part in such discussions, both to present their own views and to analyse critically those presented by others.

Why study Government and Politics?

While all students should benefit from the better understanding gained from these elements of study, those who wish to pursue their studies of Government and Politics into Higher Education may then access career opportunities in the civil service, journalism, broadcasting and education, to name but a few.

Course entry requirements:

Although individual cases will be assessed on their merits, the general entry requirement is a grade B in GCSE English or History. If you are interested in learning more about this subject then please feel free to approach the Head of Department for further information; an interest in current affairs is an important pre-requisite of this course.

Success rate:

In 2016 100% students achieved A - D grades and 50% A* - B at A2. At AS 100% A* - D and 63% A* - B.



HISTORY

What does the course involve?

The specification has been designed to ensure length, depth and breadth to enable students to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to achieve the highest grades possible at either level. Each unit requires students to engage with a range of historical perspectives, including social, economic, political, religious and cultural. The course of study involves a wide and stimulating choice of content including areas of British, European and World History.

Why study History?

There is abundant evidence that History is of enormous importance in that it is central to any concept of citizenship. It fosters the spirit of independent thinking and inquiry that is essential to any society. All national cultures are deeply rooted in perceptions of history and thus the study of History enables students to have an understanding of the world in which we live.

Course entry requirements:

Grade B or above is required from students who have studied GCSE History. For others six GCSE passes and a grade B or above in English is required.

Success rate:

In 2016 100% A - D and 90% A* - B for A2.



MATHEMATICS

What does the course involve?

Each year, two units of core mathematics and one unit of applied mathematics are studied. This provides students with both a broad experience of key mathematical ideas and the opportunity to extend their technical skills to a sophisticated level.

The core units cover a variety of algebraic, numerical and calculus techniques. These include the binomial theorem, summation series, the theory of logarithms and the process of differentiation. The modules explore how these techniques can be used to solve graphical and contextual problems.

The applied modules provide students with an understanding of modelling and the techniques used to analyse and predict using mathematical models, both in Statistics and Mechanics.

Why study Mathematics?

Mathematics is a highly regarded A Level, both by universities and employers, because it develops students' abilities to reason, explain and analyse purposefully and efficiently. These skills are valuable in nearly all subjects and so Mathematics combines well with a wide variety of other A Levels. It is particularly supportive for further study in Physics, Chemistry, Engineering, Computing, Economics and Finance.

Course entry requirements:

Grade 7 or above in GCSE mathematics is essential. You should be able to demonstrate a proficiency in algebraic technique, an ability to abstract and generalise, a willingness to apply theory to problem solving and a capacity to persevere. Students who have enthusiasm for Mathematics, don't give up easily on a problem and review their work regularly, will do very well in Mathematics at A Level.

It is essential for students to be prepared to attend the lunch time 'clinic' for extra help as necessary.

Success rate:

In 2016 74% of students achieved A*- C grades at A2.



FURTHER MATHEMATICS

What does the course involve?

Over the two years, students cover up to two units of Further Mathematics, combined with additional units in applied mathematics. These can include additional modules in Statistics, Decision or Mechanics. The latter is highly recommended for students wishing to pursue careers physics or engineering. All units will be examined at the end of Year 13.

Why study Further Mathematics?

This is an enjoyable and rewarding course full of new and challenging concepts. It will be of particular interest to those aiming to pursue their mathematical studies in Higher Education, and is equally valuable for physics and engineering. It is a highly regarded qualification, in which to succeed students must show initiative, commitment and resilience, qualities that are extremely valued both in education and employment.

Course entry requirements:

Grade 7 or above in GCSE mathematics and, of course, to be studying the A-level in mathematics.

Double mathematics should only be studied by people with a great deal of enthusiasm for the subject. However, most students find it a rewarding though demanding experience.

The teaching approach is similar to that at GCSE but students are expected to study more on their own and read around the subject, in particular study of online lectures to supplement class teaching.

Success Rate:

In 2016, 100% of students achieved A* - B at A2.



MEDIA STUDIES

What does the course involve?

A-level Media Studies is designed to encourage candidates to:

- Enhance their enjoyment and appreciation of the media and its role in their daily lives
- Develop critical understanding of the media through engagement with media products and concepts and through the creative application of production skills
- Explore production processes, technologies and other relevant contexts
- Become independent in research skills and their application in their production work and in developing their own views and interpretations

Why study Media Studies?

This course aims to provide candidates with a framework for analysing the media and requires them to explore representations and audience/user responses. Candidates will be encouraged to explore the media through the study of genre, narrative, representation and make connections between the texts and audience/user responses to them. In the developing area of interactive media, this involves considering users and their interaction with texts. It will be important for candidates to be provided with a range of global examples which will enable them to understand and interpret the media independently. The representations of social/cultural groups, events, issues and their underlying messages and values will be explored, using a range of approaches. A coursework component will challenge candidates to produce their own media texts, demonstrating their command of theoretical content and digital applications,

Course entry requirements:

Students wishing to study Media Studies AS-level should have achieved a B grade at GCSE in English Language or English Literature.

Success rate:

In 2016 65% of the cohort secured A* - B.



MUSIC

What does the course involve?

The course is designed to allow the study of music through the integration of performing, composing and compositional techniques and analytical and aural skills in almost equal measure with opportunities to use music technology (but not essential). It recognises that we live in an age of cultural diversity and the areas of study cover a wide range of music.

At A-level the performing section enables students to develop their skills in performing not only in an examination but during the course as well. Performing may take place in ensembles as well as performing solo. All candidates are expected to offer two original compositions in the exam one composition to a brief and one free composition. For Performing, students give a recital on their own instrument/voice. All composing is completed at school.

Why study Music?

Careers in music involve teaching, performing and arts related activities, musical theatre etc. Some students may not want to take up a career in music but may wish to eventually use music skills in amateur music circles either at university or/and afterwards. Music can bring pleasure and fulfilment for the rest of one's life.

Course entry requirements:

Students should be able to perform at grade 6 by the time they are in Year 13. (It is not necessary to have taken these grades but these give a benchmark for standards which are required.) As well as obtaining a grade B at GCSE, the levels of expected performance should also be considered before starting these courses. Likely students should therefore be already receiving individual instrumental or singing lessons from a specialist teacher.

Students should be able to work on their own unsupervised – this is important for working on compositions, individual practice – preparing for performance examinations and research for analysis and the history of music. The ability to write essays (history of music and on set works) is also important.

Success rate:

In 2016 50% of students gained A* - B grades and 100% achieved A* - D grades at A-level.



PHOTOGRAPHY

What does the course involve?

The new A Level in Photography is a two year course, which has two components. Coursework which counts for 60% of the final grade and an exam which takes place at the end of the second year which counts for the remaining 40% coursework starts with an investigation into a range of different photographic techniques and processes, including photo shop. Then, after selecting a personal starting point, they will take their own photographs which will be used as a basis for experimentation. This will enable them to develop and refine their ideas and lead to a creative finished piece of work. They will also undertake an in-depth written study and analysis of an aspect of photography and artist's work that relates to their ideas. Candidates receive the exam paper at the beginning of February of the second year and after a planning and preparation time of approximately eight weeks, undertake a fifteen hour exam during which they produce a finished piece of work.

Why study Photography?

Photography could lead to academic or vocational degrees and careers relating to press photography, photojournalism, fine art, editing, fashion photography and styling, film, forensic science, curating and many others.

You will develop skills in creative and practical problem solving, developing ideas through research, practical application, analysis and critique. These transferable skills gained through the study of photography are, in general, applicable to many walks of life.

Course entry requirements:

To study Photography at A Level, students are required to achieve a minimum of a B grade at GCSE Art and Design.

It is advisable that students have their own camera.

Success Rate:

In 2016 67% of students achieved A* - C grades at A Level.



PHYSICS

What does the course involve?

The specification we will be following is the AQA (A) Physics course. This is a progressive and modern A Level course which builds on the skills and knowledge the students developed in Years 10 and 11. The course rewards students for using their imagination, initiative and interest in learning. The course covers a diverse range of concepts including: particle physics; quantum phenomena; electricity; mechanics; fields and nuclear Physics. Assessment is exam-based and will test both your recall of knowledge and ability to apply knowledge to a range of practical situations.

Why study Physics?

Physics is foremost a fascinating subject. The study of Physics involves theories which attempt to describe the behaviour of everything from an atom to a super-giant star. It is often considered to be the most fundamental of sciences as it is the science that attempts to describe how the universe behaves. It is a practical subject, so those who learn best from hands-on experience can make excellent progress. Studying Physics will also develop your transferable skills, as it requires not only analytical skills, mathematics and ICT, but also imagination, problem solving and communication skills. Above all, Physics is highly relevant to society today. The technological advances which are continually changing the world in which we live in would not be possible without Physics research. For those who wish to be at the forefront of these developments, the study of Physics at A Level and University is necessary.

Course entry requirements:

Entry to A-level requires students to have Physics GCSE at A grade or an A grade in the Physics 2 Additional Science examination. It should be emphasised that the course builds on knowledge acquired and understood during GCSE Physics/ Additional Science at Key Stage 4.

Mathematical skills are of enormous benefit to A-level physicists; although it is not requisite to take A-level mathematics, A*-B grade at GCSE is essential.

Success rate:

In 2016 100% of students achieved A* - C grades at A Level.



PSYCHOLOGY

What does the course involve?

The A-level Psychology course offers an insight into a range of interesting aspects of human behaviour. We consider theories relating to the behaviour and associated research, incorporating the full spectrum of approaches in Psychology from biological to social.

A key element of the course is the study of research that has taken place, and we take the opportunity to recreate such studies within the classroom to offer students a clearer understanding of the scientific method. It is important that students recognise that Psychology is a science, and that the course contains a significant amount of biological content.

Why study Psychology?

Studying Psychology will provide you with an insight into an array of interesting and relevant topics, from why we forget things to diagnosing disorders such as schizophrenia. In addition to gaining this knowledge you will enhance your critical thinking skills by analysing and evaluating research. One factor that makes the subject particularly appealing is its versatility – Psychology may be beneficial in a range of careers including health, law, teaching, the police, marketing, and human resources.

Course entry requirements:

Grade C or above in English, Mathematics and Science. To gain the most from the Psychology course you should be interested in human behaviour, have the ability to think critically, and be comfortable working in a science-based context. It is important to recognise that Psychology is a very demanding course, with a high level of content to be covered. Students must be prepared to undertake independent learning outside of the classroom to ensure that a full understanding of each topic is gained.

A number of universities now accept Psychology as a second science when applying for science-based undergraduate courses.

Success rate:

In 2016 43% of students achieved A* - A, 69% achieved A* - B and 100% achieved A* - D at A Level.



SOCIOLOGY

What does the course involve?

Sociology is a subject that deals with new ways of explaining the social world – known as sociological theories. Sociology involves the political and philosophical analysis of society, how it operates and influences our lives. Sociology offers a unique and fresh insight into the world that we take for granted. Good sociologists will be able to 'step back' from common-sense thought and instead analyse the social world in a clinical, objective and rigorous fashion.

Sociology employs a wide variety of theories and concepts in order to interpret how and why humans behave as they do. Interpretation, analysis and evaluation of these theories encourage debate and curiosity.

Why study Sociology?

Sociology will provide pupils with a broad understanding of society. Studying sociology offers insights into social and cultural issues. It helps develop a multi-perspective and critical approach to understanding issues around class, culture, identity, religion, crime, childhood and social power. It is therefore relevant to a wide variety of careers. These include: journalism, teaching, the police, medicine, probation, social work, child development, psychology, government and criminology.

Course entry requirements:

To be successful in Sociology students need to have an interest in people and how and why they behave as they do. Students should show awareness of social and political issues, listen to current affairs on the radio and be familiar with quality newspapers; they must also be prepared to challenge taken-for-granted ideas in order to develop a deeper understanding of society. An ability to respect and listen to others, communicate ideas concisely and to present a balanced and critical argument is also desirable.

It is required that students have a Grade B at GCSE English and Mathematics. Students do not need to have studied Sociology at GCSE; however, this would prove to be a great advantage at A-level and give students the opportunity to be team leaders in group activities.

Success rate

In 2016 70% of students achieved A* - B grades and 100% of students achieved A* - D grades at A Level.



SPORTS STUDIES

What does the course involve?

The course is broken down into 2 main components at A Level, the theory of sport and physical activity, and the practical aspects that ensure success in sport. The theory element is worth 70% in assessment and the other 30% is based on practical performance. Students will investigate how the body responds and adapts to exercise, the components of physical and skill fitness and different methods of fitness training as well as the history of sport. The rationale behind carrying out fitness assessments and the protocols associated with recognised fitness tests will also be considered. For the practical aspect of the course, students are required to perform or to coach in one sport.

Why study Physical Education?

In the Advanced GCE students will develop a knowledge and understanding of the short-term and long-term physiological and psychological preparations made by elite athletes. Physical Education is a well-respected qualification and students studying the course often continue their interests at university through the study of a sports related degree, physiotherapy, or as an addition to a science-related degree course due to the significant Biology content. Importantly, many students continue their interests in local and national sporting groups after study at this level.

Course entry requirements:

Grade B in Biology or Additional Science at GCSE level is necessary to be able to access the Biology content of this course. Students should be advised that they will be expected to pursue a particular sport which will form part of the coursework assessment at A-level.

Success rate:

In 2016 57% of students achieved A - C grades and 100% of students achieved A - E grades at AS Level. At A2 100% achieved A - C grades.