



**SIXTH
FORM**  **BRISTOL
FREE SCHOOL**

PROSPECTUS 2024

COMMUNITY • AMBITION • OPPORTUNITY

WELCOME

SUSAN KING – HEADTEACHER

Welcome to our Sixth Form at Bristol Free School.

BFS is a happy, energetic and welcoming inclusive school with a thriving Sixth Form. We have outstanding teachers with excellent facilities. It is a school where we are passionate about developing young people and working in partnership with the community we serve.

We are a proud member of the Russell Education Trust, a 'family' of like-minded schools, that collaborate to provide mutual support, share their good practice and learn from each other, whilst retaining and developing their own distinctive character.

Our outstanding GCSE and A Level results have put us in the top performing schools in Bristol. These results come from hard work and a focus on really high expectations of staff and students because we know that this is what they deserve. Our students are incredible and deserve amazing teachers, quality lessons and the right levels of support, as well as great opportunities that enrich their experience at school.

Our pastoral care and enrichment programme allows students to develop their character as well as their academic journey through school. We give students the opportunity to take part in enrichment activities such as music and sport; they have a number of trips, they perform in musical productions, they have many leadership and mentoring opportunities with the younger students, they are ambassadors for events; they take part in competitions; they listen to inspirational speakers from universities and employers.

Come and visit if you would like to see any of these things in action!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S King". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

“Sixth form students have good support from knowledgeable staff, who help them apply for university places” OFSTED

KIERAN SMITH – HEAD OF SIXTH FORM

A warm welcome to Bristol Free School Sixth Form – a centre of excellence for Post-16 education which opened in 2016 and has consistently secured exam outcomes which are higher than the national and regional averages.

Our approach is built upon our wider school values of community, ambition and opportunity.

Community

Our sixth form is small enough for every student to be known, supported and championed. All students work closely with their tutor and subject teachers to ensure that they are making good progress and are supported pastorally – every student is treated as an individual member of the BFS family.

Ambition

At BFS, we set the highest expectations and academic ambitions for all of our students. In 2019, the last time schools were accurately and publicly compared against their outcomes, students at BFS gained more progress in their A Levels than students at any other state Sixth Form in Bristol. BFS students also had the second highest percentage of A*, A and B grades of any non-fee paying Sixth Form in Bristol. In 2022 and 2023, we continued to secure excellent outcomes that we higher than the national and regional averages. Further, since our inception, seven of our students have accepted university places at Oxford or Cambridge and almost half of our students have accepted places at one

of the universities which are part of the prestigious Russell Group. We will provide you with expert teaching staff, with two dedicated study spaces, with an exclusive café and with personalised university and apprenticeship application support.

Opportunity

Our sixth form is open to all students, and we celebrate diversity of all kinds. Students are encouraged to take part in a wide range of enrichment activities including sport, performing and creative arts, outdoor education and peer mentoring. This doesn't only make your time at BFS Sixth Form more rewarding and fulfilling but will also strengthen the depth of your CV or university application. Ultimately, BFS is an ambitious school which works to ensure every child makes excellent progress from his or her starting point and experiences a breadth of opportunities which develop the whole person.

I look forward to welcoming you to our Sixth Form community.



For further information do not hesitate to contact the Sixth Form Team on 0117 959 7200 or email sixthform@bristolfreeschool.org.uk



RESULTS & OFSTED

Bristol Free School celebrated another fantastic set of A Level and BTEC Results in 2023.

28% of grades awarded were either an A or an A* (compared to a national average of 25%) whilst 73% of grades awarded were a C or higher. It was also another bumper year for the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) with all students achieving between an A*-B. We were also delighted to be recognised as Good in our recent Ofsted inspection in May 2022. Inspectors commented on our success in university applications, the independent study skills of our students and the knowledgeable support given by teachers and that students make 'good progress' across our wide range of subjects.



Inspectors also judged that 'students in the sixth form are particularly positive about the ways in which the school helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain.' All of our students who applied for university, were given unconditional firm offers by the end of August. Pupils enrol at university courses from Plymouth to Glasgow and in a diverse set of fields ranging from Computer Science to Criminology to Engineering. A number of students also take up lucrative apprenticeship and employment opportunities.



PASTORAL SUPPORT

Sixth Form is a real change in culture and study habits for some of our students. With extra freedom comes extra responsibility that not all students can immediately cope with. It can be difficult to find a balance between studies and a social life that encompasses driving tests, relationships, part-time work, interviews, university visits and, of course, making a contribution at home.

Students have to learn how to organise and prioritise their time; this is not only vital for Sixth Form study but is an important life skill and something we are very mindful of when students start their Post-16 studies.

At BFS Sixth Form, each student is allocated a personal tutor who they will see each morning as part of the tutorial programme. Personal tutors are the first point of contact for students to get support and guidance for any day-to-day issues.



The Sixth Form Team are also here to help and support.

The golden rule with any problem during Sixth Form is to speak to someone. We are here to help, no matter what the problem may be.

Our tutor programme includes sessions in PSHE, careers guidance and current affairs along with fortnightly assemblies led by staff and external speakers. A fundamental part of Sixth Form life at BFS are the weekly study skills sessions embedded within the tutor programme.

These sessions support students in making good use of their independent study sessions, and managing their time effectively.

At BFS we spend quality time getting to know our students on a personal level so we can best support them with both their pastoral and academic needs so they can thrive and go on to achieve their goals.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT


The 16–19 Bursary Fund is a scheme to help students facing financial hardship to continue in full-time education after Year 11. To qualify, a student must be aged 16 to 19 on 31 August at the start of the academic year in which they start a programme of study; they must also be on a full-time programme of study.

Payments are dependent on student attendance, conduct and positive attitude to learning. The Head of Sixth Form and the schools' Finance Manager will make a decision on who receives the awards based on the criteria in our Bursary Application Form.

For more information and advice on our Sixth Form Bursary Fund, please speak to a member of the Sixth Form team or visit our website. The Bursary Fund is given to the school each year by the EFA (Education Funding Agency). Once these monies have been allocated, the school will be unable to make further grants until the new academic year.

We also have a Sixth Form Hardship Fund for those students that do not meet the EFA Bursary Fund criteria, but who need financial support in one-off circumstances, such as residential trips or lessons resources.





“The teachers are really supportive, but also challenge you to achieve your future aspirations.”

YEAR 13 STUDENT

ENRICHMENT

As part of our value of opportunity and our commitment to develop the whole person, we place significant emphasis on our enrichment programme. Students are able to engage in over 50 different enrichment programmes and some of these are exclusively open to students in the Sixth Form whilst others provide students with opportunities to 'give back' to the wider community or to develop their burgeoning leadership skills.

We work closely with a number of external organisations in order to ensure that we can offer a strong programme. For example, in partnership with the University of Bristol, we are able to offer Access to Bristol, Bristol Scholars, Writing the Wrongs and the STEM Up Programme. We work also work with the Duke of Edinburgh, The Model United Nations, Nuffield Research Placements, the University of Bath, the University of Cambridge and many others.





Other enrichment programmes are also designed to give students a chance to develop in their areas of interest and to give them a taste of the society groups that will be available to them at university. Within this theme, we offer groups such as Model United Nations, Extra-Curricular Sports Leadership, Language Ambassadors, the Pride Group, the Chemistry Olympiad, the Digital Ambassadors, the Programming Club, the Cyber EPQ and the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

One of the areas of our enrichment programme which we are most proud to champion is our volunteering and mentoring groups. For instance, many of our Sixth Form students choose to peer-mentor younger students and receive training through the Anna Freud National Centre. Others mentor students in subjects such as Maths, reading, DT workshop time, Food Technology, Science, Computer Science, French and Spanish.





STUDENT LEADERSHIP

We aim to provide an effective forum so that all students feel they have a voice. Students are able to provide feedback through the Student Voice Questionnaires which take place every term or through their Sixth Form Student Council representative (this group meets termly to discuss Sixth Form matters and also constitutes the Sixth Form contingent of the House Parliament). Ms Norton and Mr Smith are also available at any time discuss student feedback.

Students are actively encouraged to take on positions of leadership within the student body. This could be through participation in the House Parliament, through leading extra-curricular and enrichment activities in the main school or through leadership during Sports Day and STEM Day.

Students in Year 12 can also apply to become a Head Student and these posts last for one year.



“Positive relationships between teachers and students assist their learning and progress. Students value the support they receive from staff for their academic and pastoral needs.”

OFSTED

FUTURE PROGRESSION AND CAREERS

All students in Year 12 complete a week's meaningful work experience in their chosen future career field. We have strong links with Bristol University and the University of the West of England (UWE), and have had students chosen to be part of their university widening participation schemes, Access to Bristol and Bristol Scholars, providing them with an unprecedented opportunity to experience life at university. BFS also participates in the Cambridge HE+ programme and has an annual residential to its varying colleges. Specific support for university, employment or careers includes:

- Participation in university summer schools
- STEM initiatives, including Women in Engineering events
- Specific support for applications to Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities
- University visits and taster days with specific subject focus
- Interview practice workshops as well as practice interviews with admissions
- Tutors and mentors from local universities that also help deliver our Sixth Form Pastoral Days
- The opportunity to complete the Extended Project Qualification



ADMISSIONS

Students applying for BFS Sixth Form will require 5 GCSEs at Grade 9-4 (including English). In most cases there will also be a specific entry grade required for each subject. Applications can be submitted via our on-line form at www.bristolfreeschool.org.uk/applying-to-6th-form. Candidates for the Sixth Form may be in Year 11 at BFS or following courses at other schools. For acceptance onto a particular course, candidates are expected to meet the minimum entry requirements for the course. For some courses there are limits on the number of students who can be enrolled. Courses will not run where they are not viable because very few students choose them.

BTEC Level 3 Nationals are equivalent to A Level qualifications and have both coursework and external examinations as part of their make-up.

Success in the Sixth Form requires a firm commitment to your future. It is rooted in hard work and having a positive attitude to learning; we want students who attend and are committed to their courses and programmes of study. Once enrolled, we expect your attendance to be at least 96%.



COURSE GUIDE



ART

Why should I study Art?

Part of the joy of a school Art course is that you don't just study Art: you make it. Those who are skilful, driven and passionate – and produce high quality, emotive work – are in a position to achieve recognition. The rapid increase of multimedia forms has changed and enriched the creative process and made it more accessible, dynamic and challenging. A Level Fine Art will provide you with the opportunity to develop personal responses to ideas, observations, experiences, environments and cultures in practical, critical and contextual forms. Art enhances fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, problem solving skills, lateral thinking, complex analysis and critical thinking skills. No matter what career you choose, those who can arrange, present and display material in a way that is aesthetically pleasing will always have an advantage.

What does the course look like?

Personal investigation – No time limit, 96 marks • 60% of A level
Response to an externally set assignment – Preparatory period + 1.5 hours supervised time • 96 marks • 40% of A-level

How will I learn?

Through an interactive workshop and studio environment there will be the opportunity to build upon existing techniques and experiment with a wide range of traditional and new media. Outside of the classroom there will be excursions to document from first hand; through drawing and photography, participation in life-drawing classes and visits to amazing exhibitions.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Please note that applications for Art colleges and universities in this field are different to the standard application. Students will need to keep an up-to-date portfolio of their art in order to present at interview. The Art department will support this through extra-curricular portfolio development sessions. Art continues to be a desirable option for those wishing to pursue 'traditional' creative careers, such as Architecture, Interior Design or Painting/Fine Art related professions. In addition, the internet has seen an explosion of exciting new roles emerge; with a surge in demand for multimedia artists, animators and illustrators who know how to use technology to create things of beauty. Bristol is a city with a keenly developed artistic sensibility, including Aardman to Banksy, and tapping into this rich cultural heritage is a key part of the A Level course.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 in Art. If Art not studied, you must show evidence of skill in a portfolio of work that shows ability

“Practising an art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow.”
Kurt Vonnegut

BIOLOGY

Why should I study Biology?

Biologists are scientists who study the natural world and all the living things in it, from the largest mammals down to our very own microscopic DNA. They try to understand how animals and organisms work, how we evolved and the things that can make us sick or improve our health. Biologists use this knowledge to do things like try to stop the spread of disease, track down natural resources, improve public health, animal care and conservation and work out the true impacts of things like pollution. Biology helps you to build up research, problem solving, organisation and analytical skills.

What does the course look like?

Content is split into six teaching modules:

Module 1 Development of practical skills in biology

Module 2 Foundations in biology

Module 3 Exchange and transport

Module 4 Biodiversity, evolution and disease

Module 5 Communication, homeostasis and energy

Module 6 Genetics, evolution and ecosystems

Assessment Overview:

- Biological processes (01) – 2 hour 15 minutes written paper – (37% of total A Level)
- Biological diversity (02) – 2 hour 15 minutes written paper – (37% of total A Level)
- Unified biology (03) – 1 hour 30 minutes written paper – (26% of total A Level)
- Practical endorsement in biology (04) – Non-exam assessment, reported separately.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from practical work to interactive classroom study, group tasks to private study and lab based practical activities. Outside of lessons there are opportunities to undertake fieldwork on the Year 12 Field Trip.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Biology is a key subject for lots of STEM careers, particularly in healthcare, medicine and jobs involving plants or animals. The list is long and includes: nursing, dentistry, forensic science, psychology, physiotherapy, botany, environmental science, zoology, geology, oceanography, pharmaceuticals, energy, teaching, science writing, genetics and research. A number of sports related courses such as physiotherapy and sports therapy may also require biology.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 6 GCSE Biology or Grade 6-6 GCSE Combined Science.

“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”

Charles Darwin

CHEMISTRY

Why should I study Chemistry?

Chemists use their experiments and knowledge to develop medicines, foods, fabrics and other materials, from neon lights to shatterproof glass. They also use it to understand the world around us, from why leaves change colour to discovering invisible pollutants in the air. Chemistry is sometimes known as the 'central science' because it helps to connect physical sciences, like maths and physics, with applied sciences, like biology, medicine and engineering. Chemistry helps you to develop research, problem solving and analytical skills. It helps you to challenge ideas and teaches you how to work things out through logic and step-by-step reasoning. Chemistry often requires teamwork and communication skills too, which is great for project management.

What does the course look like?

Content is split into six teaching modules:

Module 1 Development of practical skills in chemistry

Module 2 Foundations in chemistry

Module 3 Periodic table and energy

Module 4 Core organic chemistry

Module 5 Physical chemistry and transition elements

Module 6 Organic chemistry and analysis.

Assessment Overview:

- Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry (01) – 2 hours 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level)
- Synthesis and analytical techniques (02) – 2 hours 15 minutes written paper – (37% of total A Level)
- Unified chemistry (03) – 1 hour 30 minutes written paper – (26% of total A Level)
- Practical endorsement in chemistry (04) – Non-exam assessment, reported separately.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from practical work to interactive classroom study, group tasks to private study and lab-based practical activities. Outside of lessons there are opportunities to visit Bristol University Chemistry labs and be involved in workshops.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Doing an A Level in Chemistry can open many doors for you in the future. It is seen as a challenging, academic and rigorous A Level that will impress a lot of universities and employers. It can lead to many careers in healthcare such as medicine, pharmacy and dentistry, the biological sciences, physics, maths, pharmacology, chemical engineering and analytical chemistry. Many law applicants also take chemistry as it shows potential employers that you can cope with difficult concepts. You need Chemistry to study veterinary medicine or medicine – universities usually ask for an A.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 6 GCSE Chemistry or Grade 6-6 GCSE Combined Science and Grade 6 in Maths.

“Every aspect of the world today – even politics and international relations – is affected by chemistry.”
Linus Pauling

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Why should I study Computing?

According to MIT “we are heading towards a period of exponential change and unprecedented technological development”. Oxford University research suggests that high-earning jobs in the white-collar sector are five times more likely to be automated in the next 20 years. Two thirds of the current generation of students will be employed in careers that do not exist yet. A high-quality computing education equips students to use computational thinking and creativity to understand and change the world. Computational thinking is the essential skill for solving problems, designing systems and learning about human behaviour in the modern world. It might draw upon concepts rooted in Computer Science but to excel in today’s world it has to be a fundamental element in how we all think and work. Computing is perfect for anyone with an innate love of computers but is also highly desirable for anyone aiming towards further studies or careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths) subjects.

What does the course look like?

Exam Board: OCR 80% examination, 20% Non-Examined Assessment Examinations: • Computer Systems: Characteristics of contemporary systems architecture; software and software development; exchanging data; data types, representation and structures; legal, moral, ethical and cultural issues • Algorithms & Problem Solving: Elements of computational thinking; problem solving and programming; algorithms. Non-Examined Assessment: • Programming Project: Set your own brief; Analysis of the problem; design of the solution; implementation of the solution; evaluation.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches including interactive classroom study, lectures and group tasks. There will be a focus on programming, which

emphasises the importance of computational thinking as a discipline that will require significant independent and/or private study and research. By putting computational thinking at the core of your study, you will develop the skills to solve problems, design systems and understand human and machine intelligence. There will be exciting opportunities to apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems with a variety of programming challenges.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Computer Science is a core subject, welcomed by universities and employers. Whether you choose Computer Science, Engineering or a traditional science, you will find that computational thinking is a vital skill. It shows that you are capable of intense analytical thought that allows you to deconstruct problems before writing algorithmic solutions and finally evaluating your solution. It provides access to a wide and disparate range of degree courses.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 GCSE Computer Science. If GCSE Computer Science not studied, Grade 6 in Maths and a keen interest in programming is essential.

“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

DRAMA AND THEATRE

Why should I study Drama and Theatre?

If you have a passion for performing, watching, reading and directing plays then this is the course for you. This course combines the activities of exploring plays, creating theatre, the performing of plays, the analysis of theatre and the critical evaluation of all of these elements. Students completing the course successfully will have a thorough understanding of drama and theatre, highly honed analytical and creative skills and an ability to communicate effectively with others.

What does the course look like?

The A Level Drama and Theatre course covers a wide range of both practical and written techniques and skills. This course is designed to encourage creativity, focusing on practical work which reflects 21st century theatre practice, and on developing skills that will support progression to further the study of drama and a wide range of other subjects. The course comprises three components (1 coursework, 1 practical exam and 1 written exam).

Component 1: Devising (40%) • Devise an original performance piece • Use one key extract from a performance text and a theatre practitioner as stimuli • Performer or designer routes available.

Component 2: Text in Performance (20%) • A group performance/design realisation of one key extract from a performance text • A monologue or duologue performance/design realisation from one key extract from a text.

Component 3: Written examination 2½ hours (40%) • Live theatre evaluation: choice of performance • Practical exploration and study of a complete text: focusing on how this can be realised for performance. • Practical exploration and interpretation of another complete performance text, in light of a chosen practitioner: focusing on how this text could be reimagined for a contemporary audience.

How will I learn?

The learning in Drama takes place across a few different lesson formats including: practical workshops, text study, rehearsals, performance and design workshops.

Students are required to take notes and complete written work, despite the perceived practical nature of the subject. The final written examination requires lengthy preparation and firm understanding of a text from an academic and practical perspective.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Drama teaches fundamental and transferable skills as an explicit part of the course. Marks are awarded for communication, collaboration and performance; three skills of absolute necessity in the modern job market.

Beyond this, future potential performers and actors will have an opportunity to begin to expand their knowledge base and prepare for a career in the arts with the same professional outlook we take to all our performances.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 GCSE English and some performance experience essential. Previous students often boost their subject knowledge through extra-curricular clubs.

“I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.”

Oscar Wilde

ECONOMICS

Why should I study Economics?

Economics is about choice and the impact of our choices on each other. It relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals or families to the structures created by governments and firms. A Level Economics helps students develop an interest and enthusiasm for economics and its contribution to the wider political and social environment. It requires the careful application of knowledge in a range of contexts and the development of an enquiring, critical and thoughtful 'economist's mind'. The course provides opportunities to practise skills, qualities and attitudes which will equip students for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult and working life. This includes developing an understanding of current economic issues, problems and institutions that affect and shape our environment. In subject specific terms, students will apply economic concepts and theories in a range of contexts and appreciate their value and limitations in explaining real world events. This includes analysing, explaining and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the market economy and the role of government within it.

What does the course look like?

For A Level you will study four themes and will sit three exams at the end of your course: Paper 1 has data response and essay questions on markets, consumers and firms (Theme 1) and making markets work (Theme 4). Paper 2 has data response and essay questions on the wider economic environment (Theme 2) and competing in the global economy (Theme 3). Paper 3 is a synoptic paper based on all the themes learnt and will focus on a research task before the exam. The questions in the exam are linked to the context you will research.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from interactive classroom study, group tasks to private study and research. Almost all daily news headlines, for example, have an economic theme if you look closely. You will be encouraged to research such topics using journals, newspapers, websites and other resources. Discussion and debate are an important element of lesson activity developing skills of evaluation and judgement.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Economics is well regarded as a rigorous A level and fully prepares you for university and the world of work: you will have developed data-handling and writing skills which are transferable to both university and employment. You might want to study a degree in economics, business economics, international business, marketing and business management. You might progress to a wide range of sectors including finance, education, law, business, journalism and the public sector.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 GCSE Maths and English.

“No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable.”

Adam Smith

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Why should I study Literature?

English Literature is without doubt the premier written A Level subject and sits alongside Further Maths in terms of its credibility. No other subject compares to Literature in terms of developing your skills of interpretation, analysis and evaluation. Literature teaches us about ourselves and our place in the universe, time and space and everything in between. It might not give you the answers to questions, but it will alter the way you think about those questions. Studying literature is perfect for anyone with a passion for reading literary texts from any era or movement. It allows you to develop your understanding of the intricacies of language and identify waves of meaning, both above and below the surface. You will develop a wider appreciation of the importance of context, exploring the factors that shape a text, whether that's when it was written or why, or how different eras have interpreted the same text differently. You will be able to engage in dynamic class discussions, learning to explore through debate and critical questioning.

What does the course look like?

- Shakespeare and a linked other drama text
- Comparing two novels
- Modern and older poetry, seen and unseen
- A coursework essay on texts you choose.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods, from interactive classroom study to lectures, group tasks to private study and research. Outside of lessons there are opportunities to visit the theatre and make use of the huge variety of other enrichment activities offered within Bristol. A trip to the Globe Theatre is usually arranged to provide additional enrichment.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Firstly, English literature A Level is a 'facilitating subject', meaning that it is highly prized by Oxbridge and Russell Group universities as a strong indicator of academic rigour. An English literature A Level showcases many skills, including, but by no means limited to: the ability to decode and analyse complex texts and concepts; sophisticated written communication; creative analytical thought; independent research and project skills; lateral and conceptual thinking; and the ability to link micro and macro concepts to wider historical and sociological trends.

However, English literature A Level is also the study of big ideas, how we make sense of the world, how we are all the product of our shared stories, how words create societies, and what it means to be human. Therefore, English literature is a robust foundation for not only career pathways involving the written word, but any career in which people and communication feature: media (including social), advertising, politics, law, education, charity, publishing, civil service, and even sciences, computing, engineering and technology.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 6 in GCSE English Language and English Literature (and you must enjoy reading!)

“It is what you read when you don't have to that determines what you will be when you can't help it.”
Oscar Wilde

FASHION AND TEXTILES

Why should I study Fashion and Textiles?

Fashion and Textiles is an inspiring, rigorous and exciting practical subject, that, if you are creative, like problem solving and enjoy working with textiles, will develop your skills to thrive in a number of careers. Fashion and Textiles is attractive to students who have a technical interest in textile materials, enjoy working practically to investigate problems and desire to find design solutions.

You will learn:

- Tailoring and pattern cutting skills
- A range of textiles techniques including decorative and construction
- To develop your sketching and illustration ability and use of digital technologies
- To understand industry and commercial practices
- To work collaboratively to develop and refine ideas
- About trends, wider issues affecting the fashion industry and design decisions.

The course develops a wide range of transferable skills, such as developing critical thinking, problem solving and technical construction skills. Students will experiment with a range of materials and media, design, research, analysis and evaluation.

What does the course look like?

There are two main written examinations at the end of Year 13.

- Exam paper 1 - Technical principles (25%)
- Exam paper 2 - Designing and making principles (25%)
- Non-exam assessment – Iterative Design Project (50%). During Year 13 you will complete an independent design, make and evaluate project following the iterative process. You will be required to identify a design opportunity or problem from a context of your own choice.

How will I learn?

The course merges theoretical design principles with the exploration of textile materials and their application. It is split into three distinct areas:

- Core principles of design and fashion
- Design communication and illustration
- Manufacturing and material application.

This will be achieved through a variety of practical skill building tasks, live design briefs and independently designed projects. Practical lessons will make full use of the specialist workshops, tools and equipment. Work placements in design and fashion companies are offered.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The fashion and textiles industry is a continually developing environment with countless possibilities. This course offers a pathway into a broad range of creative and diverse degree courses, including but not limited to; fashion design, costume design, manufacturing, tailoring, material science, textile technologies, interior design, retail management, fashion marketing, fashion buying, visual merchandising, textiles/print design or journalism.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 or above in Maths. Grade 5 or above in D&T GCSE is beneficial however, If you have not studied D&T at GCSE level, you will need to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment for the subject.

“Create your own style. Let it be unique for yourself and yet identifiable for others.”

Anna Wintour

FRENCH

Why should I study Languages?

French is spoken by 125 million people on every continent and is spoken in more than 40 countries. Because French is the language of choice in schools across the globe, this A Level will open up additional job opportunities across the channel. Students of French will develop an understanding of the language in a variety of contexts and genres, and learn to communicate confidently, clearly and effectively. They will also develop an awareness and understanding of the contemporary society, cultural background and heritage of the countries or communities where French is spoken. Foreign languages open up a new world of culture, literature and history. On a pragmatic note, French opens up lots of different skills in which employers in all walks of life are very interested.

What does the course look like?

The course follows four general topics but they are wide and open ended topics which give scope for debate. The topics give students the opportunity to discuss new ideas, discover attitudes from other parts of the world and open their eyes to the wider world.

- Changes in French Society
- Political and Artistic Culture in French Speaking Countries
- Immigration and French Society
- Occupation and The Resistance
- Literature and Film
- Personal Research Project

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; interactive classroom study, group tasks, private study and research and one-to-one discussions with a native speaker. There will also be opportunities for foreign travel and immersion in French culture. The course will cover a set text, for example 'L'Étranger' by Albert Camus – the story of one man who has chosen to be a martyr in dying for what he believes in, the truth.

What kind of things might it lead to?

French can lead to many different and varied jobs – it is not all about teaching and translating. An A Level in French shows universities and employers that you are prepared to work hard to learn grammar and vocabulary but that you also have lots of other skills like independent thinking, the ability to argue points and discuss ideas, and that you have the ability to listen and verbalise ideas.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 6 or above in GCSE French. A love of French, other cultures and the diversity of the world is also a prerequisite.

*“Au milieu de l’hiver, j’ai découvert
en moi un invincible été.”
Albert Camus*

GEOGRAPHY

Why should I study Geography?

You only have to catch a brief glimpse of the news to know that geography is the most relevant subject of our time. The problems of tomorrow's world are global in nature and require students to think synoptically. As such, Geography could not be a more respected and valued academic discipline. It has the advantage of having wide appeal to universities and employers, and this allows it to be combined successfully with most other A Level subjects. Students can enjoy the extremely varied content of the course and develop a wide range of analytical skills and synoptic knowledge that will serve them well at university and in the world of work. Your A Level Geography course gives you a strong foundation for understanding the two main themes of the subject: human geography and physical geography. Between them, they are what make our planet tick. It's not all theory either - you will get the opportunity to visit places of geographic interest and roll up your sleeves with some fieldwork.

What does the course look like?

Section A: Physical Geography

Written Exam: 2h 30 mins 40% of overall mark

- Water and carbon cycles
- Coastal systems and landscapes,
- Hazards

Section B: Human Geography

Written Exam: 2h 30 mins 40% of overall mark

- Global systems and governance
- Changing places
- Population and the environment

Section C: Geographical Investigation:

3,000 – 4,000 words, 20% of overall mark

Students complete an individual investigation, which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question or issue defined and developed by the student relating to any part of the specification content. Students have to

undertake a minimum of 4 days of fieldwork in order to complete their independent NEA.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from interactive classroom study to lectures, group tasks to private study and research. Being outside the classroom is an integral part to the study of Geography, and there will be a number of trips and visits to important geographical sites.

What kind of things might it lead to?

If you specialise in Geography at university (or use your Geography A Level as a stepping stone to study Geology or Archaeology at university) you could find yourself working within STEM fields, doing things like charting oil wells or developing the next renewable energy farms across the world. These command a respectable wage. Geography is about the interaction between people and our planet, making this fascinating subject valid for a number of different career paths, like advertising and marketing, oceanography, international relations, hospitality, environmental management and social services. Due to its analytical nature, graduates are well placed to convert into professions such as accountancy and consultancy (BSc) or law. Combined with further Masters study (MSc), students can go on to specialise further in solving the problems of tomorrow. Ultimately, Geography can lead you anywhere on earth.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 or above in GCSE Geography and Grade 5

GCSE Maths. If Geography not studied, students must have

Grade 5 English.

“Geography students hold the key to the world’s problems.”

Michael Palin

HISTORY

Why should I study History?

Everyone remembers where they were when key events occur in history. The assassination of President Kennedy, the first moon landings, Princess Diana's death, 9/11 to name a few. The human race is continually making history and trying to avoid the errors of the past. History is relevant today as it helps you make sense of the world in which we live. In addition to content, you will learn essential transferable skills such as analysis, evaluation, interpretation, discussion, debating and presenting. History is widely regarded as a strong qualification for a broad range of higher education and career choices. History is ideal for students who:

- Have an interest in the way the world has developed through the ages.
- Enjoy investigation and discovery
- Enjoy debate and putting forward a well-argued case
- Wish to improve their analytical skills
- Want to study a subject which encourages them to consider evidence and make up their own minds
- Want to keep their options open.

What does the course look like?

Unit 1 Russia, 1917–91: From Lenin to Yeltsin

Unit 2 The German Democratic Republic, 1949–90

Unit 3 Lancastrians, Yorkists and Henry VII, 1399–1509

Unit 4 Non-exam assessment: Historical based essay

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from interactive classroom study to lectures, group tasks to private study and research.

What kind of things might it lead to?

History combines well with a number of other subjects and is well regarded both by universities and employers as a qualification for a wide range of courses in Politics, Economics, English, Languages, Art History, Law, Archaeology, Philosophy, Sociology or Theology. It is ideal preparation for a career in any of those areas and a plethora of others, including journalism.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 in GCSE History as well as a Grade 5 in GCSE English and a genuine interest in History and the world around you.

“The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future.”
Theodore Roosevelt



“We get lots of support with our next steps, whether it’s applications for university or apprenticeships or writing a CV.”

YEAR 13 STUDENT

MATHS

Why should I study Maths?

Maths is everywhere, from the patterns on a butterfly's wings to the trajectory of a rugby conversion. Maths helps us make sense of these patterns and obtain greater structure and predictability in life. Maths helps us price things, build websites, create graphics and design skyscrapers. A Level Maths develops key employability skills such as problem solving, logical reasoning, communication and resilience; it is a vital qualification for numerous high paid jobs that play an important role in the British economy. The course builds on work you will have met at GCSE, but also involves many new ideas. If you enjoy maths, have a strong work ethic and relish the challenge of problem solving then this is the course for you.

What does the course look like?

Pure Maths

This includes familiar topics such as algebra, functions and co-ordinate geometry. New topics include sequences and series, a wider view of trigonometry, numerical methods, logarithms, differentiation and integration, together known as calculus.

Applied Maths – Statistics and Mechanics

Statistics involves statistical sampling, data presentation, hypothesis testing and probability, all of which follow on from topics met at GCSE, leading to the study of statistical distributions with special properties.

Mechanics includes the maths used to study the physical world, modelling the motion of objects and the forces acting on them. Topics include kinematics, moments, forces and Newton's laws.

At the end of the two year course there are three two hour examinations. Two of these cover the Pure Maths content and the other is Applied Maths. The three examinations are equally weighted.

How will I learn?

You will learn through a variety of techniques; modelling of new ideas, exploring different ways to solve problems and presenting your solutions to your peers. Investing time in solving problems independently is critical to developing your mathematical ability. You will have the opportunity to participate in UKMT National Challenge competitions, and attend events at UWE and Bristol University with a STEM focus.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The skills developed through the study of Maths are in high demand from employers. In addition to developing the ability to solve problems and think logically, the study of Maths provides opportunities to develop team-working skills, resilience, effective communication of complex ideas and the ability to use your own initiative. The vast range of degree courses and careers that require solid mathematical skills ensures that taking Maths to A Level or beyond will open doors to a world of opportunities!

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 7 GCSE Maths. Students will be accepted on to the course with a Grade 6 if they performed strongly on the algebra sections of the GCSE Maths exams.

“It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems for longer.”
Albert Einstein

MATHS (FURTHER)

Why should I study Further Maths?

Further Maths is taken in addition to A Level Maths. It enables enthusiastic mathematicians to broaden and deepen their subject knowledge through studying additional, more challenging topics in pure maths as well as a wider range of topics in applied maths. Further Maths is suitable for students who are considering studying for a Maths, Engineering, Physics or similar degree. It is also a perfect choice for those students who love Maths and want to devote more time to the studying wider aspects of the subject.

Further Maths is usually studied as one of four A levels. However, it is possible to complete the AS qualification in Further Maths either at the end of Year 12 or Year 13.

What does the course look like?

You will study a wider range of topics in Pure Maths, plus additional topics selected from Mechanics and Statistics. Assessment is through four examinations at the end of the two-year course, each of 90 minutes' duration.

How will I learn?

You will develop your understanding through a range of methods: modelling, application, discussion and presentation. Independent study is a vital part of this development, where you apply new techniques and secure a deep understanding. A number of web-based platforms will be available to support you.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Maths underpins most of science, technology and engineering, and is also important in areas as diverse as business, law, nutrition, sports science and psychology. There are many opportunities to use maths to make a difference in society, for example through the analysis involved in medical research, developing new technology, modelling epidemics or in the study of patterns of criminal activity to identify trends. Further examples include: finance and banking, operational research, computer game design, engineering, health, education, teaching, accounting, aerospace and defence, environmental industry, pharmaceutical industry, healthcare, food and drink industry, bio science, medicine.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 7 or above in GCSE Maths and must also be taking the A Level Maths course.

“Pure mathematics is, in its way, the poetry of logical ideas.”
Albert Einstein

MATHS (CORE)

Core Maths is a new Level 3 qualification designed for Post-16 students with a minimum of grade 5 at GCSE Maths who wish to continue studying Maths, but not at A Level. The new Core Maths qualification will help you retain, deepen and extend your knowledge of Maths so that you are better prepared for higher education and employment; it is also particularly useful if your other qualifications have a high level of mathematical content. The use of real-life scenarios in Core Maths will help you understand and apply clear, mathematical reasoning to real-life problems, analyse and interpret data in a variety of contexts, and confidently deal with everyday financial mathematics.

The qualification has the same UCAS tariff points as an AS Level.

Who is Core Maths suitable for?

Core Maths is useful for students studying courses such as A-level Psychology, Sciences and Geography; as well as technical and vocational qualifications.

What skills will I develop?

You will develop the skills to analyse data, deal with financial calculations, model real-life situations and criticise existing models.

You will learn how to model situations mathematically, including the use of Statistics, as well as developing your problem-solving and reasoning skills.

Ultimately, Core Maths will prepare you to use the mathematics that arises in everyday life.

What does the course look like?

Component 1 – Examination: Paper 1 (1 hour, 30 minutes – 50%)

- Analysis of data
- Maths for personal finance
- Estimation

Component 2 – Examination: Paper 2A Statistical Techniques (1 hour, 30 minutes – 50%)

- Students will be expected to develop and demonstrate confidence and competence in the understanding and application of mathematical modelling in the solution of problems related to the use of statistical techniques.
- Topics covered include: Critical analysis of given data and models, the normal distribution, probabilities and estimation, correlation and regression.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The Core Maths qualification is highly valued by employers and universities as more subjects, such as Geography and Psychology, recognise the importance of statistics and problem-solving skills. Bath University has recently announced that there will be greater recognition of Level 3 Maths qualifications (including Core Maths) through the use of alternative offers.

Many roles in today's workplace require high levels of budget management and problem-solving abilities, and this course will equip you with these skills.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 or above in GCSE Maths.

“Facts are stubborn, but statistics are more pliable.”
Mark Twain

MUSIC AND MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Why should I study Music?

Music is an essential part of the human experience. It allows us to unleash creativity and communicate ideas and emotions through sound. Music connects us to different cultures and times. It is a science as well as an art form, which means it will help you build your problem solving, research, planning, analytical and critical thinking skills. Musical performance is collaborative, confidence building and, for many, a lifelong source of joy and fulfilment. The study of Music or Music Technology at A Level will engage and extend appreciation of the diverse and dynamic heritage of music, promote spiritual and cultural development, encourage life-long learning and provide access to music-related and other careers. The Music course encourages students to experience all three main musical disciplines of performing, composing, and listening and understanding. Music Technology focuses on using technology such as sequencing software and use of the recording studio to record, produce and compose music.

What does the course look like?

Music – Performing (30%) Composing (30%) Appraising (40%)

Music Technology – Recording (20%), Technology-based Composition (20%), Listening and Analysing (25%) and Producing (35%)

How will I learn?

Music is often taught in small classes and teaching resources are tailor-made to bring out the best in students and play to their individual strengths. Lessons will focus on developing practical and composition skills, as well as listening to and analysis of a wide range of pieces.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Music is a traditional academic subject recognised by all universities, including Oxbridge. Many students go on to study Music at either university or music college, but for others it is a lifelong love alongside pursued other careers. There are a wide range of career options available as a performer, composer or many other related musical careers. There are degree courses available in Music Technology which could lead to careers in music production and recording, live sound, composition for film and games and more.

What is the entry requirement?

A Level Music Students must have Grade 6 or above in GCSE Music and instrumental skill of Grade 5 or above.

A Level Music Technology students must have 5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above. Students do not have to have previously studied music, but if they have not, they must demonstrate some practical skills in music technology through a composition/sequencing portfolio.

*“Everything in the universe has a rhythm,
everything dances.”
Maya Angelou*

PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND ETHICS

Why should I study Philosophy, Religion and Ethics?

A Level Philosophy and Ethics is an incredibly special subject that develops the core skill of critical thinking. Philosophy literally means a love of wisdom and is a quest for truth and knowledge, an ability to distinguish between doxa (opinion) and episteme (knowledge). Religion, Philosophy and Ethics examine the three R's of what is real (metaphysics), what is right (ethics) and what is rational and reasonable belief. The subject is very highly respected by universities and colleges and it develops key skills of analysis and enquiry which are transferable across many subjects. The addition of the 'science' element of the course makes it a really good option for those who are quite interested in the scientific subjects but need or want some variety - bear in mind universities and colleges look favourably on having some variety in A Level studies! It also goes well with other social sciences or humanities subjects such as Psychology, History, Sociology and Geography.

What does the course look like?

Christianity and the Philosophy of Religion:

- The Existence of God
- Religious Experience
- Religious Language
- Life after Death
- Christianity and Ethics
- Ethical Theories
- Medical Ethics
- Sexual Ethics
- Environmental Ethics.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from interactive classroom study to group tasks and debates, private study and research.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Religious Studies at A Level is a highly respected training of the mind for any area of degree study. Likewise, the academic skills you evolve and hone along the way will be valued by business, medicine and the legal professions alike – not to mention academia. Or, more directly, your course could lead you into degree areas like Philosophy, Politics & Ethics (PPE), Theology, or any joint honours courses where these are a component.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 GCSE English and Grade 5 Religious Studies
(full course or short course)

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”
Socrates

PHOTOGRAPHY

Why should I study Photography?

Photography is the art of observation. How you see and interpret things is key. If you are passionate about interpreting the world around you and producing stand out imagery this may well be the course for you. Choosing to study A Level Photography will give you the opportunity to develop your creativity and learn the practical skills needed to become a successful Photographer. You will expand your visual vocabulary through exploration and experimentation with both traditional and modern techniques. You will be able to choose between a variety of areas to study within the disciplines, ranging from portraiture, landscape, still life and documentary Photography. Knowledge of other photographers and artists plays an integral part of your personal investigation. You will produce written work explaining important contextual links between your work and that of others.

What does the course look like?

Personal investigation - No time limit, 96 marks • 60% of A level
Response to an externally set assignment - Preparatory period + 15 hours supervised time • 96 marks • 40% of A level

How will I learn?

Initially a whole-class teaching approach is adopted, where lessons will be as much practical as theoretical in content, so that the needs, previous photographic skills, knowledge and understanding of all students is catered for. Eventually work will become increasingly student-led, with advice and one-to-one guidance from staff, as you begin to respond directly to your own personal interests and ideas. Sketchbooks and journals will be used to track the progression of your work and to build a portfolio of critical investigation. Manipulation of images, both digital and manual, with the optional

use of drawing will be explored. Your contextual studies will be aided by gallery visits and excursions to observe and record from first hand. Students should be aware that this course is demanding. It is essential to your success that you are motivated and organised as a large amount of self-directed study outside of lessons is required. You need to be both willing and able to invest time into taking photographs independently, and at times on location, in order to fully develop your practice.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Photography can act as a platform for a range of exciting careers that involve some aspect of visual imaging. Those who study may wish to branch into graphic design, radiography or marketing. Even more, the skills you will hone in the study of photography at this level are highly transferable including: analysis, evaluation, discussion and presentation.

What is the entry requirement?

5 GCSEs at Grade 4 or above (in any subjects).

“Photography is the only language that can be understood anywhere in the world.”
Bruno Barbey

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Why should I study Physical Education?

Sport is no longer decided by the people with the most talent or the people who train the hardest. Sport is now about 'marginal gains' from the diet of athletes to their kit and equipment, altitude training and preparation; no detail is left unexamined in the pursuit of excellence. With this in mind this course provides the perfect stepping stone to the world of 'Sport Science'. A Level Physical Education builds on students' experience from Key Stage 4 and GCSE to enhance their knowledge and increase their understanding of the factors that affect performance and participation. The content addresses contemporary topics in sport, such as the impact in the use of ergogenic aids, technology and the increasing commercialisation of sport.

What does the course look like?

The course features a variety of teaching and learning approaches; including interactive classroom study, lectures, group research tasks and private study. Students are expected to commit and participate to one sporting activity outside of school as part of the A Level PE course. Visit the AQA website for a list of activities that are assessed.

Where possible, a visit to a sports testing laboratory is organised to support the application of student's knowledge around the anatomy and physiology elements of the course.

How will I learn?

Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport •
Content: Applied anatomy and physiology, skill acquisition and sport and society. Written exam: 2 hours - 35% of A Level
Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport •
Content: exercise physiology and biomechanics, sports psychology, and sport and society and technology in sport
Written exam: 2

hours - 35% of A Level
Practical performance in physical activity and sport •
Content: students are assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity (20%) and a written/verbal analysis of performance (10%).
Internal assessment, external moderation - 30% of A Level.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Physical Education is regarded highly by universities and employers due to the skills and qualities developed throughout the course. High quality communication, collaboration and leadership are required both as a sports performer and a student or employee. Sport and Exercise Science, Sport Management, Sport and Exercise Psychology, Sport Coaching and Performance Analysis are all available subjects to study further at university. A Level PE is also useful for Physiotherapy if combined with a strong science.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 6 PE or Grade 6-6 Combined Science or Grade 6 Biology. Must be competing in a sport from the AQA A Level specification (list found on AQA website) outside of school.

"It never gets easier, you just go faster."
Greg LeMond

PHYSICS

Why should I study Physics?

Physicists look for all the hidden laws that explain why all matter and energy in the known universe exists, where it comes from and how it behaves the way it does. Physicists use the laws they uncover to develop new materials, machinery, and technology to improve our lives and help us explore the universe further, from computers to telescopes and spacecraft. Physicists ask big questions, but they specialise in different areas and their work can be varied. For example, nuclear physicists study tiny particles of matter to discover what the universe is made of, whereas astrophysicists study some of the largest objects – stars, planets and celestial bodies. Many physicists also combine their work with the other sciences (Chemistry and Biology) to study things like meteorology (the atmosphere) and geophysics (the structure of the earth).

What does the course look like?

Content is split into six teaching modules: Module 1 Development of practical skills in physics Module 2 Foundations of physics Module 3 Forces and motion Module 4 Electrons, waves and photons Module 5 Newtonian world and astrophysics Module 6 Particles and medical physics. Assessment Overview: Modelling physics (01) – 2 hours 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level) Exploring physics (02) – 2 hours 15 minutes written paper (37% of total A Level) Unified physics (03) – 1 hour 30 minutes written paper (26% of total A Level) Practical endorsement in physics (04) – Non-exam assessment – Reported separately.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from practical work to interactive classroom study, group tasks to private study and lab-based practical activities. Outside of lessons there are opportunities to visit Bristol University labs and undertake a visit to CERN in Switzerland.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Physics is a useful subject for the majority of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) careers. You will find physicists everywhere, in industry, transport, government, universities, the armed forces, computer games companies, research labs and more. Physics is helpful for jobs that involve building and developing new technologies, including: engineering, astronomy, robotics, renewable energies, computer science, communications, space exploration, science writing, sports and games technology, research and nanotechnology.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 6 GCSE Physics or Grade 6-6 GCSE Combined Science. Grade 6 GCSE Maths.

“If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants.”
Isaac Newton

POLITICS

Why should I study Politics?

To say that Politics doesn't concern you would be naïve and very misinformed. Politics is the only subject you can study that will directly affect you and the lives of everyone you know. We are living in a world of decisions and decision makers. Do we have a say in these decisions or are we just puppets at the whim of the government of the day? Politics is relevant as it helps us make sense of the world in which we live. In addition to the content, you will learn essential transferable skills such as analysis, evaluation, interpretation, discussion, debating and presenting. Politics is widely regarded as a strong qualification for a broad range of higher education and career choices. Politics is ideal for students who:

- Have an interest in the way political decision making happens
- Enjoy investigation and discovery
- Enjoy debating and putting forward a well-argued case
- Wish to improve their analytical skills
- Want to study a subject which encourages them to consider evidence and make up their own minds
- Want to keep their options open.

What does the course look like?

- Component 1 UK Politics: Political Participation and Core Ideas (Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism)
- Component 2 UK Government: How the UK Government works and One Optional Idea (anarchism, ecologism, feminism, nationalism)
- Component 3 Comparative Politics: US Government and Politics

How will I learn?

You will spend the majority of your time studying a range of political content and policies leading to examined work. We will also look at setting up some debates (such as whether or not there is a need to change the voting system) and you will be actively encouraged to participate.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Politics combines well with a number of other subjects and is well regarded both by universities and employers as a qualification for a wide range of courses in Politics, Economics, English, Languages, Art History, Law, Archaeology, Philosophy, Sociology and Theology. It is ideal preparation for a career in any of those areas and a plethora of others, including journalism.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 GCSE English and a genuine interest in Politics and the world around you.

“The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you.”
Barack Obama

PRODUCT DESIGN

Why should I study Product Design?

Where would the world be without designers? Designers shape the world around us, predict our future and solve problems through the products they create. This creative and thought-provoking qualification gives you the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in a number of careers. You will:

- Design and manufacture a range of multi material products and study their impact on daily life and the wider world
- Be supported to be creative and develop your drawing and sketching skills and use of digital technologies to create quality presentations
- Have practical experience of a range of materials and components and manufacturing methods
- Learn to work collaboratively to develop and refine your ideas, responding to feedback from users, peers and expert practitioners
- Gain an insight into the creative, engineering and manufacturing industries and learn about the iterative design practices and strategies they use
- Explore important issues that affect design in the wider world such as sustainability, globalisation and inclusive design; in order to become an empathetic and successful designer who can consider wider social implications of products.

What does the course look like?

There are two main written examinations at the end of Year 13.

- Exam paper 1 – Technical principles (25%)
 - Exam paper 2 – Designing and making principles (25%)
 - Non-exam assessment – Iterative Design Project (50%)
- During Year 13 you will complete

an independent design, make and evaluate project following the iterative process. You will be required to identify a design opportunity or problem from a context of your own choice.

How will I learn?

The course intertwines theoretical design principles with the development of a deep-rooted understanding of materials and their application. This will be achieved through a range of focused practical tasks, live design briefs and independently selected projects. Practical lessons will make full use of the specialist workshops, tools and equipment. Work placements in design, architecture and engineering companies are guaranteed.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The world of Product Design is an ever-changing environment with exciting and innovative possibilities. You will develop your problem solving skills, logical judgment and an awareness of the world we live in. It offers a pathway into a broad range of creative and diverse degree courses.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 or above in GCSE Maths. Grade 5 in GCSE D&T is beneficial, however, if you have not studied D&T at GCSE level, you will need to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment for the subject.

“Creativity is intelligence having fun.”
Albert Einstein

PSYCHOLOGY

Why should I study Psychology?

Have you ever wondered if prison really does change criminal behaviour? Or why some people conform? Or perhaps if the experiences you had before the age of five really do shape the person you are today? A Level Psychology will give you an understanding of the way people think and why people behave in certain ways. You will learn a variety of skills including analytical thinking, improved communication, problem solving and many more that will prepare you for an exciting future with the possibility of a range of fantastic careers.

What does the course look like?

There are three exams, each accounting for one third of your A Level. The three exams last 2 hours. The exams consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

- Social influence, Memory, Attachment, Psychopathology (33%)
- Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology, Research Methods (33%)
- Issues and debates: Relationships, Schizophrenia and Forensic Psychology. (33%).

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; from interactive classroom study to conducting social experiments, group tasks to private study and research. Outside of lessons there will be opportunities to attend revision conferences and psychology workshops. .

What kind of things might it lead to?

Possible degree options: the top seven degree courses taken by students who have an A Level in Psychology are Psychology, English Studies, Sociology, Business Studies, Teaching, Sport and Exercise Science and Law.

Possible career options studying Psychology at university can give you a whole host of exciting career options, including Marketing, Business Development, Accountancy, Human Resources, Forensic Psychology, Occupational Therapy, Clinical Psychology, Nursing and Teaching.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 GCSE English and Grade 5 GCSE Science.

“The brain is wider than the sky.”
Emily Dickinson

SOCIOLOGY

Why should I study Sociology?

Sociology is a relevant, exciting and current course that provides an insight into how our behaviour is shaped by the world around us. The topics covered on the A Level course help to explain why people are no longer choosing to marry, why middle class students achieve better grades in school, why certain social groups are negatively represented in the media and why crime is concentrated in inner city areas. If you are inquisitive and keen to understand these points, sociology is the course for you.

What does the course look like?

There are three exams, each accounting for one third of your A-level. The three exams last 2 hours and are worth 80 marks each. The exams consist of short answer and extended writing questions:

- Research methods
- Education
- Crime and Deviance
- Families & Households
- The Media.

How will I learn?

In Sociology we examine different sociological perspectives that provide a unique take on society, the variety of research methods employed by different groups of sociologists and the strengths and weaknesses of employing them to study aspects of society. You will need to be able to assess the quality of the sociological views and methods covered, be good at working on your own and as part of a group, take part in discussions and debates, construct balanced arguments and keep up to date with relevant news stories. You must also be prepared to write essays as this is how you will be assessed.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Studying Sociology provides an excellent foundation for a number of popular university courses. For example, Criminology, Education Studies and Social Policy. Sociology provides knowledge and skills that are transferable to a number of careers such as Education, Media or Health.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 5 GCSE English.

*“History is, strictly speaking, the study of questions;
the study of answers belongs to sociology and anthropology.”*
WH Auden

SPANISH

Why should I study Spanish?

Around the world Spanish is spoken as a native language by 406 million people, which makes it second only to Mandarin. As the official language of 21 countries, Spanish is quickly becoming a key language in the modern business world. What this means is that anybody who is able to speak it at fluent business level will not only have a head start with university applications but also considerable advantage when applying for all types of careers later on in life and it will also give you more opportunity for international travel and working abroad. Learning Spanish will also give you a major advantage when trying to understand/learn any other Latin-based language, such as French, Portuguese and Italian. Hispanic literature is regarded as some of the best in the world. You will get the chance to experience the rich variety of their festivities, customs, art and music original to Hispanic culture!

What does the course look like?

The course follows four general themes that are each split into three units. Each of the themes are wide and open-ended, which gives scope for debate. The topics give students the opportunity to discuss new ideas, discover attitudes from other parts of the world and open their eyes to the wider world:

- The evolution of Spanish society
- The culture of the Spanish-speaking world
- Immigration and the multicultural Spanish
- The Franco dictatorship and the transition to democracy.

Apart from the themes studied, you will also study a Spanish film and play: *El Laberinto del Fauno* and *La Casa de Bernarda Alba*. In the final year of A Level you will have the opportunity to show your individuality by selecting, researching, presenting and discussing a topic of your own choice for the Independent Research Project.

How will I learn?

The course features a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and methods; interactive classroom study, group tasks, private study and research and one-to-one discussions with a native speaker. There will also be opportunities for foreign travel and immersion in the Spanish culture.

What kind of things might it lead to?

Spanish can lead to many different and varied jobs – it is not all about teaching and translating. An A Level in Spanish shows universities and employers that you are not only prepared to work hard to learn complex grammar and sophisticated vocabulary but that you also have lots of other skills like independent thinking, the ability to argue points and discuss ideas, and that you have the ability to listen and verbalise ideas.

What is the entry requirement?

Grade 6 in GCSE Spanish. A love of Spanish, other cultures and the diversity of the world is also a prerequisite.

“Nunca se puede cruzar el océano hasta que se tenga el coraje de perderde vista la costa.”
Cristóbal Colón



*“I love the community feel of
the Sixth Form. Everybody is so
welcoming and friendly.”*

YEAR 12 STUDENT

BTEC BUSINESS

Why should I study Business?

The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate is the equivalent of one A Level, with the equivalent UCAS points to achieve a place at university. This course suits a learner who prefers a continual assessment method without the pressure of one terminal examination. This course will give you an excellent grounding in the vocational skills and knowledge required for all types of work in the business environment. This varied work-related course is taught by experienced and enthusiastic teachers in conjunction with external speakers. All of the units will have a real life business focus.

What does the course look like?

This qualification is equivalent in size to one A Level when studied over two years and is split into units.

- Each unit focuses on a different topic or skill enabling you to develop a significant common core of knowledge of Business, including Finance, Marketing and the Recruitment and Selection process.
- Assessment will be external (paper based exam and externally set coursework marked by Edexcel) and internal (assignment based evidence, set and marked by your teachers).

How are BTEC courses assessed?

Students will be assessed continually throughout the year, through bespoke assignments and external assessment, which will take place twice during the course. Each assessment allows students to achieve either a pass, merit or distinction which translates to the equivalent of a Grade E, C and A respectively. Students will work on entrepreneurial assignments in order to give a feel for the practical workings of a modern business. It is hoped that students will be able to hone their skills in the national 'Young Enterprise' competition.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The course is ideal for those looking for a career in business, entrepreneurship, finance or administration. If you decide to go to university you could take a degree in all areas of business such as finance, marketing, human resources or economics.

What is the entry requirement?

5 GCSES at Grade 4 or above (in any subjects).

“A business that makes nothing but money is a poor business.”
Henry Ford

BTEC HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

Why should I study Health & Social Care?

The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate is equivalent to one A Level, with the equivalent UCAS points to achieve a place at university. The Health and Social Care sector is a major employer of almost 4 million people in the UK, many of which are highly skilled with another 1.9 million job openings expected by 2030. By studying a BTEC National in Health & Social Care you will develop knowledge, understanding and skills required by employers and apply them in real work contexts.

What does the course look like?

This qualification is equivalent in size to one A Level when studied over two years and is split into units.

- Each unit focuses on a different topic or skill enabling you to develop a significant common core of knowledge of Health & Social Care
- Assessment will be external (paper based exam and externally set coursework tasks marked by Edexcel) and internal (assignment based evidence, set and marked by your teachers)
- Students are also required to study personal and professional development, through a work placement within the health and social care settings.

How are BTEC courses assessed?

External assessment will take place twice during the course, usually January and June. Internal assessment uses Pass, Merit and Distinction grading criteria and takes place continuously throughout the course, this allows you to receive feedback on your progress with an opportunity to improve your portfolio. Internal assessment uses assignment-based activities to generate evidence including project work, case studies, work place assessments, role play and oral presentation.

What kind of things might it lead to?

This qualification enables you to become occupationally ready to take up employment in the health and social care sector either directly after achieving the qualification, or via the stepping stone of Higher Education (HE) in university or college. Universities have individually confirmed that this qualification fulfils their entry requirements and when achieved alongside other qualifications will be an asset.

What is the entry requirement?

5 GCSES at Grade 4 or above (in any subjects).

“It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that you cannot sincerely try to help another without helping yourself.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson

BTEC SPORT

Why should I study Sport?

The BTEC extended certificate is the equivalent of one A Level, with the equivalent UCAS points to achieve a place at university. This course suits a learner who prefers a continual assessment method without the pressure of one terminal examination. This course will give you an excellent grounding in the vocational skills and knowledge required for all types of work in the sports environment. This varied work-related course is taught by experienced and enthusiastic teachers in conjunction with external speakers. All of the units will have a real life sport focus. You will also have the opportunity to represent the school by participating in competitions, sports leadership and trips.

What does the course look like?

Unit 1: Anatomy and Physiology Unit 2: Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Sport and Well-being. Unit 3: Professional Development in the Sports Industry Unit 4: Sports Leadership

How are BTEC courses assessed?

Students will be assessed continually throughout the year, through bespoke assignments in Units 3 and 4 (Internally assessed via a range of coursework submissions and assignments.) Units 1 and 2 are externally assessed via examinations; one in the summer of year 12 and one in the New Year of year 13. Each assignment allows students to achieve either a pass, merit or distinction which translate to the equivalent of a grade E, C and A respectively. Through the tasks, students demonstrate their skills and knowledge in a practical sports scenario.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The course is ideal for those looking for a career in sport, health and fitness or coaching. If you decide to go to University you could take a degree in all areas of sport. Universities have individually confirmed that this qualification fulfils their entry requirements and when achieved alongside other qualifications will be an asset.

What is the entry requirement?

5 GCSES at Grade 4 or above (in any subjects).

“In order to succeed we must first believe that we can.”
Nikos Kazantakis



DIPLOMA LEVEL 3 IN FOOD SCIENCE & NUTRITION

Why should I study Food Science and Nutrition?

An understanding of food science and nutrition is relevant to many industries and job roles. Care providers and nutritionists in hospitals use this knowledge, as do sports coaches and fitness instructors. Hotels and restaurants, food manufacturers and government agencies also use this understanding to develop menus, food products and policies that support healthy eating initiatives. Many employment opportunities within the field of food science and nutrition are available to learners who have studied Food Science and Nutrition.

The Diploma enables you to develop your understanding of food microbiology, the media, product development and the food production industry as a whole. You will learn about large scale commercial organisations and develop your understanding of how these organisations stay at the forefront of innovation.

What does the course look like?

You will complete three units: over the two years. The first unit: Unit 1 Meeting Nutritional Needs of Specific Groups will enable you to demonstrate an understanding of the science of food safety, nutrition and nutritional needs in a wide range of contexts and through ongoing practical sessions, to gain practical skills to produce quality food items to meet the needs of individuals.

The second unit: Unit 2 Ensuring Food is Safe to Eat will allow you to develop your understanding of the science of food safety and hygiene; essential knowledge for anyone involved in food production in the home or wishing to work in the food industry.

The final unit: Unit 3 Experimenting to Solve Food Production Problems will allow you to develop your food science and investigation skills. Again, practical sessions will support the gaining of theoretical knowledge and ensure learning is a tactile experience.

How will I learn?

You will build on and extend your practical food preparation skills alongside studying the theoretical aspects of the course. The diploma is made up of four assessments, each worth 25%. Unit 1 is assessed by exam and by non-exam assessment which is marked by your teacher, Unit 2 assessed by exam, Unit 3 assessed by non-exam assessment which is marked by your teacher.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The diploma has been designed primarily for those wanting to pursue careers in related areas such as food industry production, food science, hospitality, human nutrition, public health, sports science and health and fitness. If you decide to go to university you could take a degree in all areas of food science and technology, business and sport nutrition.

What is the entry requirement?

5 GCSES at Grade 4 or above (in any subjects).

*“Eating and reading are two pleasures
that combine admirably.”*

CS Lewis

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)

Why should I do the EPQ?

The EPQ allows each student to embark on a largely self-directed and self-motivated project. It is an opportunity to look deeply at a topic the student is passionate about and explore it fully in a range of different ways. Students must choose a topic, plan, research and develop their idea and decide on their finished product. The course encourages creativity and curiosity. A project topic may be directly related to a student's main study programme, but should look beyond the specification. A finished product may take the form of: a research based written report; production (charity event, fashion show or sports event, for example); an artefact (piece of art, a computer game or realised design). A written report must accompany these options. Previous student projects have included

- Will antibiotics become useless?
- The history of drumming in rock music
- The impact of the portrayal of women in the media
- Drugs and the Tour de France.

Students must also record their project process in their Production Log. The process of recording and completing a project is as important as the finished product. Both the Production Log and Product will be assessed.

What does the course look like?

The course is divided into a neat process and structure, allowing you the best opportunity to develop your project.

- Choose an area of interest and draft their project title and aims.
- Plan, research and carry out their project.
- Keep a production log of all stages of the project production, reviewing and evaluating their progress.
- Complete the project product.
- Prepare and deliver a presentation.
- Review the outcome of their project and presentation.

How will I learn?

During the EPQ, students will learn to identify, design, plan, and complete a project, applying organisational skills and strategies to meet the stated objectives. Students will also need to obtain and select information from a range of sources, analyse data, apply it relevantly, and demonstrate understanding of any appropriate connections and complexities of their topic. All of these elements require a range of skills, including using new technologies to solve problems, taking decisions critically, creatively and flexibly, and to achieve their aims. Lastly, students will need to evaluate the outcome, including their learning and performance.

What kind of things might it lead to?

The EPQ can be the deciding factor for top universities who have lots of students applying with the top grades. Extended projects can help students to develop and demonstrate a range of valuable skills through pursuing their interests and investigating topics in more depth. It has also been praised by universities for guiding students into higher education and is an excellent component of any outstanding UCAS application.

What is the entry requirement?

5 GCSES at Grade 4 or above (in any subjects).

“By seeking and blundering we learn.”
Goethe

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Course	Exam Board	Entry Requirements
Art	AQA	Grade 5 GCSE Art. If Art not studied, you must show evidence of skill in a portfolio of work that shows ability
Biology	OCR	Grade 6 GCSE Biology or Grade 6-6 GCSE Combined Science
Chemistry	OCR	Grade 6 GCSE Chemistry or Grade 6-6 GCSE Combined Science and Grade 6 in Maths
Computer Science	OCR	Grade 5 GCSE Computer Science desirable. If GCSE Computer Science not studied, Grade 6 in Maths and a keen interest in programming is essential
Drama and Theatre	Edexcel	Grade 5 GCSE English and some performance experience essential
Economics	Edexcel	Grade 5 GCSE Maths and English
English Literature	Edexcel	Grade 6 GCSE English Language and English Literature (and you must enjoy reading!)
Fashion and Textiles	OCR	Grade 5 or above in GCSE D&T is desirable, Grade 5 or above in GCSE Maths
French	AQA	Grade 6 GCSE French
Geography	AQA	Grade 5 GCSE Geography and Grade 5 GCSE Maths. If Geography not studied, students must have Grade 5 English
History	Edexcel	Grade 5 in GCSE History, Grade 5 in GCSE English
Maths	Edexcel	Grade 7 GCSE Maths. Students will be accepted on to the course with a Grade 6 if they performed strongly on the algebra sections of the GCSE Maths exams
Maths (Further)	Edexcel	Grade 7 GCSE Maths and must also be taking the A Level Maths course
Maths (Core)	AQA	Grade 5 GCSE Maths. Course is taught over 1 year
Music	Edexcel	Grade 6 GCSE Music and instrumental skill of Grade 5 or above
Music Technology	Edexcel	5 GCSEs Grade 4 or above. Students do not have to have previously studied music, but if they have not, they must demonstrate some practical skills in music technology through a composition/sequencing portfolio.
Philosophy, Religion and Ethics	AQA	Grade 5 GCSE English and Grade 5 Religious Studies (full course or short course)
Photography	AQA	Grade 4 GCSE English. If you have not studied Art at GCSE, you will need to demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment for the subject
Physical Education	AQA	Grade 6 GCSE PE or Grade 6-6 Combined Science or Grade 6 Biology. Must be competing in a sport from the AQA A Level specification (list found on AQA website) outside of school.
Physics	OCR	Grade 6 GCSE Physics or Grade 6-6 GCSE Combined Science, Grade 6 GCSE Maths
Politics	Edexcel	Grade 5 GCSE English and a genuine interest in Politics and the world around you
Product Design	OCR	Grade 5 or above in GCSE D&T is desirable, Grade 5 or above in GCSE Maths
Psychology	AQA	Grade 5 GCSE English and Grade 5 GCSE Science
Sociology	AQA	Grade 5 GCSE English
Spanish	AQA	Grade 6 GCSE Spanish
BTEC Business	Edexcel	5 GCSEs Grade 4 or above (in any subjects)
BTEC Health & Social Care	Edexcel	5 GCSEs Grade 4 or above (in any subjects)
BTEC Sport	Edexcel	5 GCSEs Grade 4 or above (in any subjects)
Diploma Level 3 Food Science & Nutrition	WJEC	5 GCSEs Grade 4 or above (in any subjects)
Extended Project Qualification	AQA	5 GCSEs Grade 4 or above (in any subjects)



RUSSELL EDUCATION TRUST

The Russell Education Trust (RET) is made up of five high-performing 11-18 secondary schools in the south of England. Member schools work together and with RET expert advisers to deliver the very highest standards of teaching and learning; and to support the achievement and happiness of every student across the Trust.

The success of the Trust's schools has been recognised by Ofsted, the Department for Education, and by the communities they serve. The RET family of schools includes:



St Andrew The Apostle School

The religious ethos in the school provides a strong base for the support of pupils' personal development and welfare. Pupils speak with pride about their school and relationships in the school.

Ofsted 2018



Kings School

Pupils are confident, articulate and aspiring. They are proud to be part of the school community.

Ofsted 2022



Becket Keys Church of England School

The headteacher's inspired leadership has quickly established a vibrant, orderly community which enables students to thrive. He ensures that a family atmosphere is fostered across the school in which all students feel cared for and valued.

Ofsted 2014



Turing House School

The school has many strengths. Leaders have established an open culture at the school where there is a clear sense of teamwork and community across staff and pupils alike. Everyone takes pride in the school. It is a welcoming and vibrant place.

Ofsted 2018



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