

Durham  
Cathedral  
Schools  
Foundation



Durham School  
Sixth Form

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At Durham School, we  
are ambitious for our  
pupils, staff and wider  
school community.



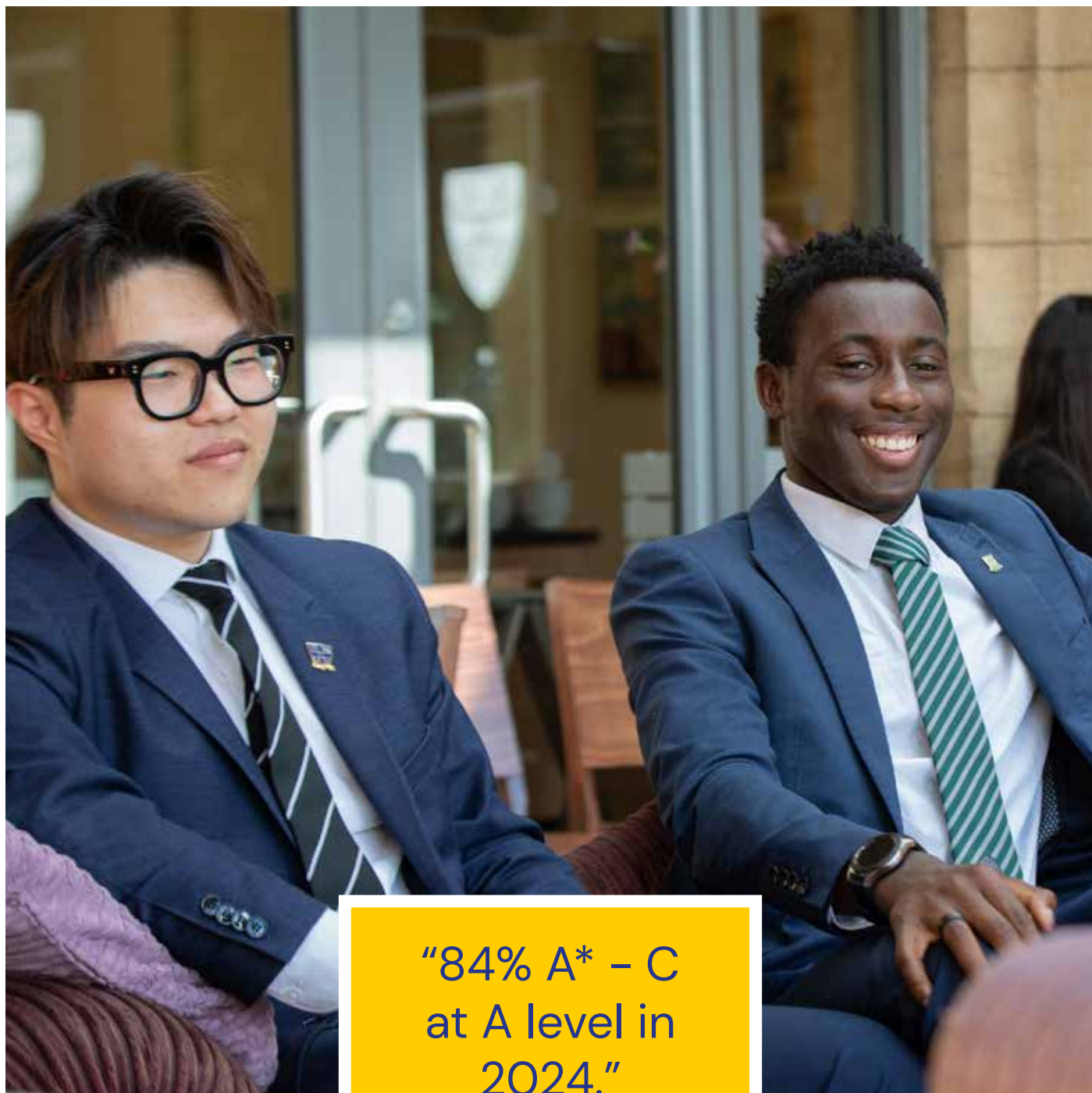
# Overview

The Sixth Form at Durham School is based on a traditional academic model of a broad A Level curriculum with the opportunity to develop the character of a student through numerous enrichment activities.

While academic success is our core purpose, within our co-educational day and boarding community our students receive a multitude of opportunities to gain *Confidence for Life*. Students are empowered to become independent and responsible learners and encouraged to think for themselves as they approach the next stage of their academic lives. After achieving A Level success, the vast majority, if not all,

of our students move onto higher education. International students can benefit from a three-year Sixth Form course by undertaking a One Year GCSE which is designed to introduce pupils for whom English is a second language to A Level study.





"84% A\* – C  
at A level in  
2024."

# A2 Exam Results 2024

A Level results 2024			Grades						Cumulative percentages		
Subject	Entries	A*	A	B	C	D	E	U	A*/A	A*-B	A*-C
Art & Des (Fine Art)	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	50.0	50.0	100.0
Art & Des (Photography)	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
Art Craft and Design	3	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0.0	33.3	33.3
Biology	12	1	3	3	2	2	1	0	33.3	58.3	75.0
Business	8	0	3	1	3	1	0	0	37.5	50.0	87.5
Chemistry	19	3	7	5	2	1	1	0	52.6	78.9	89.5
Chinese	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Computer Science	5	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	0.0	20.	40.
Drama & Theatre Studies	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Economics	6	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	50.0	83.3	100.0
English Lang and Lit	8	0	0	2	5	0	1	0	0.0	25.0	87.5
English Literature	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	33.3	100.0	100.0
French	4	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	25.0	100.0	100.0
Further Mathematics	6	1	3	1	1	0	0	0	66.7	83.3	100.0
Geography	8	0	2	4	2	0	0	0	25.0	75.0	100.0
History	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	75.0	100.0	100.0
Latin	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mathematics	21	7	7	3	3	0	1	0	66.7	81.0	95.2
Music	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Physical Education	12	0	1	4	2	3	2	0	8.3	41.7	58.3
Physics	13	2	4	3	2	1	1	0	46.2	69.2	84.6
Politics	5	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	20.0	40.0	100.0
Psychology	16	0	1	7	3	3	2	0	6.3	50.0	68.8
Religious Studies	8	0	2	2	4	0	0	0	25.0	50.0	100.0
Russian	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Spanish	3	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	33.3	33.3	33.3
Totals	173	21	41	47	36	18	10	0	35.8	63.0	83.8

# Entry Requirements



Students need a minimum of 5 GCSEs at Grade 6 to study a course of A Levels in our Sixth Form.

They must also have a Grade 4 in both Mathematics and English, otherwise they will have to resit in Year 12 alongside starting their other Studies

Ideally students need at least a Grade 6 in the subjects that they are studying at A Level. In many subjects a Grade 7 is strongly recommended.

International students must have an IELTS score of 5.5 to enter into the Sixth Form. It is our aim that by the time our international students graduate from our Sixth Form they will be at IELTS 7. This is the standard required by universities for overseas students to study in the UK.

To progress from Year 12 to Year 13, students must satisfy the School's attendance requirements as stipulated in our School's Sixth Form policy, as well as achieving satisfactory results in the end of Year 12 mock exams.

# Leavers' Destinations – 2024

Destination	Subject
Newcastle University	Law
Oxford University	History
University of Exeter	Modern Languages and Arabic
Cardiff University	Neuroscience
The University of Edinburgh	Engineering
University of Reading	Accounting and Business
University of Oxford	Ancient and Modern History
UCL (Imperial College London)	Chemical Engineering
University of Georgia	Economics
Liverpool John Moores University	Biomedical Science with Foundation Year
University of Manchester	Genetics
University of Kent	English Literature and Creative Writing
Durham University	Sport and Exercise Sciences
University of Stirling	Psychology
Northumbria University, Newcastle	Business Management
Newcastle University	Sociology
University of Liverpool	Medicine
Sheffield Hallam University	Physiotherapy
UCL (Imperial College London)	Civil Engineering
Bucconi University, Milan	Economics



Destination	Subject
Newcastle University	Biomedical Sciences
University of Leeds	Music (Performance)
University of Bristol	Mechanical and Electrical Engineering
University of Bath	Business with Work Placement
Newcastle University	Pharmacy
Newcastle University	Mechanical Engineering
University of Leeds	Geography
University of York	Theatre: Writing, Directing and Performance
York St John University	Business Management
University of Liverpool	English Literature
Northumbria University, Newcastle	Law/MLaw
Newcastle University	Mechanical Engineering
UEA (University of East Anglia)	Medicine
University of Warwick	Law
UCL (Imperial College London)	Chemical Engineering
Loughborough University	Politics, Philosophy and Economics
University of Glasgow	International Relations (SocSci)
University of Newcastle	Agriculture
University of Hertfordshire	Optometry
University of Manchester	Mathematics and Physics

# Preparing You for University Life

This booklet is designed to give help and guidance to Year 11 pupils about the courses on offer in the Sixth Form at Durham School.

## Introduction

At Durham School we are very proud of our Sixth Form. It is the final stage before our students become Old Dunelmians and leave our School community to go and make their own contributions to the world.

Our students are encouraged to be independent learners which is a vital skill if they are to make the best use of the freedom offered by life at university and beyond. This is even more critical if you consider that, in many cases, we are preparing our students for jobs that potentially do not exist yet.

As a Sixth Form, we offer traditional academic A Levels and a BTEC qualification in Business. The vast majority of our students after completing these A Levels will move on to higher education. Whilst academic success is our core purpose within our co-educational, day and boarding community our students receive a multitude of opportunities to practise our school motto "Confidence for Life."

We are proud of the wide range of academic and extracurricular opportunities that we have to offer.

## Selecting Your Subjects

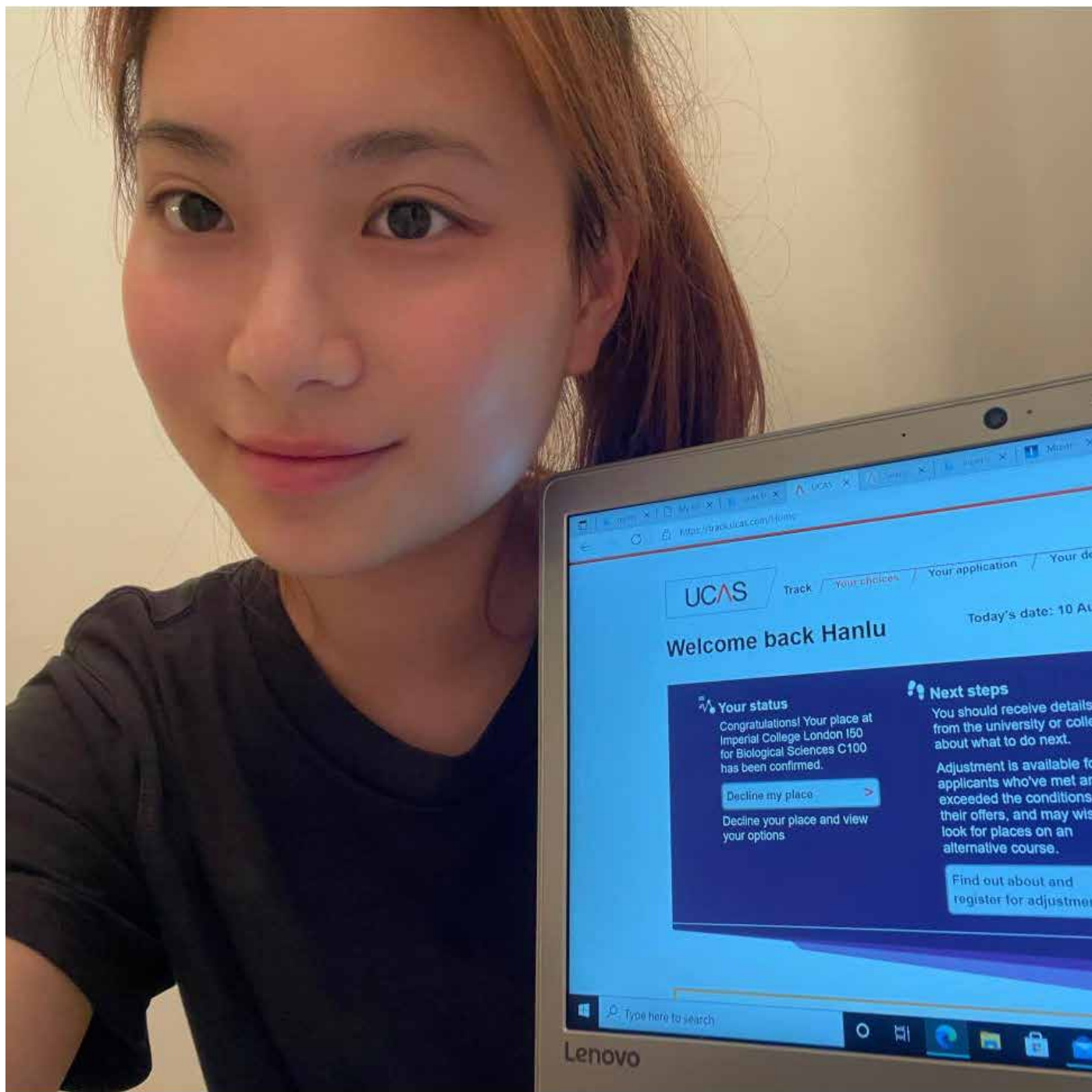
Some courses at university will require you to study certain subjects at A Level. For example, Medicine requires you to have studied Chemistry or Biology. Many university courses, however, will only ask for three A Levels or BTEC with no stipulation on the subjects studied. Staff are available to discuss Sixth Form subject choices at any time, and Mr McNair offers one-on-one meetings for this during a bookable timetabled slot. Motivation is important too because it is much easier to study a subject that you enjoy.

## Private Study Periods

Private study periods are included in the timetable with an element of supervised private study in Year 12 as the students adjust to Sixth Form expectations and work habits.

## Assessments

We are data-rich with our information on our Sixth Form students as we track their progress through their Sixth Form careers. The CEM Centre ALIS test is used to help us set Year 12 minimum expected grades. Progression tests are set on a half-termly basis. These results form part of an extensive mentoring programme that takes place on an individual basis with the students, their tutor, the Sixth Form staff and their Housemasters and Housemistresses. Included in this process are electronic-mark books and timely feedback.



# A Level Curriculum

Students need a minimum of 5 GCSEs at Grade 6 for A level study. They must also have a grade 4 in both Mathematics and English.

**September 2017 was the first year where all A Levels were reformed.**

## Reformed A Levels

These subjects have become two year, or linear, A Levels. This means that students will complete all of their unit exams at the end of the Year 13. All content will be assessed at A Level standard and there will be no opportunity to re-take units. It is important to note that, for subjects with a coursework component, there may be some coursework deadlines in Year 12.

Students who are joining the Sixth Form in 2025/6 have a number of options available to them.

### Option 1: 4 A Levels

This offers the possibility of studying four A Level subjects. It is likely that only students making outstanding progress in Year 12 will continue with all four subjects.

### Option 2: 3 A Levels + Extended Project Qualification

This option allows a student to study three A Levels, but with the added advantage of taking the EPQ in Year 12. The EPQ is worth 50% of the UCAS points of an A Level and is a valuable addition to a student's academic portfolio. Further details on the EPQ can be found on page 33.

### Option 3: 3 A Levels + Extra-Curricular Commitments

This option is primarily for students who have heavy extracurricular commitments e.g. sport, music, drama). Here, a student can opt to study just three A Levels, thus releasing them from academic teaching in one of the option columns. In the 'free' option column, the student would be allocated two private study periods; this would enable them to stay on top of their academic work commitments while allowing them to participate fully in their extra-curricular activities.

### Option 4: Business BTEC + an A Level

The BTEC in Business is offered across two option columns and is worth the grade equivalent of two A Levels for university applications. There is less of an emphasis on performing under examination conditions in the BTEC, as it is a 50% non-examined qualification.



# BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Business

## Introduction

BTECs in Business are alternative academic qualifications to A Levels. The qualification can be studied post-16, the same as A Levels, but they are more flexible and have a more vocational content (more focus on developing skills and knowledge specifically for the workplace). The BTEC in Business course can be equivalent to two A Levels and is respected and accepted by the vast majority of universities. Instead of being graded in the traditional sense, BTECs have grading criteria of pass, merit, distinction and distinction\*, with distinction\* being the highest achievement.

## Course Content

The National Diploma in Business BTEC course allows learners to study elements of Traditional Business Theory such as Marketing and Finance, whilst also introducing modern themes such as Event Management and pitching business ideas.

**Assessment: Examination Board:**  
Pearson (720 GLH) 601/7157/1

### Unit 1

Exploring Business (internally set and marked assignment, 90 GLH)

### Unit 2

Developing a Marketing Campaign (externally set and marked assignment, 90 GLH)

### Unit 3

Personal and Business Finance (exam, 120 GLH)

### Unit 4

Managing an Event (internally set and marked assignment, 90 GLH)

### Unit 5

International Business  
(internally set and marked assignment, 90 GLH)

### Unit 6

Principles of Management (externally set and marked assignment, 120 GLH)

### Unit 8

Recruitment and Selection (Optional unit, internally set and marked assignment, 60 GLH)

### Unit 9

Team Building in Business (Optional unit, internally set and marked assignment, 60 GLH)

## Preparation for University

The assessment tasks on the BTEC Business course may take several forms: written projects, presentations and practical activities. There is scope for a wide variety of assessment methods to be used which will stand learners in good stead for the future. They provide progression to the workplace either directly or via study at a higher level. Over 100,000 BTEC students apply to UK universities every year, and their BTEC Nationals are accepted by over 150 UK universities and higher education institutes for relevant degree programmes, either on their own or in combination with A Levels.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

There are no specific course requirements, although it is recommended by Pearson that students have achieved at least five GCSEs (preferably including Maths and English) to a good grade.

**Head of Department:** Mr A J Graham

# Business

## Introduction

Business is an exciting, forward-thinking A Level. We aim to develop an understanding of business issues and to foster thinking, analysis and evaluative skills. We welcome visiting speakers from various industries, go on field trips. A keen and lively interest in business affairs contributes greatly to success in the academic study of Business.

## Course Content

The Business course is built around the four functional areas of Business: Marketing, Finance, Operations Management and Managing People. Students develop their skills and knowledge across all topic areas.

## Assessment

### Examination Board:

Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Business (9BSO)

### Paper 1 (33%) – (2 hours)

BUSS1 – Marketing, People and Global Businesses

### Paper 2 (33%) – (2 hours)

BUSS2 – Business Activities, Decisions and Strategy

### Paper 3 (33%) – (2 hours)

BUSS3 – Investigating business in a Competitive Environment

## Preparation for University

The course will be of direct value to students considering a degree or a career in Business, Management, or Accounting and Finance. To this end, students intending to enter careers such as engineering and other science-based areas will find that business provides a good insight into the way their future organisations operate. Business combines well with other subjects and because there is little direct overlap, it is possible to take it with Economics.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements – an ability to interpret data and financial figures is useful throughout the course.

**Head of Department:** Mr A J Graham

# Art and Design (Fine Art)

## Introduction

The course is designed to promote awareness and understanding of all aspects of art and design. It aims to develop a wide range of skills, including competence in observational drawing as well as expertise in an extensive range of media and techniques. It develops knowledge of the History of Art and Design in our own and other cultures.

## Course Content

The course consists of two components, a Personal Investigation and an Externally Set Assignment. The Personal Investigation requires students to conduct a practical investigation into an idea, issue, concept or theme supported by written material of 1000–3000 words. It should demonstrate a coherent and in-depth response and reflect the student's ability to construct and develop a sustained line of reasoning from an initial starting point to a final realisation.

The Externally Set Assignment requires students to respond to a question paper issued by the examination board on 1st February of the final year. Students produce a response to one of eight questions. Preparatory work is developed over the course of several months and the final outcome is created during 15 hours of supervised time after Easter.

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** AQA  
**Fine Art A Level Unit 1:** 7202/C  
**Unit 2:** 7202/X

## Preparation for University

The course provides access to foundation courses and to a wide range of degree courses in related subject areas. Some universities accept students directly onto a degree course in Art and Design, while others require them to have undertaken a foundation course at a college of higher education. Degree courses which students have chosen include Fine Art, Graphics, Sculpture, Teacher Training, Web Design, Multi-Media Design, Fashion Design, 3D Design, and more.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements.

**Head of Department:** Mrs L E Thompson



# Biology

## Introduction

Biology is a dynamic subject and recent advances in medicine, food technology, and environmental issues have been reliant upon scientists with a sound grasp of Biology. The course is primarily aimed at candidates who are likely to apply for a degree course with a biological emphasis.

## Course Content

There are eight topics that are to be covered throughout the two year linear course. Topics 1–4 will cover the first year of the course (biological molecules, cells, exchanging substances and genetic information). Topics 5–8 cover the second year of the course (energy transfer, homeostasis, inheritance and gene expression). There is also a significant practical component throughout the course.

**Assessment: Examination Board:** AQA Biology 7402

### Unit 1 (35%)

Topics 1–4, including any relevant practical skills (2 hours)

### Unit 2 (35%)

Topics 5–8, including any relevant practical skills (2 hours)

### Unit 3 (30%)

Topics 1–8, including relevant practical skills (2 hours)

There is a separate practical skills endorsement. This is assessed by teachers and will be based on direct observations of students' competency in a range of skills that are not assessable in written exams.

## Preparation for University

A Level Biology offers a broad spectrum of topics and experimental skills and as such is an appropriate stepping stone for university courses. Completing the course in Biology would demonstrate that candidates have a variety of practical and intellectual skills. These can be applied to scenarios or tasks that the candidate may be set in their chosen course, whether it be Accountancy or Zoology.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Grade 7 Biology, or 7–7 Double Award Science is the GCSE recommendation. It should be worth noting that 10% of the awarded marks are for Level 2 Maths (GCSE), so a pass in Maths is also beneficial.

**Head of Department:** Mr M F Burke



# Chemistry

## Introduction

Chemistry is the study of the substances that help to make our life more comfortable. Materials developed by chemists can be seen in the clothes we wear, the fuels that we burn in our homes and cars, fertilisers used in the production of our food and in the medicine we take. Chemists need also to study how and why substances react together and how they can change the properties of compounds so as to produce those characteristics that will be beneficial to humans.

## Course Content

The course develops those skills learnt at GCSE and develops the students' interest and enjoyment of Chemistry. It aims to produce an appreciation of the interlinking patterns that exist amongst the chemical elements so that predictions can be made. The course is challenging, but is also lots of fun, and it is expected that students carry out extra reading in their study time.

## Assessment

### Examination Board: OCR Chemistry A

**Unit 1** Practical Chemistry

**Unit 2** Foundations in Chemistry

**Unit 3** Periodic Table and Energy

**Unit 4** Core Organic

**Unit 5** Physical Chemistry and Transition Elements

**Unit 6** Organic Chemistry and Analysis

All modules are examined at the end of the course in two 1hr30 exams, and third synoptic paper 1hr30. The assessment will be in the form of long and short answer questions, multiple choice and synoptic questions.

## Preparation for University

Chemistry A Level is a well-respected qualification, highly regarded by universities and employers alike. Other subjects which complement Chemistry at advanced level are Biology, Physics and Mathematics; however, an increasing number of students following arts or humanities subjects choose to continue with Chemistry to broaden their studies.

A qualification in Chemistry may lead to the following careers:

Engineering	Nursing
Management Consultancy	Chemistry
Chemistry	Pharmacology
Accountancy	Biochemistry
Environmental Science	Veterinary Science
Dentistry	Food and Drug Industries
Medicine	Law
Sports Science	Forensic Science

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Grade 7 in Chemistry and grade 7 in Mathematics or 7-7 in Double Award Science are required to study Chemistry at A Level.

**Head of Department:** Mrs F J Gowland

# Classical Civilisation

## Introduction

Classical Civilisation is a fascinating subject in its own right, but in addition, a knowledge and understanding of the classical world will enable you to understand better our own culture and civilisation which owes so much to Greece and Rome. This course is open to all students, requires no previous study of classical subjects and offers students a chance to make a fresh start on a new and exciting specification. We aim to give an insight into the glorious civilisations of Greece and Rome, exploring important aspects of life through history, archaeology, art, architecture and literature. It encourages candidates to develop a range of analytical, interpretative and communication skills that can be applied to a wide variety of subjects.

## Course Content

The emphasis is on learning a range of different aspects of studying the ancient world.

The A Level is made up of three units, one of which is compulsory. One module of three is chosen on the topic of Culture and the Arts and another on Belief and Ideas. All three units are externally assessed in May/June.

## Likely units of study are:

### H408/11: The world of the hero\*

A study of books of either Homer's Iliad or Odyssey plus Virgil's Aeneid.

### H408/24: Greek Art

An analysis of the development of sculpture and pottery through the examination of many ancient artefacts.

### H408/31: Greek Religion

An overview of the varied religious practices and their origins through the ancient Greek world.  
(\* compulsory unit)

**Examination Board:** OCR specification H408

H408/11	2hr20 exam	100 marks	40% of A Level
H408/24	1hr45 exam	75 marks	30% of A Level
H408/31	1hr45 exam	75 marks	30% of A Level

## Preparation for University

As an academic A Level, Classical Civilisation gives excellent preparation for many courses at university due to the strong investigative skills, critical interpretation, source analysis and information assimilation that students develop throughout the course. Apart from students of Classics and Archaeology, those of English, Politics, Law, History and many others will find an A Level in Classical Civilisation a great support for their studies. Graduates in Classics enjoy success in a huge variety of careers including Public Relations, Marketing, the Civil Service, Law, Journalism and the Diplomatic Service.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form requirements.

**Head of Department:** Mr C J Hope

# Computer Science

## Introduction

Computers infuse every aspect of modern life. Modern society simply could not function without computers. Computer Science at A Level will give students a general grounding in Computing, including an understanding of computer systems, the principles of programming, and the solving of problems. The course is designed to develop an understanding of computer science as students can develop the capacity to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically. Over the two years, students will develop a strong ability to analyse problems, deconstruct them, spot patterns and formulate solutions, all of which are skills that are extremely valuable for further study and employment.

## Course Content

- The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices
- Software and software development
- Exchanging data
- Data types, data structures and algorithms
- Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues
- Elements of computational thinking
- Problem solving and programming
- Algorithms to solve problems and standard algorithms

The learner will choose a computing problem to work through according to the guidance in the specification:

- Analysis of the problem
- Design of the solution
- Developing the solution
- Evaluation

## Assignment

### OCR Computer Science H446

#### Module 1 – 2 hours 30 minutes (40% of A Level)

A written paper including short answer, longer answer, and some higher tariff questions that will test the quality of extended responses.

#### Module 2 – 2 hours 30 minutes (40% of A Level)

A written paper including short answer, longer answer, and some higher tariff questions that will test the quality of extended responses.

#### Module 3 – 20% of A Level

The project will be internally assessed and externally moderated.

## Preparation for University

If you are considering a career in Computing or Engineering, Computer Science is an excellent subject to consider. It complements a wide range of subjects at university and beyond.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

A Grade 7 in GCSE Computer Science/ICT and a Grade 7 in Mathematics is recommended in order to successfully pursue this course.

**Head of Department:** Mrs L Fox

# Drama and Theatre

## Introduction

Drama is one of the oldest and most profound of human activities and its rich potential for developing confidence, expression, and teamwork is obvious. Whilst GCSE Drama is not an essential requirement, you should have some performing or technical experience. You must also have an appetite for going to the theatre.

## Course Content

### A Level Drama And Theatre Component 1:

#### **Drama and Theatre (written exam) 40% of A Level**

We will undertake the study of two set plays, and you will answer one question on each play.

Our programme of theatre visits prepares you for the second part of the written exam where you will answer a question on the work of theatre makers in a single live theatre production seen.

### Component 2:

#### **Creating Original Drama (practical) 30% of A Level**

The creating and performing of an entirely devised piece which must be influenced by the work and methodologies of a prescribed practitioner or theatre company. You will also submit a working notebook on the devising process.

This component is marked by your teacher and moderated by the exam board.

## Assessments

### Component 3:

#### **Making Theatre (practical) 30% of A Level**

Practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts (Extract 1, 2 and 3) each taken from a different play. The methodology of a prescribed practitioner must be applied to Extract 3.

Extract 3 is to be performed as a final assessed piece (students may contribute as performer, designer, or director). A reflective report analysing and evaluating theatrical interpretation of all three extracts will also be submitted. This component is marked by the exam board.

## Preparation for University

The course is academically exacting, and its combination of a written exam, practical work and evaluation and analysis of both the interpretative and creative processes enables students to gain an entry qualification for university courses in a host of subjects.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form requirements.

**Head of Department:** Mrs A V Brownlee



# Design Realisation

## Introduction

This course follows the 'Art Craft and Design' qualification and is an exciting opportunity for Sixth Form students who wish to follow a Creative Design route at university, or wish to refine skills of a practical nature.

Developed by Edexcel, it provides students with knowledge, skills, and in-depth understanding of Design processes. The course is mostly practical in nature, allowing students to develop creativity and their own areas of interest.

Project work reduces exam stress too, as this course focuses upon the production of a Portfolio and has a grade scale that suits students across the full ability range. All students can pursue high grades without having to worry about revision or exam nerves. This qualification is fully recognised by universities as a great way of developing key skills needed to proceed to the next stage.

## Course Content

In this course students will follow a route where they initially follow the acquisition of new skills and then use these within a series of projects. For example, Graphic Design, Product Design, or even Environmental architecture.

Candidates will learn to design and modify new and existing products. They should explore a wide range of materials and processes, and work produced should adhere to a design brief and demonstrate ability to research, develop, and test ideas. Candidates should also demonstrate their understanding of environmental issues.

## Component 1: Portfolio

The portfolio consists of a skill booklet, charting progression, a series of small projects based in several fields of Design. And an extended project in the students' specialism where they will also include a written investigation on a design theme. Work can include research, observation, exploration, analysis and evaluation of working practices, ideas and contexts of designers and creative practitioners.

## Component 2: Externally set assignment

In Component 2, students will respond to a starting point set by the examination board. They are required to develop project work which culminates in a fully resolved piece within a 15 hour Controlled Assessment.

## Assessments

### Component 1 (60%) Portfolio & Investigation

### Component 2 (40%) Externally Set Task

## Preparation for University

The course will provide access to degree courses in many areas but especially; Architecture, Product Design, Industrial Design, Graphic Design, Fashion Design, Web Design, Mechanical or Design Engineering to name a few.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry qualifications.

**Head of Department:** Mr M J Clayton

# Economics

## Introduction

'The ideas of economists, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed, the world is ruled by little else.' – J.M. Keynes.

Economics is a long-established discipline whose relevance to the world of Business, Government, International Relations and Academia is widely acknowledged. Many students find that studying Economics opens up new areas of interest in which they previously had little knowledge.

## Course Content

- **Theme 1:** Introduction to Markets and Market Failure
- **Theme 2:** The UK Economy – Performance and Policies
- **Theme 3:** Business Behaviour and the Labour Market
- **Theme 4:** A Global Perspective

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** Edexcel

**Paper 1:** Markets and Business Behaviour

\*Paper code: 9ECO/01

**Paper 2:** The National and Global Economy

\*Paper code: 9ECO/02

**Paper 3:** Microeconomics and Macroeconomics

\*Paper code 9ECO/03

## Preparation for University

Economics graduates are eagerly sought by employers because of the analytical, problem solving skills, and organisational expertise which a study of this discipline provides. The Bank of England, Stock Broking, the Civil Service, Management Consultancies and major national and international companies all employ Economics graduates as professional Economists and Economic Advisers.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Grade 6s in Mathematics and English at GCSE are required.

**Head of Department:** Mr A J Graham

# English Language and Literature

## Introduction

This is a popular and lively course for students who enjoyed both Language and Literature at GCSE.

## Course Content

Students study literary texts; novels and poems, in addition to transcripts of spoken language and representations of speech in texts. The course requires formal essays and also transactional pieces such as creative writing, travel writing, memoirs, articles and journal entries.

## Assessments

Examination Board: Edexcel

### Unit 1 (40%) Telling Stories. (3 hours)

Open book. Section A – Voices in 20th- and 21st century Texts: one comparative essay question on one unseen extract selected from 20th- or 21st-century sources and one text from the anthology (AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4 assessed).

Section B – Drama Texts: one extract-based essay question on the chosen drama text (AO1, AO2, AO3 assessed).

### Unit 2 (40%) Exploring Conflict (2 hours 30 minutes)

Open book. Two sections – students answer one question from a choice of four in Section A and one question from a choice of four in Section B. Section A – Unseen Prose Non-fiction Texts: one essay question on an unseen prose non-fiction extract. The unseen extract is linked to the studied theme (AO1, AO2, AO3 assessed).

Section B – Prose Fiction and Other Genres: one comparative essay question on one prose fiction anchor text and one other text from a theme (AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4 assessed).

### Unit 3 (20%) Non-Exam Assessment; Making Connections

Students will produce two assignments:

Assignment 1 – two pieces of original writing: one piece of fiction writing and one piece of creative non-fiction writing (AO5 assessed).

Assignment 2 – one analytical commentary reflecting on their studied texts and the pieces of writing they have produced (AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4 assessed).

The advisory total word count is 2500–3250: 1500–2000 words for the original writing pieces and 1000–1250 for the commentary.

## Preparation for University

This course offers an excellent grounding for the study of academic subjects at university for example History and Law. Indeed, many universities ask specifically for an A Level in English in order to apply to their Law degree courses. The course develops strong analytical skills, critical interpretation and communication skills. The ability to develop a line of thought and convincing argument is enhanced through discussion and considered essay writing. English Language and Literature is also a good introduction to creative courses such as script writing, creative writing, or media courses.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements. A reading habit is also advisable.

**Head of Department:** Mrs F Swan

# English Literature

## Introduction

Studying English Literature allows students to evaluate their experiences and develop their opinions through a range of different texts. Both coursework and exam encourage the development of skills such as: analysing, comparing, evaluating, structuring and supporting an argument. The study of Literature discusses the contexts of production of texts and the contexts of reception. This makes us think about our role as readers as well as the author's role in writing.

## Course Content

The course requires students to read widely and to engage in discussions about the characters, themes and ideas presented in the texts. The texts required for the syllabus range across drama, including study of a Shakespeare play, modern and Victorian novels, and poetry. We approach texts through individual reading and responses; class and group discussions; presentations; performances and visits where possible.

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** CIE 9695

**Paper 1 Drama and Poetry.** 2 hours exam 50 marks

Candidates answer two questions: one from section A Drama and one from section B Poetry

**Paper 2 Prose and unseen.** 2 hours exam 50 marks

Candidates answer two questions: one from section A on studied Prose and one from section B unseen.

**Paper 3 Shakespeare and Drama.**

2 Hours exam 50 marks

Candidates answer two questions: one from section A Shakespeare and one from section B Drama.

**Paper 4 Pre-and post – 1900 Poetry and Prose.**

2 Hours 50 marks

Candidates answer two questions: one from section A Pre-1900 Poetry and Prose and one from Post – 1900 Poetry and Prose

All papers are externally assessed and contribute 25% of the A Level.

## Preparation for University

This course offers an excellent grounding for the study of academic subjects at university; for example, English, History and Law. Indeed, many universities ask specifically for an A level in English in order to apply to their Law degree courses. As the skills acquired are transferrable, the study of Literature is compatible with the study of other academic subjects such as Classics, Art History and Modern Languages, Psychology, Philosophy, Sociology, Anthropology and others. The course develops strong analytical skills, critical interpretation and communication skills. The ability to develop a line of thought and convincing argument is enhanced through discussion and considered essay writing. The course itself allows students to consider periods in history and consider different theoretical approaches to Literature. English Literature is also a good introduction to creative courses such as script writing, creative writing, or media courses

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements. A reading habit is also advisable.

**Head of Department:** Mrs F Swan



# Geography

## Introduction

The A Level Geography course gives learners the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to become engaged global citizens. It combines well with both arts and science A Levels. Contemporary and dynamic content allows students to understand and interact with issues which affect people and places from local to global scale.

## Course Content

The Physical Geography component covers Tectonic Hazards, Coastal Landscapes, Ecosystems, and Global Water and Energy supplies. The Human Geography component investigates Diverse Places, Global Connections and Superpowers. Fieldwork is carried out as an essential part of the course. The Coursework component allows learners to undertake an independent investigation of their choice. This encourages learners to deepen their knowledge and understanding of their chosen topic whilst developing a number of study skills relevant to Higher Education and the world of work.

There will be a residential field trip over a weekend in the Spring Term of Year 12.

## Assessment

There are 3 externally examined papers and one coursework component. Students complete all assessment in the May/June of Year 13.

### Paper 1 – Physical Geography

30 % of total A Level (2 hour 15 minute written paper)

### Paper 2 – Human Geography

30 % of total A Level (2 hour 15 minute written paper)

### Paper 3 – Synoptic Decision Making

20 % of total A Level (2 hour 15 minute written paper)

### Coursework: Independent Investigation

20% of total A Level (non-examination assessment)

## Preparation for University

Geography is a popular choice at university. Geography graduates are in a strong position when applying for jobs because careers in Development, Planning, Environmental Management, Travel and Tourism and many other areas incorporate geographical knowledge and skills. Many employers also recognise the wide range of transferable skills that geographers have, such as the ability to collect, process, present and analyse data, work in a team, interpret maps and satellite images and use geographical information systems (GIS).

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements.

**Head of Department:** Dr C H Scott-Warburton

# History

## Introduction

The History Department's aims are many and varied. History is a subject that is important to everyone and should be accessible to everyone. The department strives, therefore, to create a stimulating environment in which to engage student of all abilities. The increased challenges presented by A Level study provide students with the opportunity to develop the crucial skills of analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, and the effective communication of ideas through reasoned argument, as well as promoting academic rigour and critical thought as valuable ends in themselves. Furthermore, through the Historical Investigation (the coursework), the department seeks to encourage intellectual curiosity in students, and hopes to engender in them the confidence to become effective independent learners. Finally, it is hoped that students will continue to read and enjoy History throughout their lives.

## Course Content

The main aim of the History Department is to inspire an interest in, and love of, the past. To that end, we offer an excitingly diverse curriculum at A Level, which includes Medieval and Modern Topics. Through our studies of the political, social, economic and spiritual lives of people in a variety of chronological, national and supranational contexts, we seek to develop an understanding and appreciation of the value of the experiences of others.

**We are following AQA 7042JL, which includes:**

- A breadth study: the British Empire, c.1857–1967
- A depth study: Italy and Fascism, c.1900–45
- Coursework: The Crusades, 1095–1204

## Assessment

**Examination Board: AQA**

AQA's A Level History course is divided into three units. Two culminate in a final examination in the summer of Year 13: the breadth study (19th and 20th century Russia) and the depth study (the English Reformation). Each examination is 150 minutes long and is worth 40% of the overall A Level grade. The coursework, worth 20% of the A Level, comprises an essay of around 4000 words.

## Preparation for University

The Russell Group of leading universities identifies History as a 'facilitating subject', in that it leaves open many options at university. It provides students not simply with knowledge and understanding of the past, but also with a range of skills that are applicable to a wide range of degree courses. The A Level can lead to study of History at university, but it also acts as background for other arts subjects. It meshes well with, for example, Economics, English, Philosophy and Politics, while its skills are very helpful in Law. There are specialist 'History' careers such as archive work or teaching, but it is also a springboard for International Business, Diplomatic and Media Careers.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form requirements.

**Head of Department: Mr S P Wright**

# Latin

## Introduction

Building on the grammar and literature of Latin GCSE, the A Level is the time to study even more exciting and fascinating literature and engage more closely with the workings of the language. Whether it is Cicero blackening the character of an enemy with all manner of insults and innuendo and trying to warn his fellow Romans of dangerous individuals, Virgil relating to the sorrow of a father losing his son in war, or the poet Horace extolling the virtues of the Emperor Augustus in some of the most beautiful and lyrical verse ever composed, you will find something of interest and something to challenge.

## Course Content

The A Level course: grammar is consolidated in Year 12 with much work on translating unseen passages of real Latin, and work on Prose Composition (writing in Latin) starts in earnest if that route is to be followed. Some of the set texts will be started too, usually starting with one of the Verse texts such as Virgil before moving on to some Prose with Cicero.

The other Latin Verse and Latin Prose set texts are primarily the focus of study in Year 13; each unit contains a mix of set text and context reading in English. Set text study also develops the skill to write critical literary essays. Work continues on Prose unseen translation and the challenge of Verse unseens is introduced and studied carefully; those wanting to do Prose Composition (English into Latin) hone their skills in this, otherwise comprehension passages are studied (for Paper 2).

The authors of the unseen passages are known beforehand so students can get used to their style.

## Assessments

**Examination Board:** OCR Specifications H443

The A Level is made up of four units which are externally assessed in May/June

### H443/01: Latin Unseen Translation

Latin unseen (one prose, one verse) translation into English. 1hr45 exam 100 marks 33% of A Level

### H443/02: Latin Prose Composition or Comprehension

A passage of English to be translated into Latin or a Latin comprehension passage. 1hr15 exam 50 marks 17% of A Level

### H443/03: Latin Prose

Two prose set texts and additional context reading in English. 2hr exam 75 marks 25% of A Level

### H443/04: Latin Verse

Two verse set texts and additional context reading in English. 2hr exam 75 marks 25% of A Level

## Preparation for University

Students may continue their Latin and/or Classical studies at university. This can be a Literature degree, Classical Civilization, Ancient History or Archaeology. Classical subjects develop a tremendous variety of skills and graduates are recognised as well-trained in clear thinking, research skills, adaptability, independence, and the ability to understand people and situations in the world at large. As such, they are eagerly sought by employers. Students of Latin enjoy success in a huge variety of careers from Journalism to Accountancy, from Management to Publishing.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements.

**Head of Department:** Mr C J Hope

# Mathematics and Further Mathematics

## Introduction

'Mathematics is the language with which God has written the Universe.' – Galileo Galilei

Mathematics is a fascinating academic discipline with innumerable links to the world around us. Indeed, it is said that if you go down deep enough into anything, you will find Mathematics.

## A Level Mathematics Course Content

Students take Pure Mathematics 1 & 2 covering: proof, algebra and functions, coordinate geometry, sequences and series, trigonometry, exponentials and logarithms, differentiation, integration, and vectors. They also sit a combined Statistics and Mechanics paper. The Statistics part covers: sampling, data presentation and interpretation, probability, distributions, and hypothesis testing. In Mechanics, topics include kinematics, forces and Newton's Laws, and moments.

## Further Mathematics

Students cover Further Pure 1 & 2: looking at proof, complex numbers, matrices, and more advanced calculus, vectors, polar coordinates, hyperbolic functions and differential equations. They can also go on to deepen their knowledge of Pure Mathematics, Statistics or Mechanics, in two further optional papers.

Those following the Further Mathematics pathway will complete the full A Level Mathematics in Year 12, followed by the Further Mathematics A Level in Year 13.

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** Edexcel

### Mathematics

Pure Mathematics 1 (2 hours)  
Pure Mathematics 2 (2 hours)  
Statistics & Mechanics (2 hours)

### Further Mathematics

Further Pure Mathematics 1 (1h30)  
Further Pure Mathematics 2 (1h30)  
Option 1: FP3, Further Statistics, Further Mechanics (1h30)  
Option 2: FP4, Further Statistics, Further Mechanics (1h30)

## Preparation for University

Mathematics is a highly regarded subject and is a prerequisite for many university courses.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

A minimum of a Grade 7 at GCSE is required to study Mathematics at A Level. A Grade 8 at GCSE is recommended for Further Mathematics.

**Head of Department:** Mr T N Middleton

# Modern Languages: French, German, and Spanish

## Introduction

An A Level in Modern Languages offers the opportunity to study for a respected academic qualification while developing a very practical skill, preparing students well for future study and living abroad.

## Course Content

The Modern Languages course covers a variety of current affairs topics alongside traditional grammar and translation; each course also offers the opportunity to study literature and/or film in the original language, while developing essential listening, reading, speaking, and writing skills.

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** Edexcel Specification  
9FRO/9GNO/9SPO

**At the end of Year 13 the course will be assessed across several different skills:**

### Unit 1 (40%) Written Examination

(2 hours) Listening, Reading and Translation

### Unit 2 (30%) Written Examination

(2 hours and 40 minutes) Written response to works (literary or film) and Translation

### Unit 3 (30%) Speaking Examination

## Preparation for University

Any Modern Language is a well-respected qualification regarded by universities and employers alike, and is actively preferred by Russell Group universities as a facilitating subject; ultimately, the ability to speak an additional language opens up the opportunity of work placements throughout the world. A language at A Level shows you have the ability to analyse language and thought as well as be an independent learner. Study of the subject at GCSE is essential preparation for A Level, and you should aim to have completed the higher tier reading and listening papers.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Grade 7 at GCSE is strongly recommended to study a language at A Level.

**Head of Department:** Mrs K L Wilkinson

# Music

## Introduction

All candidates will enjoy and succeed at Music A Level if they can fulfil the following:

- Enjoy performing both as soloist and as part of an ensemble.
- Be prepared to practise regularly to improve instrumental or vocal technique.
- Have some experience of composition and show a willingness to improve compositional techniques.
- Enjoy listening to a very wide variety of musical styles, be prepared to analyse critically and to build up aural skills.

## Course Content

The course develops further the skills acquired during GCSE: performing, composition and appraising (listening and analysis).

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** AQA

**Course code:** 7272

**Component 1 (40%):** Appraising Music

**Component 2 (35%):** Performing

**Component 3 (25%):** Composing

## Preparation for University

A Level Music is amongst the most respected A Levels by universities as it tests a variety of challenging skills. It is acceptable as a subject for any degree application.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Normally, at least a Grade 6 at GCSE Music is a prerequisite, and it is important that potential candidates have reached approximately Grade 5 standard on one instrument (or voice) by the end of the GCSE year. Grade 5 theory would be an additional, though not essential, benefit. The course is open to pop and rock musicians as well as those with a classical background, though the ability to read music from staff notation is essential.

**Head of Department:** Mr S R Bowler





# Physical Education

## Introduction

This course suits any genuine sportsperson. It focuses on participation and performance in physical activity as part of a balanced, active and healthy lifestyle.

GCSE PE is a slight advantage, but not a necessity. Talented sportspeople who have not studied the subject at GCSE have been very successful on the course.

## Course Content

The course is 70% academic and 30% practical.

## Assessment

Examination Board: OCR Physical Education

### Component 1

Anatomy & Physiology, Exercise Physiology, Biomechanics

### Component 2

Skill Acquisition & Sports Psychology

### Component 3

Socio-Cultural & Contemporary Issues

### Component 4

Performance

## Preparation for University

The subject is useful to any sports-related university course. It also covers many health-related issues that would be useful to anyone with a philosophy of pursuing and active healthy lifestyle into adult life.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form requirements.

**Head of Department:** Mrs K L Rochester



# Physics

## Introduction

Physics “is a way to teach how something gets to be known, what is not known, to what extent things are known (for nothing is known absolutely), how to handle doubt and uncertainty, what the rules of evidence are, how to think about things so that judgments can be made, how to distinguish truth from fraud, and from show.” – Richard Feynman, Nobel-Prize winning physicist

## Course Content

- Mechanics
- Materials
- Waves
- Electricity
- Light
- Fields
- Particle Physics
- Thermodynamics
- Nuclear Physics
- Oscillations
- Astrophysics
- Practical Skills
- Analysis

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** Edexcel

### Unit 1 (30%) 1hr45 (90 marks)

Advanced Physics I

### Unit 2 (30%) 1hr45 (90 marks)

Advanced Physics II

### Unit 3 (40%) 2hr30 (120 marks)

General and practical principles in Physics

**Practical Endorsement** – internally assessed throughout year (pass/fail)

## Preparation for University

Physics as a subject is highly respected by universities and employers alike. It is one of the few A Levels which will allow you access to specialist degrees, such as Engineering and Medicine, and also allow you to keep your options open with relevance in other areas such as Finance and Politics.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Minimum Grade 7 in Physics GCSE or 7–7 in Combined Science and Grade 7 in Maths are a requirement to study Physics at A Level.

**Head of Department:** Mr A P Smith

# Politics

## Introduction

Politics is all about what is going on in the world right now, this makes politics exciting and interesting to learn. No other subject at A Level lives outside the textbook in this way, allowing students to understand the world around them beyond the headlines. Students who take politics match it up with a wide range of A Levels, using it as an option to make them a more well-rounded candidate.

## Course Content

Nearly all students come to Politics with little or no understanding of the subject. This is not a problem as the course is designed with this in mind; all students start by studying the basics of what democracy is and how it works in the UK.

During Year One the focus is mainly on UK Politics. Students' study eight modules ranging from 'What is the UK Constitution?' to 'How does social media influence voting behaviour?'. Towards the end of Year One students investigate Political Ideologies. These are the really big ideas behind political parties going back hundreds of years. This is the fascinating part of the course as these ideas shape the ways societies and governments operate. Students who also study A Level History find the Socialism module particularly interesting.

In Year Two, the focus moves to the US. Students learn about the US political system, comparing and contrasting it to the UK. The course structure closely mirrors the UK and once again the focus is on US Politics as it happens. Thankfully, there is no shortage of excellent resources to learn Politics. In addition to the core text books there are a wide range of programmes to watch and listen. This makes the seemingly difficult job of staying up to date and understanding what is going on so much easier.

## Assessment

**Examination Board:** Pearson (Edexcel)

**Paper 1** | 33% | UK Politics (9PLO/01)

**Paper 2** | 33% | UK Government (9PLO/02)

**Paper 3** | 33% | Comparative Politics (9PLO/3A)

**All exams are two-hour written papers**

## Preparation for University

Politics is the ideal preparation for students who want to develop skills in investigation, communication and persuasive analysis, skills which are sought after and applicable to any career.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements. Having an opinion on and an interest in the world is useful.

**Head of Department:** Mr S Macnair

# Psychology

## Introduction

Psychology is an exploration of the most complex machine on earth – the human mind. Literally defined, Psychology is the “scientific study of the mind and behaviour”, and during your A Level course you will cover a varied and challenging syllabus, considering questions such as:

- Where do mental illnesses come from and how do we treat them?
- What makes people aggressive?
- Are we a product of our genes or our environment?
- How does our memory work?
- What are the consequences of childhood neglect?
- What do Psychologists actually do?

## Course Content

There are three examined units in the Psychology A Level. In Unit 1, students study Social Influence, Memory, Attachment and Psychopathology. Unit 2 covers classic approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology and Research Methods. Unit 3 involves a consideration of issues and debates in Psychology and three additional optional topics – Schizophrenia, Relationships and Forensic Psychology.

Teaching and learning involves a variety of methods, including lectures, small group activities, discussions, videos and independent learning tasks. As the A Level is assessed entirely through external examinations, you will also spend time developing your exam skills and critical essay writing. You will, however, conduct your own psychological research to learn about how psychologists’ study human behaviour.

## Assessment

Examination Board: AQA Specification 7182

**Unit 1** (33%) Introductory Topics in Psychology (2 hours)

**Unit 2** (33%) Psychology in Context (2 hours)

**Unit 3** (33%) Issues and Options in Psychology (2 hours)

## Preparation for University

Psychology develops literacy and numeracy skills as well as critical and analytical thinking. Its status as a scientific discipline means that it is an A Level which serves as a good basis for a number of degree courses, especially those of a scientific nature. Beyond university, the diverse nature of the Psychology course means that it is an attractive qualification for many career paths, including those in the fields of Education, Business and Health. At A Level, Psychology combines well with both the traditional sciences as well as humanities subjects.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form requirements.

**Head of Department:** Mr B Brownlee

# Religious Studies

## Introduction

Studying Religion is an excellent vehicle for refining high-level thinking skills in preparation for university and beyond. Issues related to the ethical themes studied at GCSE are explored in greater depth and augmented, but the GCSE qualification is not a prerequisite to studying this course.

## Course Content

The OCR A Level course includes three papers, each worth one third of the A Level. Philosophy includes the study of ancient philosophical influences, arguments for and against the existence of God, the nature and influence of religious experience, and the challenge for religious belief of the problem of evil. Ethics includes the study of normative ethical theories, the application of ethical theory to contemporary issues (e.g. business ethics), the idea of conscience, and sexual ethics. Developments in religious thought includes the study of contemporary religious expression, religious diversity, religious identity, and the relationship between religion and society.

## Assessment

### Unit 1 (33%)

Philosophy of Religion (2 hours)

### Unit 2 (33%)

Religion and Ethics (2 hours)

### Unit 3 (33%)

Developments in Religious Thought (2 hours)

## Preparation for University

### Examination Board: OCR Specification H573

An A Level pass in RE is highly regarded by leading universities around the world. Top-ranking universities offer degrees in Theology/Religious Studies and Philosophy. The high-level thinking skills developed in Philosophy are exceptionally valuable to students in any subject. Ethics, and the debating skills that this course develops, are important elements in many university courses, including Medicine, Law and Business. Religious understanding is invaluable in the increasingly globalised world we live in.

## Course Entry and Qualifications

Standard Sixth Form entry requirements.

**Head of Department:** Fr S A McMurtary

# Learning Support

## Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

Where necessary and applicable, Durham School will seek to gain further support for students during key examinations.

### Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements are pre-examination adjustments for candidates with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries. All Access Arrangements must be assessed by a qualified Specialist Teacher or Educational Psychologist and approved by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) and must be based on evidence of need and normal way of working.

Access Arrangements allow candidates to access the assessment without changing the demands of the assessment; for example, candidates may be granted a reader, scribe or braille question papers. In this way Awarding Bodies will comply with the duty of the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

At Durham School we are able to offer appropriate in-house assessments in order to quickly and efficiently identify need. This means that external professional reports are not required, reducing both time and cost for parents.

## Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 requires an Awarding Body to make Reasonable Adjustments where a disabled person would be at a substantial disadvantage in undertaking an assessment.

A Reasonable Adjustment for a particular person may be unique to that individual and may not be included in the list of available Access Arrangements.

## Special Consideration

Special Consideration is a post-examination adjustment to a candidate's mark or grade to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the examination/assessment. Request for Special Consideration must be made by Durham School as necessary.

**Head of Department:** Mrs C L Bennett



# LWE – Life and Wellbeing Education

## Introduction

By definition, Life and Wellbeing Education covers a broad range of topics relating to the community locally, nationally and globally. We seek to educate our students so they can learn to appreciate a wider perspective within which they can develop the skills necessary to make wise and informed decisions as they grow towards independent living. Durham School is proud of its LWE programme, and this framework ensures we offer the skills based around self-awareness, responsibility, financial capabilities and how to become a more active citizen.

## Course Content

The programme is delivered through a set scheme of work, and lessons are creative, stimulating, and encourage discussion and critical thinking. Topics within the year range from democracy, politics and voting, charity work, society, media and influences, United Nations and World Trade Organisations, peer feedback, teamwork, debate and presentation skills.

## Preparation for University

We also offer slots to visiting speakers to come and talk about physical and emotional wellbeing, real-life stories and experiences, which are crucial in assisting young adults in understanding the new challenges ahead.

**Head of Department:** Mrs N J Thompson



# Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

## Introduction

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is an optional addition to the academic programme offered in the Sixth Form; it does not replace one of the student's A Level choices. It is designed to provide students with an opportunity to extend their studies beyond the A Level syllabus and help prepare them for university or their future career. Students have the freedom to select their own area of research; this might be related to their planned career, such as medicine or law, or perhaps a particular personal interest, such as film or sport. Each candidate receives supervision from appointed staff, but their project must be the result of independent study, and they will be responsible for researching the topic, producing their project, maintaining a continuous production log and, finally, presenting to a small audience. It is not usually recommended to pupils who take four A Levels.

The EPQ is equivalent to half an A Level, so carries the added benefit of providing an additional qualification and UCAS points. In addition, some universities may reduce their A Level grade offer subject to a particular level being achieved in the EPQ. Other more competitive institutions may not include the EPQ in their conditional offer, but they recognise that it helps develop the skills which are required at undergraduate level, and it is a useful focus for entrance applications and interviews.

## Course Content

Pupils begin with the taught element of the EPQ, where they will participate in group sessions which are designed to develop specific academic study skills which can be utilised at the various stages of the project. Each student will be responsible for designing a title,

planning and completing their individual project, before presenting to a small audience. Students will be assigned a staff supervisor who will oversee and facilitate throughout the project, but can not give specific directed support. The EPQ is known as a process qualification because in addition to assessment of the final outcome, marks are gained for evidencing how they manage and monitor their time and resources, as well as appropriate decision-making and review, through maintaining a production log. Pupils are given a hand-in deadline, and it is up to them to arrange meetings with their supervisor and plan their time to meet it.

## Assessment

**Assessment:** Examination Board AQ

**Assessment is based purely on the evidence produced during the project which is marked internally and moderated by the exam board. This is comprised of:**

- a completed production log and assessment record
- the project product – this is a 5000 word report on their research, or an artefact (such as a model or short film) accompanied by a 1000 word report

## Preparation for University

The EPQ allows a student to demonstrate their academic passion and interest in a certain area, as well as providing the opportunity to develop research and academic skills which are vital at undergraduate level. As such, it is viewed extremely favourably by many universities and often forms the basis for questions during admissions interview.

**Director of EPQ:** Mrs A M Warne

# Academic Support

## The Sixth Form Study Centre

The Sixth Form Study Centre, located in the Vallance building, is the ideal environment for students to work. With large desks and full WiFi access, the SFC provides a spacious area away from the hustle and bustle of the school which is conducive to the requirements of Sixth Form study. It also contains key materials for students in the Sixth Form, such as university prospectuses and open day information, gap year opportunities and possible work experience placements. The offices of the Head and Assistant Head of Sixth Form are located in this area; students can drop in at any time of the day to discuss any issues they have.

When students in Year 12 have private study periods, they are required to go to the SFC for supervised study in the mornings, periods 1 to 4. This helps develop their study skills and ensures students remain on top of their academic commitments. At other times of the day all Sixth Form students are encouraged to use the SFC, and many do just that!

## Year 11 Surgeries

Sixth Form support actually begins while students are in Year 11. Following the open evening, students and parents are encouraged to sign up to individual 'surgeries'; these provide an opportunity for students to speak with a key member of staff about A Level choices, allowing a discussion on which subjects are required for certain university courses, the nature of A Levels, which subjects are particularly suitable, thoughts on careers and any other questions relating to life as a sixth former.

## Academic Monitoring and One-to-One Tutorials

Academic monitoring is key to success at A Level. Students need to be aware of their current standard in each subject and what they need to do to improve.

To support the students in this at Durham School, subject staff will provide regular assessed work with detailed feedback in accordance with exam board criteria. Individual discussions are also offered, where teachers and students can discuss recent work and areas for improvement. Finally, whole group tutorials are largely replaced with regular one-to-one interviews, which allow tutors and students to discuss progress across all subjects. In this way, tutors become a key support structure as they have an overview of the students' performance in all subjects and can provide specific targets which recognise the needs of individual students.



## UCAS and University Choices

When students return to school following the Year 12 exams, they are introduced to the UCAS application procedure with a three-day induction programme delivered by the Head of Sixth Form and the Sixth Form team. In this, students will have the opportunity to research their university choices, work on personal statements, visit local university open days, hear talks from admissions officers and complete their UCAS forms. While this can be a very daunting experience for the students, support is provided every step of the way by Sixth Form staff whose expertise in the area will guide them through the process.

## Oxbridge, Russell Group and Elite Course Applicants

All students who wish to apply for Oxford, Cambridge or medical courses (including dentistry and veterinary science) are required to submit an early application to UCAS, and this is also strongly advised for students wishing to apply for very competitive courses at the top universities. Mr Hope (Coordinator of Elite Applications) provides specific support to students wishing to apply for these courses, including personal statement help, advice on choosing the right college, help with completing additional submissions and finding work experience, and organising all-important mock interviews. There will also be the opportunity to speak to Oxbridge and Russell Group admissions officers at various events (in Years 11, 12 and 13), and to visit both Oxford and Cambridge for their Open Days.

## Academic Development

Sixth Form is challenging, and students will soon realise that the work is a significant progression from GCSEs. Subject staff will support and challenge students, providing individualised feedback, workshop sessions and exam focused assessment and differentiated learning opportunities, all of which will ensure students can realise their potential in each of their subjects.

However, there are many additional provisions which will significantly contribute to the academic development of students at Durham School.



# Academic Enrichment

## Durham University Library (Bill Bryson) Introductions

Early in Year 12 pupils are inducted at the Durham University Library nearby, on South Road opposite our Bow Site. A member of the Library staff comes to School and speaks with the whole year group about using library systems, referencing and plagiarism, and shows ways to research materials online and with books. Subsequently we take all Year 12 pupils to the library for an induction session, where they are given a tour of the facilities and learn how they can use this fabulous resources for their coursework, to enrich their studies or just for fun! At the end of the induction, pupils receive a card which entitles them to access the library for future use.

## Creighton Society

The Creighton Society is the Sixth Form History Society. It is run by students who invite visiting speakers, including academics, to address the group, in addition to hosting students talks and debates on historical topics.

## Heretics Society

The Heretics Society gives students the opportunity both to present and debate heretical subjects. In each session, one student will present a defence of a controversial viewpoint before opening the subject up to debate and, ultimately, defending the argument, often against fierce opposition. The Heretics Society is supervised by Mr SP Wright, Director of Scholars, but is run by the students.

## Tristram Society

Aimed specifically at potential scientists, but open to all students with an interest in this discipline, the Tristram Society offers targeted sessions focused on the world of science. Lectures from leading academics, seminars and visits allow students the opportunity to explore various scientific fields from a real life, practical and hands on perspective which will develop their understanding of the subject far beyond the confines of the A Level syllabus. The Tristram Society is supervised by a member of staff, but is run by the students.

## Durham Student Union Debating Society

Father Simon informs Sixth Form pupils of the topics of debates and regularly takes groups of pupils to attend these events; Father Simon has even taken part in them himself, and pupils get to see the importance of informed argument and debate, and learn that there are multiple perspectives and sides to any discussion.

## Lectures and Talks

At the end of this process, either a Head of School with Deputy Heads of School or two Heads of School are selected, as well as Heads of Houses and School Monitors, to be the student leaders for the following academic year.



## Monitor Selection

All students in Year 12 are invited to apply for Monitor roles in Year 13. The initial stage of this is a written application, which is followed by a formal interview with two senior members of staff.

For many, this is the first time that they will have had to put themselves forward and to think about how to create the right impression in a competitive and selective environment.

All students receive feedback on their application and interview and whether or not they are successful in their application. The school views either outcome as a positive learning experience for the students as they mature into adulthood.

At the end of this process, either a Head of School with Deputy Heads of School or two Heads of School are selected, as well as Heads of Houses and School Monitors, to be the student leaders for the following academic year.

In certain circumstances, some students who have not been appointed as School Monitors will be given additional leadership roles based on their skills and personality. These students will be expected to provide a significant contribution to the school by leading other students in a variety of events, for example as Captain of Outdoor Education, Co-Ordinator of Environmental Projects or Bow Link Monitors.

## Leadership Opportunities

All Sixth Form students accept that they are leaders and role models for the younger students in the school. Their achievements, behaviour and attitudes to staff, each other and their academic work are powerful, aspirational incentives for the younger students as they grow up in our community.

Sixth Form students also chair and run various School Councils, organise and co-ordinate charity work in the community, help the Chorister School with various activities (such as their Sports Day), act as ambassadors for the school at external events and (very importantly) guide new and prospective students and parents on tours of the School site and the Houses.

## Extra-curricular

Many other leadership opportunities exist in the Houses, in sport, in music, in drama, with the Durham Eye, School and House councils, Boarding and food committees, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, World Challenge, and adventure training.

## Further Information

**For further information on any matters concerning our Sixth Form please contact:**

### Head of Sixth Form:

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