

**Sixth Form Curriculum
and
AS Option Choices
Guide**

2009 – 2010

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Sixth Form Curriculum and AS Option Choices Guide. It is intended that this document will provide detailed information about the range of sixth form courses that we have on offer at the Royal Hospital School and give advice on how to select courses, entry requirements for each subject and the skills required for success.

The Sixth Form

At the Royal Hospital School it is the individual student who is in the forefront of our minds. We are committed to ensuring that all sixth form pupils make the most of these final two years in their school career, achieving every possible success, not only in the crucial area of academic achievement, but also in a wide range of cultural, sporting and social activities. We firmly believe that by offering each pupil new experiences, challenges and opportunities they will find life in the sixth form enriching, and will be motivated to fulfil their potential. Furthermore we hope that all our sixth formers will leave us with a wide range of qualifications and personal qualities to present to institutions of higher education and to future employers.

Over the course of their sixth form career pupils will experience greater freedom and will take greater responsibility for their own academic and personal development; many of them will also take on leadership roles and we hope that they will all be aware of their position as role models in the School. To support and guide our pupils through the sixth form each pupil will be allocated a personal tutor; the tutor will play an important role in the life of every sixth former, and we hope that the relationship between tutor and parent will also be a fruitful and positive one.

We provide a well-structured academic timetable which includes both traditional and more modern subjects; the staff give every encouragement to achieve good results and the atmosphere will be conducive to studying. Sixth form work is very rewarding. Pupils study a smaller number of subjects in greater depth and are able to express their own researched and carefully considered ideas. There is also more time for private study, and pupils are

expected to work unsupervised for several hours each day. In these two years we aim to provide an academic training that will prepare young people for the transition between school and higher education.

In this booklet you will find short descriptions of the subject courses available.

Further Advice

Parents or pupils seeking further advice on any matter concerning entry into the sixth form should contact:

- Mrs S Godfrey, the Head of Sixth Form, on 01473 326273
smg@royalhospitalschool.org.
- Ms S Toner, the Admissions Officer, on 01473 326210
admissions@royalhospitalschool.org

General Advice on Choosing Courses

Parents and pupils should consider 3 main factors:

Careers

A small number of careers have very specific requirements for A-Level courses, and obviously care must be taken not to rule out a future career at this stage if it seems likely that a pupil will wish to take it up. However, for most careers (and university courses) high grades in the sixth form are more important than specific subjects. The Head of Careers can give advice on this matter. An increasing number of pupils now combine both arts and science subjects at A-Level in order to keep open as many options as possible. We encourage this approach provided it is carefully thought out, and pupils need to be aware that we usually expect a single science A-Level to be supported by either another science A-Level or A-Level mathematics. While career requirements are an important factor in making decisions about sixth form study they should not be viewed in isolation, as ability and interest are also critical factors.

Ability

Pupils should play to their strengths and choose the subjects in which they are likely to achieve the highest grades. They should take advice from their subject teachers about their suitability for a particular course in the sixth form, and the likely grade they will achieve. There is little point in a pupil choosing a course for perceived career reasons if he or she is unlikely to achieve the grades required.

Interest

The importance of choosing courses that interest the pupil must not be underestimated. The pupil has to live with the choice for at least two years; if interested, he/she is far more likely to work hard, and thus is more likely to achieve a high grade. For most degree courses and careers the quality of grades achieved at A-Level is more important than the actual subjects studied.

Entry Requirements for Sixth Form Courses

The minimum requirement for entry into the sixth form is a GCSE average point score of 5.5 (where A*=8, A=7, B=6, C=5, D=4, E=3) obtained from at least 8 GCSEs including a pass in both English and mathematics GCSE at grade C or better. It should be emphasised that the vast majority of our pupils will have better GCSE results than this.

Requirements for studying individual subjects vary slightly. For subjects previously studied at GCSE a minimum of a B grade is usually required for sixth form study, because experience shows that this is the minimum likely to ensure success at AS or A-Level. Further details are provided in this booklet and Heads of Department should be consulted if the pupil is in doubt about his/her suitability for the course.

Selecting A-Level Courses

We ask pupils to nominate four subjects that they will take at AS Level in the lower sixth. Most will eventually take three subjects through to A-Level (A2) in the upper sixth year. Initially they may select freely from the list below and we will try to construct a timetable from the choices pupils make. Exceptionally it may not be possible to fit in a particular subject combination, or numbers may not justify the running of a particular course. We would always advise parents of this at the earliest possible moment so as to discuss alternatives.

Courses Available in the Sixth Form

ART	HISTORY
ART HISTORY	ICT
ART (TEXTILE DESIGN)	LATIN
BIOLOGY	MATHEMATICS
BUSINESS STUDIES	FURTHER MATHEMATICS
CHEMISTRY	MEDIA STUDIES
DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY	MUSIC
DRAMA & THEATRE STUDIES	PHYSICAL EDUCATION
ENGLISH LITERATURE	PHYSICS
FILM STUDIES	PSYCHOLOGY
FRENCH	POLITICS
GEOGRAPHY	RELIGIOUS STUDIES
GERMAN	SPANISH

Sixth Form Enrichment Programme

All sixth form pupils follow a sixth form enrichment programme in the lower sixth year; the programme is delivered outside the four main option blocks so that it is available to all.

The following options are generally available:

- AS Law
- GCSE Russian
- GCSE Greek
- English as a second language
- Community sports leadership
- Music practice
- Carousel consisting of:
 - Student finance
 - Cooking on a budget
 - PSHE
 - Music and culture

Sixth Form Activities Programme

The Activities Programme takes place on a Friday afternoon. Students taking Law, Greek, or Russian will use Friday afternoon for further study. Otherwise a wide range of activities is offered, depending on staff availability. Some of the likely options are:

- CCF
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
- Young Enterprise Scheme
- English as a second language
- Maths help desk
- Music practice
- Amnesty International
- Aerobics
- Guitar ensemble

Art

Aims of the course:

Students follow their own personal journey through Art and Design exploring their own chosen medium or approach to art under the close personal guidance of our team of art specialist teachers. Students attempt to develop their own interests and skills to the optimum degree to attain the highest possible grade at the end of the course.

Outline description of the course:

The course consists of two AS units and then two A2 units. Each year of study requires students to submit one unit of coursework in their own chosen medium and to carry out one Externally Set Assignment. The AS level course begins with a six week intensive induction course in which students are intensively coached in a variety of disciplines by art staff in order to bring the standard of their work up to AS level from GCSE, before embarking on their first assessed unit.

Study visits to art exhibitions are organised at least twice each year for all students.

Why study this subject:

Art A level is the stepping stone to an enormous number of degree courses in all aspects of art and design from fine art and sculpture to graphic design, architecture, interior design, fashion and textiles.

Syllabus followed:

'Edexcel' Art and Design

Entry requirements:

A 'B' grade at GCSE is strongly recommended but not essential

Set texts:

None

Extent of practical work:

All units of work are practically based but supported by critical/contextual studies.

Coursework requirements:

Two units of coursework complement the two Externally Set Assignments

Skills required:

- 1 The ability to observe and record information from your own environment and personal experiences.
- 2 The ability to analyse and evaluate your own art work and the work of other artists.
- 3 The ability to develop and adapt your own ideas from initial conception towards a final creative solution.
- 4 The ability to create art work using your own chosen materials and techniques.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Students create art work in their own chosen discipline(s) under the close guidance of specialist art teachers.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Many Higher and Further Education studies in all aspects of Art and Design.
Countless careers in Art and Design.

Art (Textile Design)

Aims of the course:

Students follow their own personal journey through Art and Textiles, specialising in Fashion Design. Individuality and flare will be encouraged alongside a high quality of pattern cutting and production skills. A multi disciplinary approach will embrace traditional and modern technologies, including machine and hand embroidery, printing, dyeing and fabric construction.

Outline description of the course:

The AS level course begins with a six week intensive induction course in which students are coached in drawing, pattern cutting and clothing manufacture, in order to hone the standard of their work. The course consists of two AS units and then two A2 units. Unit one of the AS (60%) is a personal exploration on a student's chosen theme which culminates in the production of one or more fashion items. Unit two of the AS (40%) starts in the new year and is a body of work which ends in a timed exam of 8 hours; samples or an item of clothing can be made. Study trips will be arranged alongside visits from Textile Artists. A2 unit one (60%) will be a personal study on any aspect of fashion or textiles, and will include an extended essay which reflects the students learning in their chosen area. The last A2 unit culminates in a 12 hour exam.

Why study this subject:

If you enjoy Art and Textiles, particularly fashion design you will gain a lot from this course. Art is the stepping stone to an enormous number of degree courses and this course offers you the chance to specialise early, building up a Textiles specific portfolio or complementing your own chosen combination of subjects.

Syllabus followed:

'Edexcel' Art (Textile Design).

Set texts / resources:

Students will be provided with the use of a size 10/12 mannequin, but may chose the option of purchasing an adjustable dressmakers dummy. A basic box of art equipment will be made up for each student. Subscription to Vogue or similar recommended.

Entry requirements:

A 'B' grade at GCSE Art is strongly recommended but not essential.

Extent of practical work:

All units of work are practically based but supported by critical/contextual studies.

Coursework requirements:

Two units of coursework complement the two Externally Set Assignments (exams).

Skills required:

- The ability to observe and record information from your own environment and personal experiences.
- The ability to analyse and evaluate your own art work and the work of other artists.
- The ability to develop and adapt your own ideas from initial conception towards a final creative solution.
- The ability to create art work using your own chosen materials and techniques.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Students will be encouraged to focus on fashion design under the close guidance of a fashion specialist. With single teacher consistency and dedicated personal study areas, high standards will be expected.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

There are many Higher and Further Education studies in all aspects of Art and Design, some examples of Fashion specific courses are:

BA (Hons) Costume for Performance

BA (Hons) Costume Design

Foundation Degree in Fashion Design Technology: Knitwear

Foundation Degree in Fashion Design Technology: Surface Textiles

Foundation Degree in Fashion Design Technology: Designer Pattern Cutter

Foundation Degree Fashion Design and Marketing

BA (Hons) Fashion Illustration

BA (Hons) Fashion Design Technology: Menswear

BA (Hons) Fashion Design Technology: Womenswear

BA (Hons) Fashion Design and Development

BA (Hons) Active Sportswear

BA (Hons) Fashion Jewellery

Countless careers in Art and Design, Fashion and Textiles.

Art History

Aims of the course:

Students follow a course in which they learn about art and architecture from the Ancient Greeks and Romans, through the medieval period and the Renaissance to the present day. They deal with two main areas:

- 1) how to visually analyse and interpret wide ranging works of art and architecture
- 2) how to understand such issues as patronage, style, historical and cultural contexts and genres in relation to those works. Students develop skills in understanding, describing and analytically appraising works of art and architecture.

Outline description of the course:

The course consists of two AS units and then two A2 units. Each year of study requires students to sit two papers. The AS papers are entitled; 'Visual Analysis and Interpretation' and 'Themes in Art History'. Lessons are based on 'PowerPoint' presentations on movements in art and individual artists and architects and these lead to discussion of relevant issues. Prep work is essay and research based.

Why study this subject:

Art History A level is a fascinating and inspiring course of study. It unfurls the astonishing creativity of artists and architects from the classical sculptors and temple builders to Jackson Pollock, Picasso and Gaudi and the conceptual and minimal artists of the 20th and 21st centuries. It is a logical step into further study at degree level and a valuable cultural journey to enrich the life of any A level student.

Syllabus followed:

'AQA' History of Art (Art of the Western World)

Entry requirements:

A 'B' grade at GCSE English is strongly recommended.

Set texts:

EH Gombrich 'The Story of Art' and many others

Extent of practical work:

None.

Coursework requirements:

None

Skills required:

- The ability to analyse works of art and architecture
- The ability to understand the ways in which different artists and architects worked.
- The ability to construct ideas in essay form.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Visual analysis of works of art and architecture. Discussion of these images and the ideas and purposes behind them. Development of essay writing skills in describing, analysing and interpreting such works.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Many Higher and Further Education courses in Art History. Career opportunities in museums, galleries, art markets, auctioneers, cultural centres worldwide.

Biology

Aims of the course:

To extend the skills and knowledge developed at GCSE to present biology as a rapidly developing and socially relevant context for the understanding of science and how scientists work.

Outline description of the course:

AS Unit 1	Biology and disease
AS Unit 2	The variety of living organisms
A2 Unit 4	Populations and the environment
A2 Unit 5	Control in cells and organisms

Why study this subject:

The recent advances in genetic research have made biology an exciting, cutting-edge discipline. The huge investment in biotechnologies guarantees employment opportunities in biological fields. The current developments in carbon management, offsetting et al, have provided a range of opportunities for biologically trained graduates.

Syllabus followed:

AQA GCE Biology

Entry requirements:

An overall average of 6.5 in GCSE scores, which also includes B grades in Biology and Chemistry if offered as separate science subjects or A grades in both Core and Additional Science.

Extent of practical work:

Units 3 and 6 are practical assignments which will be set by the examination board. These can be completed at any time during the course.

Additional requirements:

The Biological Sciences Review collection is placed in the School library and it is expected that this will be actively used for research and further reading.

Additional comments:

Biology along with chemistry, physics and mathematics is one of the most challenging A level subjects, and pupils are advised that they need to be skilled in both written English and mathematics to be successful.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Chemistry, mathematics, geography

Skills required:

Literacy – good written communication essential

Language skills – confidence with new terminology

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Mostly delivered/received but with opportunities for independent development of the topic areas under study.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Medicine, biochemistry, veterinary science, pharmacy, dentistry.

Business studies

Aims of the course:

To prepare students for external examination success.

To make them aware of the important role of business in society.

To develop important skills such as communication, creative thinking and financial awareness.

Outline description of the course:

Students will sit 2 AS papers:

1. Introduction to Business (1 hour) – looking at the aims, control and legal structure of businesses such as partnerships and limited companies.
2. Business Functions (2 hours) – investigating key functional areas in businesses, such as marketing, human resources, production and finance.

Both are written papers comprising a mixture of short-answer and data-response questions.

Why study this subject:

This is an academic subject but one that is rooted in the real world with a large quantity of material available in the media to support learning. It can lay the foundation for a well-respected and well-rewarded career. Some of the subject content, such as finance and human-resource management, is applicable to students' personal development.

Syllabus followed:

OCR Business Studies

Entry requirements:

GCSE Maths grade C and GCSE English grade C

Extent of practical work:

There is no compulsory practical work for the examinations but there will be opportunities to apply classroom work in real-life situations such as the Young Enterprise competition.

Coursework requirements:

There is no coursework option with this specification.

Additional requirements:

Reading the business sections of quality newspapers.

Watching TV news.

Reading of magazines such as The Economist to improve general knowledge and linguistic skills.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

No specific requirements but fits well with other humanities subjects.

Skills required:

The ability to read effectively and to analyse and evaluate ideas, generating solutions to problems. The ability to write in a structured manner, making use of business terminology and developing points thoroughly.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

The use of real-life case studies to support learning and assessment.

Independent research and reading.

Presentations by students.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Widely accepted A-level for entry to business/management degree courses and also those not specific to business.

A very wide range of business/management-related degree courses available at very good universities.

Useful A-level for employment.

Chemistry

Aims of the course:

To develop a candidate's knowledge and understanding of Chemistry to provide a pathway to further study

To ensure that learning is enjoyable, and enhances a candidate's enthusiasm for Chemistry

To ensure relevance to contemporary issues by building on the concepts of How Science Works that were introduced at GCSE.

Outline description of the course:

Students are given a solid grounding in foundation Chemistry. The introduces the chemical reactivity of atoms and molecules and provides an understanding of their structures The development and use of the periodic table is explained. The introduction of Practical Skills Assignments (PSA) into the course allows students to gain credit for work done in routine class practicals. Assessment becomes linked to the work of the course, and moves away from formulaic testing.

Why study this subject:

The subject is both interesting and intellectually rewarding

It is a requirement for a future career or course

Syllabus followed:

AQA Chemistry (2420)

Entry Requirements:

Grade B or better at separate Science (i.e. C1, C2 and C3)

Double A or better at Double Science (i.e. core and additional)

Set texts:

Texts books and revision guides dedicated to the course published by Nelson Thornes.

Extent of practical work:

An extensive use of practical work: some demonstrations, some group work but mostly individual work.

Coursework requirements:

Teacher assessment of practical skills (PSA) (4.8% of AS marks)

Teacher assessment of investigative assignment (ISA) (15.2% of AS marks)

Additional requirements:

Keep abreast of developments in, and new applications of chemistry, by reading publications such as: 'New Scientist', 'Scientific America' and 'Chemistry review'.

Additional comments:

Chemistry is a subject of global impact. As a fundamental science it has profound effect on our planet and is involved in nearly every facet of everyday life. Almost every technological change and important discovery had its foundation in chemistry. Chemists are the key to influencing life and making the world a better place to live in. A-Level Chemistry provides the bases for other key areas of study - medicine, agriculture, geology, food technology, chemical engineering, textile technology and materials science. Even if you are not considering a career in any of these areas a Chemistry qualification is considered by many employers to be an excellent training for many other occupations and professions.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Mathematics and or Biology

Skills required:

Commitment and enthusiasm

An enquiring mind and an ability to work independently

An interest in the subject

A sound mathematical ability

Manipulative and organisational skills to cope with practical demands

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Reading, note taking, individual research

An extensive use of practical work: some demonstrations, some group work but mostly individual work

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

HE courses in chemistry, chemical engineering, biochemistry, medicine, veterinary, pharmacology, nursing, geology, food industry, textiles, forensics, meteorology to name but a few.

Careers; finance, law, politics, retailing, computing and purchasing. Chemists make good managers and they can put their specialist knowledge to work as consultants or technical authors.

Design & Technology

Aims of the course:

To build upon the skills, knowledge and experience gained throughout all previous key stages of this subject. To ensure that all students develop their creative and imaginative approaches to the subject and to enjoy their work and experiences gained within the subject. To deliver the subject in such a way so as to encourage each pupil to question and be curious about their work, and to relate all products studied to the real world in which we live.

Outline description of the course:

Each pupil will identify a number of appropriate design briefs based upon their personal interests and experiences and through discussion with their teachers they will select one of the as the basis for their coursework project. It is anticipated that by half-term all students will have completed the initial stages of the design process and will have started the demanding manufacturing stages. This will continue throughout the first two terms of the year, with a planned deadline of mid-March for the completion of all the making requirements so as to facilitate the final testing and evaluation prior to handing in the finished project at the beginning of the Summer term for final marking. Throughout this coursework period any number of syllabus requirements concerning manufacturing processes, industrial processes, marketing influences, the environment, social and moral implications, health and safety etc. will also be covered.

Why study this subject:

Students who are curious about the 'built environment' within which we live and who are motivated towards the 'Design & Make' philosophy we adopt here at RHS would be well suited to the courses on offer. The multi-media approaches, including Resistant Materials, Textiles, Food Technology, Graphic Products and Systems & Control give a wide variety of options within their selected coursework modules that would cater and reflect all personal interest areas. Also, students who clearly enjoy a different teaching environment to that of a formal classroom situation, often workshop based as well as each student having a personal design area enables a unique and individual learning programme to be developed. Self directed study is an essential component within the research and analysis requirements as well as the development of personal ideas, modelling and manufacturing of high quality products of a personal value and nature. The new development of our CAD/CAM suite has enabled us to develop more realistic manufacturing techniques reflected in the world outside RHS.

Syllabus followed:

AQA GCE Product Design (3D)

Entry requirements:

GCSE Design and Technology grade 'B' or better

Set texts:

All pupils are supplied with the Design & Technology Foundation Course (Collins); Product Design 'Graphics with Resistant Materials' (Cresswell, Attwood, Goodier & Lambert); AQA Schools Revision Guide for Product Design (Lonsdale).

Extent of practical work:

Clearly an essential component of the since this is the essence of the subject, design and make. All manufacturing is underpinned by the need to understand the value of quality basic skills including marking out procedures and preparation for finishes etc. The safe use of all tools, machines and equipment is paramount in developing a pupil's confidence in producing high quality products.

Coursework requirements:

30% of the final mark, with A/S units contributing 30%, and units 2 & 6 scoring 20% each. A substantial design and make coursework project, reflecting the individuality of each student. All aspects of design, manufacturing, processes, health & safety, marketing, industrial mass production etc. to be included. The projects will be completed over a 22 week period throughout the Michaelmas & Spring terms.

Skills required:

Imagination and creativity are the main skills in addition to curiosity as to how things work and the determination to succeed in fulfilling the demands of the course. Good communication skills in all forms including team work, but particularly graphical are also important. A willingness to listen to others, evaluate the evidence, and to apply the agreed response with determination are all key factors within this subject.

Additional requirements:

Every effort is made to increase the awareness of each pupil of the real world around them. Newspaper articles, magazines, videos are all important aspects of the developing world of technology, and class discussions encourage pupils to keep abreast of these and to develop their self-confidence in offering their valued opinions. The use of other designer's work as a

basis for discussion, including fellow pupil's, is actively encouraged, as is drawing their attention to the variety of design and practical work on display throughout the department. Encouraging them to produce their best work in all aspects of the subject and to see their own work on display is used positively throughout, as is the use of the department's very successful 'Merits' system as reward for quality work and positive attitude.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Maths, Physics & Art are considered beneficial, in addition to Business Studies.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Each student has ownership of the Design & Make coursework components, and through discussion with their teacher will select the topic/product to be studied, in addition to setting the deadlines for completion of each stage within a given framework. Inter-active whiteboard, video and DVD support materials, educational visits and supporting text and reference book materials all form part of the teaching resources used throughout the course. Personal planning and organisation are essential components for each student if they are to maximise the effectiveness of the time available. Practical and theoretical periods are allocated weekly with target setting an important part of these. Effective use of all available prep time is essential to achieve the high standards expected in this subject.

Additional comments:

The subject is a very popular option at 'A' level reflecting the enjoyment and satisfaction that the pupil's achieve throughout their course. At this level all students will focus their individual major coursework projects on areas of their own personal interest in discussion with their teachers. This 'personal contact' in this high scoring aspect of their courses helps develop a very positivist and motivational inspiration needed for them to truly fulfil their potential, as reflected in the pleasing 'value added' component of their examination successes. The final paper will focus upon product design and manufacturing processes, including the theory of materials and components. Enjoyment is the key to success in this subject. Ownership of the work involved drives students to excel, as is reflected each year by our results and the unique end of year exhibition of all students work.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Students who successfully complete 'A' level courses frequently follow university/career courses in Product Design, Graphic Design. Teaching courses in Design & Technology, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Architecture, Fashion Textiles, Computer Aided Design, Computer aided Manufacture, Catering Management, Business administration, Health & Safety in addition to numerous strands of the design and manufacturing industries.

Drama and Theatre Studies

Aims of the course:

To promote an enjoyment of, and an interest in, drama and theatre, both as a participant and as an informed member of an audience.

To extend the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to communicate through drama and theatre, encouraging life-long learning.

Outline description of the course:

AS: 2 units of study

Unit 1: Exploration of Drama and Theatre

Unit 2: Theatre Text in Performance

A2: 2 further units of study

Unit 3: Exploration of Dramatic Performance

Unit 4: Theatre Text in Context

Why study this subject:

The course provides: opportunities to develop, interpret and shape ideas; explore the social, historical and cultural contexts of plays; analyse performance; understand forms and genre; develop skills (acting and/or design); acquire knowledge of theories and concepts. Obviously a genuine interest and love of theatre is essential!

Syllabus followed:

Edexcel AS and A2 in Drama and Theatre Studies

Entry requirements:

GCSE Drama and Theatre Studies preferred, but not essential; C in GCSE English

It is important that there is an interest in gaining a greater understanding of how theatre and plays work, and to be involved with performances.

Set texts:

No texts are set – texts are selected by teachers throughout the course.

Extent of practical work:

The course demands practical, creative and communication skills.

Coursework requirements:

No coursework, but pupils are required to write about drama and to develop their powers of analysis to become an informed critic.

Additional requirements:

Regular visits to theatre
Background research to plays
Participation in workshops

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

English/History/Art/Music/Languages

Skills required:

The course demands practical, creative and communication skills in almost equal measure. Good vocal skills; learning to work as part of a team; being able to initiate and further ideas; good textual interpretation; a creative response to themes and issues; being able to evaluate work in progress. Being interested in going to the theatre to see plays performed by different theatre companies is of paramount importance.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Learning can take place within very structured lessons, through practical workshops, through rehearsals, through set assignments, through directed study, through research tasks and/or through theatre visits.

Any other comments:

Pupils need to be able to think on their feet, use creative energy in a positive and purposeful manner. The greater the research, the greater the enjoyment at all levels. Superficial understanding of this subject is not encouraged.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

The AS and Advanced GCE can lead to further study in Drama, Theatre Studies and Performing Arts in Higher Education at degree or HND level. It may lead to a career in the performing arts industries. The subject complements a range of other subjects and is useful in building confidence and improving presentation skills in a wide range of careers.

English literature

Aims of the course:

AS and A2 courses based on the AQA Specification A should encourage students to develop their interest in and enjoyment of literature and literary studies as they:

- read widely and independently both set texts: and others that they have selected for themselves
- engage creatively with a substantial body of texts and ways of responding to them
- develop and effectively apply their knowledge of literary analysis and evaluation in speech and writing
- explore the contexts of texts they are reading and others' interpretations of them
- deepen their understanding of the changing traditions of literature in English.

Outline description of the course:

At AS level, this will involve the study of a variety of texts under the heading of "The Struggle for Identity in Modern Literature". Reading for this area of study ranges across all three major genres and encompasses writing from the turn of the century, as well as utterly contemporary and international literature written in English. The shared context provides a meaningful overview for students of all abilities and interests.

There will be two modules: the first is an open-book written paper of two hours, and the second is a Creative Study, which takes the form of two coursework units, involving both imaginative and critical writing. Those students who enjoy creative approaches to writing will value this element especially.

At A2 level, there are again two modules. The first is a closed-book written paper of two and a half hours, in which students will answer two questions on the theme, "Love Through the Ages". As this a paper of unprepared texts, the reading for it will be wide-ranging and shaped by the teachers rather than by a list of prescribed texts; considerable flexibility in the choice of text will be possible, as well as a degree of responsiveness to the interests of students. The second is a coursework module, which focuses on the study of three texts, including a Shakespeare play but encompassing a variety of other texts, too.

Why study this subject:

The study of English literature combines serious and demanding academic skills with the stimulus and pleasure of engaging with a wide range of literary texts, including drama, novels and poetry. The individual and independent study of texts is complemented by lively group discussion and debate, where the expression of personal insights and opinions is encouraged. The study of literature entails the student's imaginative involvement in all kinds of ideas and experiences: you might find yourself discussing the morality of incest in one part

of the course and the suffering of soldiers on the Western Front in another. The subject is also an ideal way of developing written skills, as it strengthens expression and the organisation of ideas and critical argument on paper. Even in the digital/internet age – especially in the digital/internet age! – the ability to make intelligent sense of language of different kinds, periods and levels of difficulty will become increasingly important.

Syllabus followed:

AQA Specification A

Entry requirements:

The ideal candidate for A-level English Literature will have achieved at least grade “B” at GCSE in both English and English Literature. However, enthusiastic students with results below the ideal level will nonetheless be considered sympathetically.

Set texts:

Poetry:

<i>The World's Wife</i>	Carol Ann Duffy
<i>Selected Poems</i>	Langston Hughes

Prose:

<i>The Handmaid's Tale</i>	Margaret Atwood
<i>Ragtime</i>	E L Doctorow

Drama:

<i>Pygmalion</i>	George Bernard Shaw
<i>Waiting for Godot</i>	Samuel Beckett

There will also be the opportunity to study non-fiction texts, ranging, for example, from Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* to the Obscene Publications Act 1928!

Extent of practical work:

Opportunities for theatre and other kinds of visits may present themselves, as well as opportunities for the use of drama and other approaches to the study of the texts.

Coursework requirements:

AS COURSEWORK:

Creative Study:

This module involves the study of one prose text and one drama text and the presentation of two pieces, one on each text. 2000-2500 words in total.

A2 COURSEWORK:

Extended Essay and Shakespeare Study:

This module involves the study of three texts, including a Shakespeare play. Students will present an extended comparative study of 3000 words.

Additional requirements:

Successful students will read widely in imaginative and critical literature. Publications like *The English Review* are useful.

Additional comments:

The new specification offers a stimulating and wide-ranging course for those students who enjoy reading and are willing to engage in lively debate and independent study. Any student who enjoys the challenge of understanding the nuances and subtleties of the work of the best writers will find AS English Literature an engaging experience. Similarly, the subject will appeal to those students who are interested in ideas and the ways in which writers have explored ideas in different periods.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

English literature works well with most subjects but has some natural affinities with classics, foreign languages, history, media studies and theatre studies. It is arguable that both politics and religious studies overlap with literary studies at certain points.

Skills required:

Effectiveness in communication, both orally and in writing

A capacity for thoughtful engagement with literary texts of increasing complexity

A capacity for the analytical and critical examination of literary texts

An interest in the versatile subtleties of language

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Group discussion and debate

Written articulation of ideas in various forms, including essays

Independent reading, study and research

Individual presentation

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

English literature is regarded as a highly credible academic subject, grounded in significant skills of analysis and expression, and is therefore useful for a variety of university degree courses, especially in the arts/humanities, as well as a variety of career choices, including business, the law and teaching.

Film Studies

Aims of the course:

To deepen students' understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of film. Students will study a wide variety of films from very different cultures.

Outline description of the course:

The course begins with a detailed introduction into how to read films. The first unit considers how films create meaning through their audio-visual forms. Students will choose a short extract from a film and complete an analysis of the sequence. This is linked to the student's creation of a storyboard or extended step-outline of a film sequence. Both these elements are internally examined. The second unit consists of the study of British and American Film. Various issues and areas are considered, such as the study of British Films of the 80s. The study of films such as *My Left Foot*, *Withnail and I*, *Ghandi* and many others will be important here. A2 continues with film research and exploring the varieties of film experience.

Why study this subject:

Film Studies at degree level is growing. King's College London has just been awarded international recognition for their research in Film Studies. It is one of the most exciting art forms of the 21st Century and its study is simply enriching.

Syllabus followed:

WJEC

Entry requirements:

No previous experience is necessary but a C at GCSE English is required

Set texts:

The examination board have not set particular films but have set areas of films that need to be studied such as films from the 80s or 60s, or films with a theme such as remakes, e.g., *Rear Window* compared to *Disturbia*.

Extent of practical work:

Practical work takes the form of photographic storyboards or extended step outlines and the possibility of the creation of a sequence of a film.

Coursework requirements:

The coursework consists of research into individual and groups of films as well as the creative projects. It is 40% of the whole course.

Skills required:

- The ability to be ready to involve oneself in something over and above simply enjoying going to the cinema.
- The ability to analyse and evaluate films.
- The ability to develop and create your own ideas for a film.
- The ability to sustain a critical approach to films while hopefully still enjoying them.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

There will be formal teaching of concepts and skills of analysis. However, once these are learnt researching films independently will be encouraged.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

It is an A-Level that is similar to many other humanities based subjects so will count towards degrees of this nature such as Film Studies and English Literature.

French

Aims of the course:

To develop language skills and a greater awareness of various social and cultural topics; particularly topics of special relevance in French-speaking countries.

Outline description of the course:

Year 12: AS covers: media, popular culture, health, family and relationships.

Exams Unit 1 (Listening/Reading/Writing)
 Unit 2 (Speaking exam with discussion of topics / issues)

Year 13: A2 covers: environment, multicultural society, social issues, French culture.

Exams Unit 3 (Listening/Reading/Writing)
 Unit 4 (Speaking exam with discussion of topics / issues)

Why study this subject:

- to develop fluency and self-expression in the language;
- to develop transferable comprehension, research and presentation skills;
- to enhance employment prospects;
- to access the culture (e.g. literature and cinema) and media of other countries;
- for enjoyment.

Syllabus followed:

AQA AS/A2 French (new GCE specification no. 2650)

Entry requirements:

Grade A or A* in French at GCSE preferred, B considered;
Good skills in own native language needed.

Set texts:

Language and topic elements are delivered using a mix of textbook and authentic (e.g internet / video) resources.

The cultural element at A2 will probably include a literary text (e.g. Candide) and a historical topic (e.g. Occupied France).

Extent of practical work:

In addition to the timetabled class teaching periods, each student has a weekly individual or paired conversation class with a native-speaking language assistant.

Coursework requirements:

No assessment by coursework but independent research and reading will be needed in preparation for the oral exams and the cultural element at A2.

Additional requirements:

Read French newspapers / periodicals / online articles regularly.
Be willing to practise speaking the language at every opportunity.

Additional comments:

The modern pattern of studying four subjects at AS gives students an ideal opportunity to continue French, even if they see themselves following a scientific career path.
Most students continue to A2, as they find French more discursive beyond GCSE.
Topics reinforce general cultural awareness, allowing scope for presentations and debate and linking well with a wide range of other subjects.
There will be an opportunity to visit France, either on a study trip or an international work experience programme.

Good combinations:

With a second modern foreign language (MFL) for a specialist linguist's profile;
With arts / social sciences as part of a humanities profile;
With mathematics and sciences to provide breadth / balance.

Skills required:

Clear oral expression;
Listening and reading skills (comprehension, summary, vocabulary retrieval etc.);
Vocabulary and grammar learning skills;
Ability to structure written work;
Ability to think critically.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Guided reading and listening from authentic sources;
Whole-class teaching of grammar etc;
Discussion / debate in small groups;
Pair or individual speaking lessons with a native speaker;
Independent reading / research for presentations and essays.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

MFL skills and qualifications are highly valued and support university entrance applications in a wide range of disciplines.

Programmes which allow you to continue studying French at university include:

French or MFL degrees – sometimes with a beginner’s course in another language;

Degrees in French with another arts subject (e.g. History or English);

Degrees in International Law / International Politics;

Engineering and science degrees with French.

Many of these degrees include a term or year of study or work abroad.

MFL skills and qualifications also greatly enhance employment prospects.

French is used regularly by many people working in journalism and the Foreign Office;

Travel and tourism, aid organisations, language teaching and the arts;

The language can also be used, and transferable skills applied, in many other professions.

Geography

Aims of the course:

To:

- (a) develop and apply understanding of geographical concepts and processes in order that pupils can understand and interpret the changing world,
- (b) develop an awareness of the complexity of interactions within and between societies, economies, cultures and natural environments at a variety of scales (global to local),
- (c) develop global citizens who recognise the challenges of sustainability and the implications for people today and in the future,
- (d) develop in pupils a critical and reflective ability, with an awareness of the importance of values and attitudes,
- (e) develop an adeptness in the use and application of skills and new technologies in the classroom and through fieldwork, and
- (f) provide inspiration for the world through an enjoyable and satisfying programme of geographical study and experience that is relevant to the contemporary world.

Outline description of the course:

AS UNIT 1: Physical and Human Geography

Core to be studied and one physical option and one human option.

Core topics:

Rivers, floods and management (fieldwork – local stream)

Population Change and settlements (fieldwork – Ipswich, Norwich)

Options:

Cold environments (Iceland) *or*

Coastal environments (fieldwork – Holkham, North Norfolk coast) *or*

Hot deserts

And

Food supply *or*

Energy issues *or*

Health issues.

AS UNIT 2: Geographical Skills

Skills and generic fieldwork questions based on the content of Unit 1.

Investigative

Cartographic

Graphical

Statistical

ICT

A2 UNIT 3: Contemporary Geographical Issues

Three topics to be studied, one physical and one human plus one other.

Physical Options:

Plate Tectonics (including hazards)

Weather and Climate (including hazards) (fieldwork – urban heat island)

Ecosystems (fieldwork – Holkham, urban)

Human Options:

World Cities (fieldwork – rural-urban fringe, redevelopment)

Development and Globalisation

Conflicts and Challenges

A2 UNIT 4: Investigation or Evaluation

There is a choice of two routes. Examination on either Fieldwork Investigation or Issue Evaluation. The former will be based on candidates' fieldwork investigations and skills which have been followed up with classwork, and the latter on pre-released materials.

Unit 4A: Detailed fieldwork study (primary and secondary) of a hypothesis, issue or problem. Pupils analyse and evaluate their fieldwork in response to questions set, plus their fieldwork skills, including health and safety.

Unit 4B: Research of an area that "extends" the specification content. Issue evaluation from data and evidence provided, including management.

Why study this subject:

Proven consistent high level of results.

An exciting fieldwork programme

A structured schedule that allows every pupil to maximise their grade.

Content covers contemporary themes relevant to today's world.

Many links to other subjects, both sciences and humanities

An exhilarating and dynamic subject with an interesting range of physical and human topics – rivers, coasts, weather, ecosystems, natural hazards, rural, urban, economic development, population, pollution, health, and sport and leisure.

Lots of degree and career opportunities.

Syllabus followed:

AQA

Entry requirements:

A minimum of GCSE Geography grade B is required (data shows that pupils with grades below B are very unlikely to be successful at A-level), and approval from the Head of Geography. Pupils who have not studied Geography GCSE may be accepted onto the course

following a discussion with the Head of Geography; normally a high grade in Mathematics and English would be advisable and an average GCSE points score of 6.5.

Set texts:

There are dedicated text books specific to the AS and A2 parts of the Edexcel course, there are also pupil revision books provided to supplement the extensive Geography library.

Extent of practical work:

Even though coursework in Geography has been removed from A-level specifications, pupils are still required to undertake fieldwork. There is a programme of visits to Ipswich, North Norfolk coast, and Norwich. There may also be an exciting 9-day trip to Iceland. Occasional visits are also made to Geographical Association events and A-level conferences when they directly help with the teaching of the specification.

Additional requirements:

Reading a reputable newspaper daily; subscribing to the A-level magazine "Geography Review"; reading the New Scientist and the Economist; watching geographical TV programmes such as Earth, and Horizon and Panorama type; and news items that cover contemporary geographical events.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Geography works well with all subjects and occupies the middle ground between the sciences and the arts. It has a logical approach which combines well with any of the sciences and mathematics, and research skills which combine well with History and English. Geography is recommended for the science specialist to provide the humanistic breadth to their studies, and for the arts pupil to provide the rigour of research and enquiry, and structured writing skills. Some topics link directly with other subjects, such as ecosystems with Biology, economics with Business Studies, and meteorology, natural hazards and hypothesis testing with Science.

Skills required:

An **interest in the modern world** and the **issues** that face it, from population pressures to natural hazards, from flooding and coastal erosion to closure of rural post offices and regeneration of urban areas, from fair trade and immigration to pollution. **Research skills**, especially the ability to follow an **enquiry** approach, are also essential as the course involves problem solving, decision-making, discussion and independent learning approaches.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

During the two year course lessons will be presented in a variety of ways, but most will be seminar based with pupils expected to make contributions to lessons on a regular basis. Independent learning is emphasised.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

We have been successful with university entry to study geography, including Oxbridge; over recent years about 40% of all geography A2 pupils have attended university to study geography. There is a wide range of geography courses to suit everyone's interests (see Directory of University Geography Courses produced by the Royal Geographical Society). In terms of careers, the research by the Geographical Association shows that nearly a quarter of all Geography graduates go into business administration and management, with other popular areas being law, finance, marketing, and teaching/lecturing. However, there is a very wide range of occupations that require geography and employers constantly seek geography graduates because of their skills, ability to think logically, and, of course, their knowledge and understanding of the contemporary world.

German

Aims of the course:

To develop language skills and a greater awareness of various social and cultural topics; particularly topics of special relevance in German speaking countries.

Outline description of the course:

Year 12: AS covers: media, popular culture, health, family and relationships.

Exams Unit 1 (Listening/Reading/Writing)
 Unit 2 (Speaking exam with discussion of topics / issues)

Year 13: A2 covers: environment, multicultural society, social issues, German culture.

Exams Unit 3 (Listening/Reading/Writing)
 Unit 4 (Speaking exam with discussion of topics / issues)

Why study this subject:

To develop your fluency and self-expression in the language;
To develop transferable comprehension, research and presentation skills;
To enhance employment prospects;
To access the culture (e.g. literature and cinema) and media of other countries;
For enjoyment.
To develop a greater understanding of other peoples and cultures
To develop invaluable competencies within the context of an increasingly globalised world.

Syllabus followed:

AQA AS/A2 German

Entry requirements:

Grade A or A* in German at GCSE preferred, grade B considered;
Good skills in own native language needed

Set texts:

Language and topic elements are delivered using a mix of textbook (Zeitgeist 1 and 2) and Advance Internet Materials. These are complemented by extensive use of the internet and authentic German media resources eg online news, German television, film and podcasts etc. The cultural element at A2 will probably include a literary text (e.g. Der Vorleser) and/or a historical topic eg The Reunification of Germany.

Extent of practical work:

In addition to the timetabled class teaching periods, each student has a weekly individual or paired conversation class with a native-speaking language assistant.

Coursework requirements:

No assessment by coursework but independent research and reading will be needed in preparation for the oral exams and the cultural element at A2.

Additional requirements:

Read German newspapers / periodicals / online articles regularly. Eg Die Zeit, Stern, Frankfurter Allgemeiner

Participate in Sixth Form work experience programme

Be willing to practise speaking the language at every opportunity.

Watch German films and visit theatre

Visit Germany

Additional comments:

The modern pattern of studying four subjects at AS gives students an ideal opportunity to continue German.

It can equally complement a scientific or arts based A level profile, by providing a highly useful skill in an increasingly globalised world

Progression to A2 is usual with most students developing a genuine interest in the cultural as well as the linguistic aspects of the course

Topics reinforce general cultural awareness, allowing scope for presentations and debate and linking well with a wide range of other subjects.

The A level course provides opportunity for students to participate in a 4 day cultural trip to Berlin and students are actively encouraged to take part in the Sixth Form work experience programme.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

With a second modern foreign language (MFL) for a specialist linguist's profile

With arts / social sciences as part of a humanities profile

With mathematics and sciences to provide breadth / balance. Many scientific documents are written in German.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Guided reading and listening from authentic sources;

Whole-class teaching of grammar etc;
Discussion / debate in small groups;
Pair or individual speaking lessons with a native speaker;
Independent reading / research for presentations and essays.

Opportunities post RHS:

MFL skills and qualifications are highly valued and support university entrance applications in a wide range of disciplines.

Programmes which allow you to continue studying German at university include:

German or MFL degrees – sometimes with a beginner’s course in another language;

Degrees in German with another arts subject (e.g. History or English);

Degrees in International Law / International Politics;

Engineering and science degrees with German.

Many of these degrees include a term or year of study or work abroad.

MFL skills and qualifications also greatly enhance employment prospects.

German is used regularly by many people working in scientific areas,

Travel and tourism, aid organisations, language teaching and the arts;

The language can also be used, and transferable skills applied, in many other professions

German is the most widely spoken language within Europe and as an academic subject is highly regarded by future employers.

History

Aims of the course:

We have constructed a course that gives students the opportunity to study a range of historical periods. This will provide an excellent foundation for a degree in history but will also make for an exciting and interesting course for those not expecting to continue history into tertiary education. Apart from trying to foster a long-lasting interest in history we aim to encourage pupils to become better independent learners, to hone their analytical skills and to make connections between different parts of the world and different time-frames.

Outline description of the course:

Unit 1 is an '*Historical Theme in Breadth*'

Alfred the Great and the Vikings 793-c900

The Norman Conquest and its Impact on England, 1066-1135

Unit 2 is a '*British Depth Study*'

Henry VIII: Authority, Nation and Religion, 1509-40

Unit 3 is a '*Depth Study and Associated Historical Controversy*'

A World Divided: Superpower Relations, 1944-90

Unit 4 is an '*Historical Enquiry*'

A coursework based unit; topics that might be studied include: 'The Ascendancy of France, 1589-1715'; 'Colonisation and Decolonisation in Africa, c1870-c1981'; 'India: From Mughal Empire to the British Raj, c1700-1857'; 'The Middle East and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, c1900-2001'; 'Dictatorship and Revolution in Russia and the Soviet Union, 1825-2000'

Units 3 and 4 are taken for A2.

Why study this subject:

As well as providing the skills that most employers want, historical awareness has a more fundamental place in the education of young people. With a good understanding of the past one can make more sense of the present and put current world issues, such as globalisation and war, into proper perspective. History helps you understand why society works in the way it does and enables you to participate in that society more effectively. In history, your education is broad-based – you find out about religion, economics, politics and culture – and thus have a better knowledge and understanding of the world.

Syllabus followed:

Edexcel

Entry requirements:

A* or A at GCSE history. In certain circumstances we will accept a 'B' grade at GCSE history, or pupils without GCSE history, but with an excellent set of GCSE grades in other subjects where good literacy is required.

Set texts:

For the Henry VIII course we recommend 'The English Reformation, 1485-1558' by Colin Pendrill as a good starting point for students who may want to start reading prior to the course.

Extent of practical work:

No practical work as such, but we hope to run a number of trips e.g. Sutton Hoo, Hampton Court Palace.

Coursework requirements:

There are no Coursework requirements for history at 'AS' Level. At A2 one of the units is an 'Historical Enquiry' which allows students to pursue a question of their own choosing, within a topic that will be taught at the beginning of the year.

Additional requirements:

It is always helpful in history if pupils have a good knowledge of the world around them, particularly current affairs, so we do encourage reading of a quality daily newspaper. Many A Level history periodicals exist; 'History Review' in particular is excellent – subscriptions are encouraged but we do have copies in the History Department.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

History works well alongside many subjects, particularly English, and other writing-based/social science subjects, such as Politics, RS and Business Studies. Languages are often useful as well, especially as we study modules based on French and German history. At 'AS' Level many pupils like to combine a subject like history with science-based subjects to develop their thinking skills and to promote themselves as broad-minded individuals.

Skills required:

An ability to communicate clearly – you should be able to express yourself well verbally and on paper. You should also be able to gather and read different kinds of information and be critical of that information by checking it for one-sidedness or propaganda. In addition, if you believe you are good at understanding how people tick, what motivates them and what they

think and feel you are likely to be a successful history candidate. An independent mind and initiative are also valuable skills to have as you will spend a considerable amount of time working alone.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

We try as far as possible to use a wide range of teaching methods to get the best out of our pupils. Whilst there is naturally a place for traditional teacher exposition, note-taking, article-reading and so on. We also try to blend in tasks such as role play, simulation, pupil presentations, debating and anything that gets our pupils discussing and participating in what should be a vibrant and open-ended subject.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Employers who see that you have a qualification in history can already make certain assumptions about you – they will see you as a broad-thinking, articulate and thoughtful person who can take in large amounts of information easily. Thus, history remains a highly respected A level from the viewpoint of employers. History is a good qualification for budding lawyers, accountants, journalists, TV researchers and archivists and is particularly useful for specific careers in town planning, tourism and conservation work. If you are intending to embark on a scientific career don't forget that scientists have to be able to communicate effectively, work with and manage people. In this field, employers and universities like to see that you have a balanced academic background.

ICT

Aims of the course:

Students will become discerning users of ICT and develop a broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding of ICT.

Outline description of the course:

AS1	:	Components of ICT	(2 hour external paper)
AS2	:	Developing ICT solutions	(Coursework – 2 tasks)
A2 1	:	Informal Systems	(2 hour external paper)
A2 2	:	Approaches to Systems Development	(Coursework – Project)

Why study this subject:

A vast amount of new vocabulary for IT will be learned, preparing you for the wider IT world. The skills learned from completing a successful IT project (mainly in Microsoft Access) will be beneficial for jobs in this sector. Developing the Systems/software Lifecycle will prepare you for logical decision making and the analysis and design techniques which are unique for your future development especially in the project management field.

Syllabus followed:

CCEA (www.ccea.org.uk)

Entry requirements (if applicable)

An A grade in GCSE ICT is preferred, but GCSE ICT is not mandatory. It is envisaged that many candidates will have already gained skills, knowledge and understanding of ICT through the successful completion of a related GCSE course. Some candidates may have completed a GCSE Applied ICT course before embarking on this award.

Set texts:

Real World ICT for As and A2 – Clarke Rice and Keith Redfern

Extent of practical work:

2 Coursework Tasks in AS

Data Processing Task (60 marks)

A multimedia Task (60 marks)

A2 - 1 Project (involving a third party 'business') (80 marks)

Coursework requirements:

Microsoft Office (including Access), Media Package (web-design, graphics, video and photo manipulation)

Additional requirements:

Reading general computer magazines.

Additional comments:

ICT is not a soft option. Coursework tasks are unique to each candidate and require a great deal of independent learning and can be very time consuming. A dedicated pupil is required with a positive outlook and an investigative approach to learning.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

English (for good coursework writing) and mathematics (for logical thinking and analysing skills).

Skills required:

Self-discipline to be able to work independently on coursework projects. Enthusiasm for new developments in the IT world (i.e. how things work technically).

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

White-board presentations for learning of new concepts. Class discussions on learned IT vocabulary. Practical implementation of Software Application knowledge on computer. Self-working coursework project.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Computer software analysts, designers. Project management/Business management fields.

Latin

Aims of the course:

To develop and apply analytical and evaluative skills when dealing with Latin texts.

Outline description of the course:

To study Latin authors in the original and to be able to translate them and appreciate their respective styles.

Why study this subject:

You will have the opportunity to read some of the finest literature ever written and study a culture that has had a huge influence on the way we live today. Hopefully you will enjoy the subject and take pride in the fact that you are studying a subject that few others are able to.

Syllabus followed:

OCR Classics HO39

Entry requirements

Minimum grade B at GCSE Latin, but A or A* is preferable.

Set texts:

Selections from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Cicero's '*in Catilinam*'

Additional requirements:

A good memory for vocabulary is important.

Additional comments:

A strong understanding of language is required, not just an interest in Romans and their way of life. All the studies require linguistic skills.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Latin goes well with most subjects, but especially modern languages, English, and even mathematics. Many pupils combine it with the sciences as a way of adding some variety to their studies.

Skills required:

A good understanding of Latin grammar and a desire to read Latin literature. A general interest in Roman life topics, although welcome, is not sufficient. Be assured that you are not taking on an easy subject and the rewards may be high, but a dedication to hard work is also needed.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Very similar to GCSE Latin. Lots of learning of vocabulary and practice of translation. Literature studies are exactly as for GCSE but there is simply more of it!

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Latin can be studied either individually at University or in combinations with other subjects. Many students combine it with Ancient Greek and read Classics. As far as careers are concerned, the study of Latin is useful in a variety of ways. Many students go on to read Law; lots of politicians have read Latin. Generally a degree in Classics tells future employers that you have coped with a difficult subject to a high level.

Further comment:

It is possible to start to learn Ancient Greek in Yr 12 as part of the Friday enrichment programme. Successful candidates may take GCSE at the end of Yr 13.

Mathematics

Aims of the course:

To develop students' understanding of mathematics and mathematical processes in a way that promotes confidence and fosters enjoyment

To develop students abilities to reason logically and recognise incorrect reasoning, to generalise and construct mathematical proofs

To extend the range of mathematical skills and techniques used by students and to use them in more difficult, unstructured problems

To develop an understanding of coherence and progression in mathematics and of how different areas of mathematics can be connected

Recognise how a situation may be represented mathematically and understand the relationship between 'real-world' problems and standard and other mathematical models and how these can be refined and improved

Develop an awareness of the relevance of mathematics to other fields of study, to the world of work and to society in general

To encourage students to take an increasing responsibility for their own learning and the evaluation of their own mathematical development

Outline description of the course:

The full A-Level comprises six units each worth $16\frac{2}{3}\%$ of the total. These units are studied as follows:

Year 12 - all pupils study Pure Mathematics (units C1 and C2) and either Mechanics (unit M1) or Statistics (unit S1) or Decision Mathematics (D1). Examinations in all 3 units will be taken in June of the Lower Sixth.

Year 13 - all pupils continue to study either additional Mechanics (unit M2) or additional Statistics (unit S2). In addition they continue their study of Pure Mathematics (units C3 and C4). Examinations in the final 3 units are taken in June of the Upper Sixth along with any retakes.

Why study this subject:

Mathematics is a valuable and interesting subject in its own right and as previously mentioned is a highly regarded A level subject. However it is also very challenging, particularly Further Mathematics, so it will appeal to any pupil who likes to be stretched intellectually.

Syllabus followed:

Edexcel

Entry requirements:

For Mathematics: at least a Grade B at IGCSE (or equivalent) at Higher Tier.

For Further Mathematics: A* at IGCSE

Additional requirements:

Interest in the subject and sound algebraic skills are also essential requirements.

Additional comments:

Apart from being a valuable and interesting subject in its own right, Mathematics combines well with virtually every other subject across the curriculum. In particular, any student studying another science in the sixth form is likely to benefit enormously from studying Mathematics to at least AS Level. However, the obvious benefits of obtaining an A-Level pass in Mathematics can prove a trap for the unwary and tempt some students into a study of the subject for the wrong reasons. Certainly no student should opt to study Mathematics because they need to fill up their timetable.

The strongest students can study additional units leading to Further Mathematics.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Mathematics combines well with virtually every other subject across the curriculum. Pupils studying another science in the sixth form will benefit from studying mathematics to at least AS Level, and in particular pupils studying A level Physics will gain enormous benefit from studying the mechanics component of the A level mathematics course.

Skills required:

Whilst natural flair for the subject is obviously helpful, pupils can achieve success at both A and AS level if they are tenacious, determined and well-motivated. A good work ethic and a genuine desire to be successful are essential.

In general pupils need good analytical skills and an interest in problem solving as well as a very solid understanding of areas like Algebra and Trigonometry to A grade standard at IGCSE. Pupils must be able to manipulate expressions, solve equations and rearrange formulae efficiently and confidently. They also need to be able to use basic trigonometry to solve right angled triangles and be familiar with the techniques used for non-right angled triangles.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

The AS and A2 examinations do NOT have any coursework component so the focus of the course is 100% dedicated to preparing students thoroughly for external examinations. The

nature of the subject means that the ability to 'problem solve' effectively is the key to success. Through graduated practice exercises and regular testing pupils develop a range of skills that enable them to ultimately successfully tackle complex problems. Pupils will also need to develop an independent learning style and be prepared to seek additional help and support outside of timetabled lessons.

Opportunities post RHS:

Pupils who achieve success at A level in mathematics are highly sought after. Apart from going on to university to study for a mathematics degree it is vitally important in other areas like engineering and physics. However mathematics also provides a route into many other professions like banking, accountancy and law.

Media Studies

Aims of the course:

The main aim of Media Studies is to stimulate students to critically analyse the mass media. This is particularly important in the growing digital age. Students will be asked to think critically and analytically on the representations that are created by the Media. It is an exciting and challenging subject. It is a major influence on our culture and country and is always relevant.

Outline description of the course:

The course is a combination of academic study supported by practical work to reinforce what has been learnt in the class. There is ample opportunity to indulge in many aspects of practical work, from making short films to radio drama productions. Academic work is based on a wide range of texts including; Hollywood blockbusters; horror films; romantic comedies; television dramas and advertising. We attempt to ensure that the course challenges the mass media's representations of race, gender and class and how the Media's control of these representations is changing as it now becomes ever more fragmented through the digital revolution.

Why study this subject:

Media studies is an enjoyable and rewarding A-level. If you have always felt that you could make a film, or radio production then you will find the opportunity here. If you have felt that there is something wrong with parts of the media but have been unable to express it, you will learn how to judge and constructively criticise programmes. Media Studies is an interesting and lively subject despite its negative press. It is very much part of our lives on an ever increasing level; studying one of the major influences of our age is exciting and challenging.

Syllabus followed:

AQA specifications: GCE Media Studies (2570)

Entry requirements:

Students do **not** need GCSE Media Studies. There are no formal Entry requirements for this subject. It is an artistic subject but it does entail writing essays and therefore, a grade C at GCSE English Language is advisable.

Set texts:

We study many texts and these change each year to remain as contemporary as possible.

Extent of practical work:

There is a great deal of practical work. In AS and A level there is a practical element. There is now a requirement for students to complete two pieces of practical work across two platforms; for example, a short film trailer **and** a film review from a new film magazine. The A level coursework will entail practical work related to an independent study; for example, if the student is studying the representation of women in popular music they would have to produce two practical pieces concerned with this issue. This could be a music video and the front page of a new music magazine.

Coursework requirements:

In brief, there is a split of 60% examination and 40% coursework which is mostly practical. Coursework has been described above in more detail.

Additional requirements:

It would be important to remember that this course on the AQA website is included under the arts banner. It is put alongside, for example, 'The History of Art' and 'Drama'. It is an art subject in many respects, but it does have a good deal of writing to undertake. Therefore an interest in design and how media texts 'look' would be useful. Any books on the subject would be worth dipping into and a healthy interest in the quality papers which often discuss the debates that rage around the media would also be relevant.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Students often do well if they are also completing an art-related subject or English Literature.

Skills required:

Ability to write essays or at least be prepared to learn the art to a certain degree. Ability to work with complicated software, such as film editing software or photographic manipulation. The need to take on quite a lot of coursework requires good organisational skills.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

We are lucky to be able to employ different styles as the course changes from theory/essay work to practical/coursework. The lessons are therefore full of variety.

Opportunities post RHS:

Media Studies would suit someone who wanted to continue this subject or perhaps English, Sociology or other Humanities subjects at university. Film, marketing and other media related careers would be a natural progression for pupils taking this subject.

Music

Aims of the course:

The aim of the course is to provide candidates with the knowledge and experience required for all forms of further and higher education. It will give them understanding and encourage appreciation of all music genre in all contexts.

Outline description of the course:

We believe that the syllabus content should be appealing, accessible and approachable giving students the opportunity to compose, perform and appreciate a wide range of music.

There are further opportunities to use music technology, improvise, present conventional submissions in staff notation and acquire music techniques of the Western classical tradition.

They will also be able to demonstrate skills as soloists, members of ensembles and performing on a second instrument.

There are six units: units 1 - 3 lead to an A/S award and all six to the A2.

Unit 1: Influences on Music

This comprises a written paper of one hour and 45 minutes. There is a wide range of choice on the subject matter examined which leads to structured listening questions using a CD of musical excerpts and two essay questions, one on each Area of Study.

Unit 2: Composing and Creating Musical Ideas

Candidates should demonstrate their ability to create and develop musical ideas in response to one of the following briefs:

- A compositional techniques
- B free composition or pastiche in response to a given genre
- C arranging

Unit 3: Performing and Interpreting Musical ideas

Candidates should offer two performances chosen from the following:

- (a) solo performance on an instrument
- (b) solo performance on voice
- (c) solo performance on a second instrument
- (d) ensemble performance
- (e) technology based performance using sequencing
- (f) technology based performance using Multi-track – close microphone recording

Each performance to last from five – eight minutes

Unit 4: Music in context

This comprises a written paper of two hours fifteen minutes on structured listening questions using a CD of musical excerpts and there will be two essay questions, one on each area of study.

Unit 5: Composing and Creating Musical Ideas

Coursework – composing – a development and natural progression of the requirements in Unit 2 responding to one brief from a choice of three.

Unit 6: A Musical Performance

Candidates offer two contrasting pieces to perform a short programme of either

- (a) solo acoustic performance
- (b) technology based performance
- (c) one solo performance and one technology based performance – each performance to be at least five minutes.

The programme to last ten - fifteen minutes. The pieces will be chosen to show a variety of style, technique, period and/or approach.

Why study this subject:

The value of music in education is a well established and accepted precept. The Greeks with their “Athletics for the body, Music for the soul” were expressing a deep felt, though concisely and simply worded ideal. Music is essentially a practical subject calling for active involvement and demanding skills of physical and aural co-ordination. Music education should be mainly concerned with bringing pupils, at every phase, into contact with the three areas of a musician’s life – performing, composing and listening. Having been brought into contact with the basic elements of music, pupils should then discover something of its nature – its excitement, vitality and impact, its power in conjuring up and evoking images and emotions, and the wide range of its expressive qualities.

Syllabus:

AQA

Entry Requirements:

Except in exceptional circumstances, a grade B at GCSE music is required

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Physics, History, Languages or Drama

Skills required:

Ability to play a musical instrument to Grade 5 standard and good aural awareness.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Helping students to develop skills in solo and ensemble performance. Developing musical ideas in the form of original composition and technique exercise. Comparisons of performance – aural recognition and perception of tonality and harmony.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

Performing, teaching, recording industry, services.

Physical Education

Aims of the course:

This course takes a multi-disciplinary approach, encouraging the development of different methods of enquiry, with the focal point being the performer and the performance. The course is based on the interaction between the theory and practice of Physical Education.

Outline description of the course:

AS - Introduction to Physical Education. Acquiring, developing and evaluating practical skills in Physical Education.

A2 - Principles and concepts across different areas of Physical Education. The improvement of effective performance and the critical evaluation of practical activities in Physical Education

Why study this subject:

To enhance the pupils' own knowledge and understanding regarding performance. To create an in depth overview about a sport of their choice. To use physical skills and abilities to gain a recognised qualification.

Opportunity for focused study at A2 in a particular area of interest; Historical Studies, Comparative Studies, Sports Psychology and Exercise and Sport Physiology.

The course will offer opportunities to develop communication and leadership skills that can be translated to any walk of life.

Syllabus followed:

OCR H154 + H554

Entry requirements:

A/B grade in science at GCSE and/or GCSE PE at A/B grade.

A high level of personal athletic performance or understanding.

To have competed at least at school level in 1 major sport.

Set texts:

Physical Education and the study of Sport (Davis, Roscoe, Bull)

Extent of practical work:

In AS candidates are assessed in 2 practical activities from 2 different activity areas. The candidate can achieve this by being assessed in the role of performer, coach or official. The same is the case in A2 but for only 1 activity.

Coursework requirements:

Ongoing over the period of the course – practical assessment.

Additional requirements:

A global outlook on sport as an institution.

Interest in reading the broad sheets and sports sections.

Additional comments:

Only those with a genuine interest in all sport should look to study this subject. This course blends many areas of other studies but can be considered for those who are more practically able. A willingness to accept sport as an institution is a key aspect of this study.

Consultation with PE staff is vital before acceptance on this course.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Science / psychology

Skills required:

A high level of physical ability and knowledge. A willingness to explore new dimensions of athletic performance. Communication and leadership skills. Analytical approach to research and study. The ability to work and learn independently.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Problem solving

Command

Reciprocal

Some independent learning.

Group work.

Analysis of self and others performance

Opportunities post RHS:

Degree courses for teaching, sports management, sports psychology, physiotherapy.

Physics

Aims of the course:

To develop interest and enthusiasm for the subject, including further study and careers

To illustrate how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how the sciences contribute to the success of the economy

To develop and demonstrate a deeper appreciation of the skills, knowledge and understanding of how science works

Outline description of the course:

unit 1: particles, quantum phenomena & electricity

unit 2: mechanics, materials & waves

unit 3: practical skills assessment

unit 4: fields and further mechanics

unit 5: nuclear & thermal physics plus a further optional topic

unit 6: practical skills assessment

As ever, units 1, 2 & 3 constitute an AS level; the addition of units 4, 5 & 6 make up the complete qualification.

Why study this subject:

Few other subjects offer the same wealth of employment possibilities. Physics not only underpins industry with its emphasis on electricity, energy, forces, robotics and so on, but its practical and analytic nature also provides an excellent basis for commerce and management. The experience of technology and problem-solving is essential for the modern work environment.

Syllabus followed:

AQA GCSE Physics A (2450)

Entry requirements:

The absolute minimum is a GCSE average of 5.5, and preferably 6.5 or higher.

Past experience demonstrates that an average of 5.5 GCSE points leads to an E grade

Ideally, separate science at GCSE (B in GCSE Physics) and an average of 6.5 would lead to a more comfortable experience.

Extent of practical work:

This qualification will involve the assessment of practical and investigative skills. Candidates will be assessed on practical skills throughout the course. In addition there will be an awarding body set investigative skills assignment (ISA) for both AS and A2 levels which will be assessed by centres. Therefore the development of practical and investigative skills plays an integral part of the course.

Additional requirements:

Students perform better if they have a fundamental interest in physics either because of the intellectual challenge or because the qualification is necessary to pursue a particular course at University. Therefore general reading of science based publications such as New Scientist, Scientific American, Focus or even Nature will be a distinct advantage, as would be a familiarity with all GCSE work covered.

Additional comments:

The revised course follows the general flavour of the GCSE course with an emphasis both on the core knowledge of the subject itself and its application to the wider world. Practical assessment is similar in nature to the junior course as well. Transition between the two is therefore relatively smooth and, provided momentum has been carried over little new impulse is needed.

Currently all course providers have been at one stage a Head of Physics and therefore the quality of experience, knowledge and dedication is without parallel.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Mathematics and other sciences. Possibly a foreign language as many undergraduate courses are available with a year's secondment to a foreign university.

Skills required:

The ability to use theories, models and ideas to develop scientific explanations; to use knowledge and understanding to pose scientific questions; to use appropriate methodology to answer scientific questions; to carry out investigative and experimental activities; to use appropriate mathematical skills; to analyse and interpret data; to recognise correlations and causal relationships; to work as part of a group; to use ICT both as an experimental tool and a presentational medium.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

There is a strong emphasis on the gaining of experimental experience for the practical modules. Students are challenged to use the problem-solving techniques encountered, and to apply scientific method to new situations.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

There is a huge range of degree subjects, from theoretical physics courses to physics with sports science, via astrophysics, cosmology, nanotechnology, biophysics and microelectronics with photonics. Many courses are practical in nature and offer opportunities to study abroad for a year. Careers are mentioned below.

More directly, physics is useful for careers in areas such as astronomy, communications and information technologies and medical physics, not to mention archaeology. There is physics of soils, physics of weather, physics of machines, and physics of the water cycle, all supporting agriculture, building, aviation and construction.

The quality and comfort of life in a modern industrialised world is directly attributable to the application of physics.

Politics

Aims of the course:

The aims of the Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE in Government and Politics are to encourage students to:

- develop a critical awareness of the nature of politics and the relationship between political ideas, institutions and processes
- acquire knowledge and understanding of the structures of authority and power within the political system of the United Kingdom, and how these may differ from those of other political systems
- acquire knowledge and informed understanding of the rights and responsibilities of the individual and encourage an interest in, and engagement with, contemporary politics.

Outline description of the course:

The Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE specification in Government and Politics requires students to develop a broad knowledge and understanding of the political system of the UK, including the local and European Union (EU) dimensions.

It encourages students to develop their capacity for critical thinking, to see relationships between different aspects of government and politics and to perceive their field of study in a broader perspective, including some comparisons with other political systems;

It enables them to develop knowledge and understanding of relevant political concepts and processes.

The Edexcel Advanced GCE in Government and Politics addresses the following:

- the essential characteristics and inter-relationships of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary;
- the adequacy of existing political arrangements for ensuring representative democracy and participation;
- the rights and responsibilities of the individual ideologies, theories and tradition; and current political debates.

In addition, the A2 specification may require students to extend their knowledge and understanding of the political system of the United Kingdom. However, the A2 specification should require students to go beyond the context of the United Kingdom in the following areas:

- the politics and government of another state;
- comparative politics

Why study this subject:

Who should study politics, and why? The short answer is that everyone should study politics — all members of society should have a better understanding of the general rules under which they live. For these rules to be effective, as many people as possible should actively participate in making them, upholding them and maybe, changing them. This is what is meant by 'active citizenship'.

A healthy society is a society in which many people participate in political activity and do so with insight and understanding.

What makes politics different as an academic subject is its emphasis on debate, discussion and argument. If politics exists because people disagree studying politics must mean studying how, why and when people disagree and taking an interest in these disagreements. What is more, we study these things not as neutral observers but as active participants. Facts (what is) and values (what should be) are so closely entwined in politics that it is often impossible to prise them apart.

Politics is a popular, academically rigorous and interesting subject, which combines well with the study of a wide variety of other A-Level subjects. It presents an opportunity to launch out into an entirely new discipline as part of your AS and A-Level studies. It provides us with constantly changing examples to illustrate relationships between people, governments, institutions and processes. The subject is all around us - on television, radio, in newspapers, the Internet, and quite often in our conversations.

Politics is therefore particularly likely to suit students who:

- have an interest in the world around them — ones who want to know more about the society they live in, how it works and how it could work
- enjoy debate, discussion and argument — ones who are comfortable with the fact that in politics there are no simple 'rights' or 'wrongs'
- like to think for themselves — ones who want to develop their own views, rather than accept the views of others.

Syllabus followed:

Edexcel Advanced GCE in Government and Politics (9GPO1)

Entry requirements:

A pass at grade C in English and mathematics

Additional requirements:

Potential students should ideally have an interest in the world about them and, in particular, should read the quality press and follow current affairs. It would be valuable to read periodicals such as The Economist, Newsweek and Time magazine.

Additional comments:

The course is very much involved with up to date politics, with what is happening today in Westminster, Washington and Brussels. Provision will be made to visit London to visit Parliament and to attend relevant Politics Conferences. The subject is intellectually demanding, but also requires considerable background reading of the quality press and the viewing of quality current affairs programmes on television.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

History / English / Geography / Business Studies

Skills required:

The ability to read widely, analyse and argue coherently both on paper and orally.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

The aim of the syllabus is to develop a critical, rigorous and analytical approach to the study of Politics, and to help students to develop interpretative and evaluative skills to distinguish between evidence and opinion.

The course encourages candidates to develop their capacity for critical thinking, and to perceive politics in a broader perspective. Politics is a subject about which everyone should have a sound understanding.

The course is taught utilising a wide range of styles but involves interaction, discussion, assimilating knowledge, reading and writing (both essays and short answers).

Opportunities post RHS:

Degree courses in the social sciences, history or law might well appeal.

Work in education, government or the EU may well be attractive to sufficiently motivated pupils.

Psychology

Aims of the course:

Students will engage in a study of the human mind and behaviour. They will develop a critical approach to psychological theory and research. Students will also adopt an independent approach when conducting own research.

Outline description of the course:

The course consists of two AS units and then two A2 units. Each year of study requires students to undertake their own independent research in preparation for the examination. Students will begin their AS level course with an introduction into the general aims and approaches within psychology. There are then a total of five approaches to psychology, which are studied in detail: cognitive psychology, social psychology, the learning approach, the psychodynamic approach and physiological psychology

Why study this subject:

Psychology is widely studied at universities and provides the stepping-stone to many careers in health, social care, the medical profession, sport and leisure and education. It draws references from a wide range of subject disciplines such as science, philosophy and child development.

Syllabus followed:

'Edexcel' Psychology

Entry requirements:

A B grade at GCSE biology, a B grade in English language and a C grade in mathematics are strongly recommended but not essential

Set texts:

Angles on Psychology

Extent of practical work:

There is a practical component for each of the five approaches to psychology mentioned above which must be carried out by students and is assessed in the examinations, not be coursework.

Coursework requirements:

None

Skills required:

- The ability to read and take notes from textbooks and articles.
- The ability to analyse and criticise evidence from psychology case studies.
- The ability to work independently and as part of a group to complete practical work.
- The ability to write fluently and with brevity to discuss and describe psychology theories and research.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

There is some group work involved for completing practical investigations, some independent research and also whole class discussions. Students are encouraged to be involved as much as possible in order to empathise with participants and researchers in psychology case studies.

Opportunities post RHS (HE/careers):

There many Higher and Further Education studies in psychology. Courses leading to recognition from the British Psychological Society (BPS) are essential if pursuing a specific psychology-related career: such courses will always make this explicit. Psychology is also frequently paired with other subjects in combined degrees such as English literature.

There are many possible careers in fields mentioned above, many of which involve further postgraduate study.

Religious Studies

Aims of the course:

RS will help you to develop:

- Your thinking skills;
- Your writing skills;
- Your ability to communicate in debate; and
- Your ability to evaluate your own argument and the arguments of others.

These skills are crucial not just at university but in many walks of life beyond. The good thing about RS is that these are the skills which are most to the fore in the subject.

The second thing to say is that RS will introduce you to some of the most important thinkers in Western history. There is a factual content to the subject which will mostly be new to you. Like many AS subjects, you will be on a journey – an intellectual journey of discovery.

Outline Description of the Course:

The course is a brand new specification run by AQA. It consists of 4 units, 2 for AS and 2 for A2 each of which is examined.

Philosophy of Religion (AS)

The Cosmological Argument for the existence of God; the argument from religious experience; psychological understandings of religion from Freud and Jung; atheistic and post modern understandings of religion.

Religion, Philosophy and Science (AS)

The Design Argument for the existence of God; miracles; the doctrine of creation; quantum mechanics.

Philosophy of Religion (A2)

The Ontological Argument for the existence of God; the relationship between faith and reason; religious language; body, soul and personal identity; the problem of evil.

Perceptions of Ultimate Reality (A2)

Different understandings of God; the relationship between revealed and natural theology; different understandings of man's relationship with God; sociological interpretations of religion; religious experience; religious language.

Why study this subject:

Religious studies will introduce you to some of the most important thinkers in Western history. There is a factual content to the subject, which will mostly be new. Like many AS/A2 subjects, you will be on a journey – an intellectual journey of discovery. You will find that many of the ideas you cover within the subject crop up in a whole range of other subjects too. Many pupils find that understanding how to think, debating with others and learning about ideas can be very enjoyable and rewarding.

Syllabus followed:

Units 1C and 1D for AS and Units 3B and 4A for A2.
AQA.

Entry Requirements:

Minimum grade B English GCSE, B in Religious Studies

Additional comments:

The subject of Religious Studies is a vast one. There are many different components which you could be asked to study. At the RHS, we think that the most interesting and useful components are those which are broadly philosophical in nature whether that be in the study of the philosophy of religion or in the study of the philosophy of moral decision-making.

Philosophy of religion touches on some old ideas about God and the world. The reason why we continue to study these ideas is because they have a remarkable capacity to survive the many challenges which have been issued against them. So you will find that your study of the subject will also pick up on argument and debate which is happening today in the 21st century.

Moral philosophy deals with the kinds of ethical decisions which most if not all of us will have to face at some point in our lives. Hardly a day goes by when the newspapers do not touch on an issue which you will have had the opportunity to look at in RS. This makes the subject alive and exciting.

Lessons are usually conducted in the spirit of exploration and debate. I will provide a great deal of the notes you need to gain the top grade in this subject. You will be expected to get the core concepts under your belt and contribute to what is often a vigorous class discussion. In addition, you will be expected to study independently for some of the course. This means reading new material on your own and putting the fruits of your efforts into your written work. This kind of learning is vital: it is the best preparation for university that the school can offer.

Good combinations (this subject works well/needs to be paired with):

Religious Studies works well with most subjects but it goes especially well with History, Politics, English and Physics.

Skills required:

Analytical skills; ability to argue clearly and support your point of view with appropriate evidence; ability to write concisely and thoughtfully.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Notes are given; lots of classroom discussion; independent reading is expected; willingness to use internet resources especially to update knowledge on ethics.

Opportunities post RHS:

Theology and Philosophy at University but most other arts subjects too.

Careers: Journalism, teaching, medicine, law, politics and any other career where it is important to think clearly.

Spanish

Aims of the course:

To develop language skills and a greater awareness of various social and cultural topics; particularly topics of special relevance in French-speaking countries.

Outline description of the course:

Year 12: AS covers: media, popular culture, health, family and relationships.

Exams Unit 1 (Listening/Reading/Writing)
 Unit 2 (Speaking exam with discussion of topics / issues)

Year 13: A2 covers: environment, multicultural society, social issues, French culture.

Exams Unit 3 (Listening/Reading/Writing)
 Unit 4 (Speaking exam with discussion of topics / issues)

Why study this subject:

Spanish is the 4th most widely spoken language in the world and is predicted to overtake English in numbers of speakers worldwide by 2050.

You will develop your fluency and self-expression in the language and be able to communicate with speakers of Spanish.

The topics studied are more challenging and thought-provoking than at GCSE.

You will develop comprehension, research, communication and presentation skills.

The Hispanic world has a fascinating history and wealth of culture which you will be able to access through the medium of the Spanish language.

We hope you will enjoy learning Spanish and gain a broad perspective on the Spanish speaking world.

Becoming a confident communicator in Spanish will enable you to be part of a dynamic and expanding worldwide community.

Syllabus followed:

AQA AS/A2 SPANISH (new GCE specification no. 2650)

Entry requirements:

A or A* grade in GCSE Spanish preferred, grade B considered

Good knowledge of native language

Set texts:

There are no set texts, but language and topic elements are delivered using a mix of textbook and authentic resources (e.g. internet / video)

The cultural element at A2 may include a literary topic (e.g. a novel or play) or aspects of cinema, history or art related to the Spanish speaking world.

Extent of practical work:

In addition to the timetabled class teaching periods, each student has a weekly individual or paired conversation class with a native-speaking language assistant.

Coursework requirements:

No assessment by coursework but independent research and reading will be needed in preparation for the oral exams and the cultural element at A2.

Additional requirements:

Read Spanish newspapers / periodicals / online articles regularly.

Be willing to practise speaking the language at every opportunity.

Watch Spanish language news online and on television regularly.

Be willing to undertake independent research in Spanish on AS/A2 topics online

Additional comments:

The modern pattern of studying four subjects at AS gives students an ideal opportunity to continue Spanish, as the language is a valuable asset in a wide range of careers. A level language courses are challenging and thought provoking. You will develop comprehension, research, communication and presentation skills. There will be an opportunity to participate in the Exchange to Madrid. Spanish is the fourth most widely spoken language in the world and is predicted to overtake English in numbers of speakers worldwide by 2050. Becoming a confident communicator in Spanish will enable you to be a part of a dynamic and expanding worldwide community.

Good combinations:

With a second MFL for a specialist linguist's profile;

With arts/social sciences as part of a humanities profile;

With mathematics and sciences to provide breadth/balance.

The syllabus covers a wide range of current topics and issues. General knowledge in all areas both complements and is further developed by the study of a foreign language.

Skills required:

Ability to think critically;
Clear oral expression;
Listening and reading skills (comprehension, summary, vocabulary retrieval etc.);
Ability to organise notes and structure written work;
Vocabulary and grammar learning;
An interest in communication, culture, travel and the wider world.

Teaching/learning styles employed in this subject:

Guided reading and listening from authentic sources;
Whole-class teaching of grammar etc;
Discussion in small groups;
Pair or individual speaking lessons with a native speaker;
Independent reading / research for presentations and essays.

Opportunities post RHS:

MFL degrees – sometimes with a beginner's course in an obscure language;
Degrees in an MFL with another arts subject (e.g. History or English);
Degrees in International Law / Politics;
Engineering and science degrees with MFL;
Many of these degrees include a term or year of study or work abroad;
Good MFL skills and qualifications make people highly employable;
MFL skills are most obviously relevant in journalism, business, financial markets, the Foreign Office, Armed Forces, travel and tourism, aid organisations, language teaching and the arts, but can also be applied in many other professions.
Languages graduates have one of the highest employment rates of all subjects.