

KS5

Curriculum Guide

2010-2011 edition

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Introduction

Welcome to the KS5 curriculum guide. It is intended that this document will give an overview of the curriculum at KS5 (years 12 and 13). You will find more detailed information about courses and course selection in the companion document, *Sixth Form Curriculum and AS Option Choices Guide*. This document's main purpose is to act as a reference for parents and pupils undertaking AS and A2 courses in years 12 and 13.

KS5 is obviously an extremely important stage in the educational development of any pupil. The curriculum has been narrowed down to a selection of 4 (3 in some cases) AS levels leading into A2 and then higher education or a career of some form. It is vital that the pupil selects AS subjects that are appropriate to their interests, skills and academic ability. Selecting the wrong subject or combination of subjects can easily lead to disappointing A2 results and a restricted range of options beyond school.

In this guide you will find information about subject blocks for AS and the subject tiers which are accessible depending on GCSE success.

Dr Jonathan Allday
Director of Studies
January 2010

Admission to the 6th form:

Pupils wishing to study in the 6th form at RHS need to satisfy the following criteria:

1. A GCSE average performance greater than 5.5 across all subjects taken (using a scale where an A* counts as 8, A as 7, B as 6, C as 5 and D as 4).
2. A pass at GCSE English
3. A selection of 4 AS subjects (3 in exceptional cases) which fit the option blocks shown below
4. Subject specific entry requirements to AS courses as detailed below.

Pupils with an average GCSE score between 5.5 and 6.0 will be encouraged to consider taking 3 AS subjects, rather than the normal 4.

Continuation on to A2 courses is not automatic, and will be dependent upon satisfactory work and progress during year 12 as well as a satisfactory performance (D or better) in the AS subject concerned at the end of year 12.

AS Option Blocks and Subject Tiers (September 2010)

AS subjects have been allocated to blocks as below.

The tier shows the minimum average GCSE score required in order to access subjects in that tier.

Individual subject criteria also apply.

Average GCSE score	Block A	Block B	Block C	Block D
5.5 – 5.9	DT	Art	History of Art	Theatre Studies
	Textiles	Media Studies / Film Studies	Politics	Business Studies
	Politics	Business Studies	Business Studies	
	Business Studies			
6.0 – 6.4	History	English	English	History
	French	French	Psychology	Geography
	Psychology	Geography	RS	IT
	Spanish		PE	
6.5	Latin/Music/German	Latin/Music/German	Latin/Music/German	Latin/Music/German
	Chemistry	Mathematics	Physics	Biology
7.0				F Mathematics

Selection of the correct combination of subjects is a key factor in eventual success at AS and A2. The subject tiers outlined above have been based on the well-respected ALIS survey produced annually by the University of Durham CEM centre.

The ALIS information comprises a detailed breakdown of the proportion of pupils with a given average GCSE score who go on to achieve certain grades at AS and A2 level. The tiers have been based on this information and show the minimum GCSE score required to have a 70% chance of achieving a grade C or better in the subject.

It is tempting to interpret this information as being a measure of “how difficult” one subject is compared to another. In reality, subject difficulty is a complicated issue involved both conceptual and assessment factors. A better approach is to regard the tiers as a measure of the average ability of pupils who go on to have success in that subject. AS grades are competitive, and it is important that a pupil has a realistic view of the standard of pupils nationally who are engaged with a given subject.

Subject requirements:

In addition to the basic requirements defined by the subject tiers, specific subject criteria have been established for entry onto AS courses:

Art / Textiles	B in Art GCSE
Art History	B at GCSE in an essay subject (English/History etc)
Biology	A in GCSE Biology, or A*A* at double award science C in GCSE English and Mathematics,
Business Studies	C in GCSE Business Studies (if taken)
Chemistry	A in GCSE Chemistry, or A*A* at double award science
Drama	B in English GCSE, B in GCSE Drama preferred as well
DT	B in GCSE DT
English	B grades in GCSE English and GCSE English Literature (if taken)
Further Mathematics	A* in GCSE Mathematics
Geography	B in GCSE Geography, pass in GCSE Mathematics
History	B in GCSE History and B in GCSE English
IT	B in GCSE Mathematics, B in GCSE English
Language	B in relevant language GCSE, B on the writing component
Latin	A in GCSE Latin
Mathematics	A in GCSE Mathematics
Media Studies / Film Studies	C in GCSE English, C in GCSE Media Studies (if taken)
Music	B in GCSE Music (if taken), otherwise grade 5 instrument
PE	B in Science and English, B in GCSE PE (if taken)
Physics	A in GCSE Physics, or A*A* at double award science
Politics	C in GCSE English and Mathematics
Psychology	B in GCSE English and Science
RE	B in English and/or B in GCSE RS (if taken)

Period allocations:

(55 mins per periods)

Subjects	Week A	Week B
OPT A	5	5
OPT B	5	5
OPT C	5	5
OPT D	5	5
Enrichment	1	1
Study	6	6
Total	27	27