

RIPON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

SIXTH FORM COURSE GUIDE

Helping shape the future since 1555





WELCOME FROM THE HEAD OF SIXTH FORM

Sixth Form is undoubtedly the most exciting and dynamic phase of a student's education, as they prepare themselves for the bright futures that await them. The opportunity to study favourite subjects in ever greater depth and sophistication offers students the chance to push beyond their comfort zone, and to become a specialist in a field which may one day become their career.

Students who join the Sixth Form at Ripon Grammar School will enjoy an environment which is both academically stimulating, and extremely welcoming. Our students are curious, proactive and independent thinkers who enjoy challenge, and who aspire highly. They are also wholehearted in their engagement in the very wide range of co-curricular activities and opportunities that they encounter during their time in our Sixth Form, and they are expected to be leaders within our school community from their very first day in the Sixth Form. At the same time, we will help students to understand the huge range of options that are open to them beyond school, and to make the choices that are right for them with the support of our dedicated Careers and pastoral teams.

This subject guide will give you specific details about the courses that we offer in our Sixth Form, and if you would like any further information, or to visit the school, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Mr T Fell
Head of Sixth Form

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
PLUS ONE PROGRAMME	6
ART	8
BIOLOGY	10
BUSINESS	12
CHEMISTRY	14
CLASSICAL CIVILISATION	16
DESIGN and TECHNOLOGY – PRODUCT DESIGN	18
ECONOMICS	20
ENGLISH LITERATURE	22
FRENCH	24
FURTHER MATHEMATICS	26
GEOGRAPHY	28
GERMAN	30
HISTORY	32
MATHEMATICS	34
MUSIC	36
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	38
PHYSICS	40
POLITICS	44
PSYCHOLOGY	45
RELIGIOUS STUDIES	47
SPANISH	49
EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)	51
ENRICHMENT	53
CAREERS PROGRAMME	54
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	56

INTRODUCTION

The Sixth Form curriculum at RGS is designed to offer breadth as well as academic challenge. We have a wide variety of courses to choose from. We expect the majority of our students will undertake three A Levels over the two years, alongside our carefully designed 'Plus One' programme, further information about this programme is detailed below.

There may be a small number of students who want to undertake a programme of four A Level courses, particularly those wishing to study Further Mathematics alongside Mathematics. Students who wish to follow 4 A Levels will need to indicate this on the Sixth Form application form and explain their request. This will be assessed and confirmed by the Head of Sixth Form.

Advice on subject choices will be available to students at any stage during the process. Should a student find that they wish to switch one of their subjects they will be allowed to do so provided that there is space in the new subject choice and it fits the option blocks. Ideally any such decisions will be made within the first four weeks of the courses.

All students will be able to undertake an EPQ if they wish (see below), and will be expected to complete their three A Levels in addition to any EPQ qualification.

Plus One Programme

Our 'Plus One' programme to accompany A Level studies is an exciting and academically robust course designed to offer a range of enrichment strands to enhance a student's academic and co-curricular skills, including:

- An option to undertake AS Mathematics
- An IT component supporting each student's current level of IT literacy
- Co-curricular, volunteering and leadership opportunities within and beyond school
- Super-curricular academic elements such as the EPQ, university online courses (MOOCs) and Russell Group university essay competitions
- A programme of wider reading around subjects.

Making Your Option Choices
Consultation regarding option choice combinations will be held with current Ripon Grammar School Year 11 students and used to construct four 'option blocks'.

Students must choose one A Level subject from each of three option blocks and the 'Plus One' programme in the fourth.

In cases where a student wishes to be considered for a programme of four A Level subjects (especially where considering A Level courses in Mathematics and Further Mathematics, or Economics and Business Studies), they should indicate this on the application form.

Option Blocks
The option blocks will be finalised by January and published on our website. If problems with your option choices are identified by us, then we will contact you to discuss the situation.

Before you make any decisions about which subject courses you wish to take it is important to study the information in this guide carefully and to talk to your current subject teachers. **Some careers and university degree courses require you to have studied specific subjects in the Sixth Form, so you may need to check these with your Careers Advisor.**

There will be further information available through our online **Sixth Form Open Evening package** and all information relating to sixth form and boarding can be found on our website. If you have any queries relating to life in the sixth form or the application process, please contact admissions@ripongrammar.com

Mr T Fell
Head of Sixth Form

Ripon Grammar School
Clotherholme Road
Ripon
North Yorkshire
HG4 2DG

Sixth Form Office
Tel: 01765 602647

www.ripongrammar.com

PLUS ONE PROGRAMME

Course details

Alongside their three A Level courses, students will undertake our specially created 'Plus One' programme, which is designed to complement the academic courses and to provide each student with a range of co-curricular and super-curricular enrichment activities and opportunities across three strands. Lessons will be timetabled for these activities

The course is divided into three components:

- Academic
- Super-curricular
- Co-curricular

Course content

1. **Academic**

Research Skills - There will be a timetabled lesson each week dedicated to helping students develop essential research skills, including an introduction to text and online resources, effective research methods, referencing styles and methods and how to incorporate academic research into your own writing.
Following the study skills sessions, there will be a weekly timetabled lesson focused on an **Extended Project Qualification** in the form either of an essay or an artefact. The EPQ project can be focused on any topic that interests the student, and when complete, will provide a qualification valued and recognised by universities, and which delivers UCAS points, equivalent to half an A Level. There will also be opportunity for those studying four A Levels to undertake an EPQ.
ICT Skills – There will be a timetabled lesson each week dedicated to acquiring and developing IT and key study skills via online workbooks. There are also opportunities to complete an industry recognised Digital Marketing qualification, ICDL and Coding qualifications.

2**. Super Curricular**

This section of the Plus One incorporates weekly involvement in student-run societies across a wide range of options – from Law and Medicine Societies to Craft and Foreign Film societies. There is scope for students to establish and run their own societies within this session.
Students will also undertake Russell Group university online courses (MOOCs) as well as wider reading around subject specialisms, to help develop the academic reading or research into their subject specialism as well as completing university essay competition entries.

3. **Co-curricular**

This section will involve students undertaking a set number of hours of co-curricular enrichment activities each week. These may include:
• approved and monitored volunteer work (either within school or in the wider community)
• approved and monitored regular work experience opportunities
• contribution to activities within or outside school such as drama, music, sport, Young Enterprise, Duke of Edinburgh, Princes Trust, Bar Mock Trial
• leadership work such as mentoring and supporting younger students, coaching younger students within or outside school, leading societies or activities
• helping to organise and run house or other activities This programme will offer our Lower Sixth students valuable opportunities to gain new skills and qualifications, enhance and demonstrate skills and personal qualities for a CV or university applications and to engage fully in the life of the community around them.

RGS Headmaster's Award

The combination of a students' Co-curricular, Super curricular and Academic achievements on the Plus One programme is recognised with the RGS Headmaster's Award. The RGS Headmaster's Award seeks to embody the school ethos encouraging students to lead and serve within the school and wider community. It is the expectation that all Lower Sixth Plus One students will engage with the award and at the end of Lower Sixth, students will receive either a Bronze, Silver or Gold certificate

Careers Support

All sixth form students receive regular sessions with our Careers department to explore possible routes and opportunities beyond school.

Student perspective

"As an aspiring medic, the Plus One programme will very useful for university applications and will help my application be more competitive. I have had time to do extensive wider reading, completed MOOCs on Genetics and Cancer and I volunteer at Harrogate Hospital as a befriender and do SEN peer support in school."

"My favourite part of sixth form!"

"Plus One will help my application to university stand out. I aim to study dentistry and have completed a MOOC on Implant Dentistry, I do Peer support to lower school students and volunteer in Ripon Hospital. I have developed my research skills and hope to do my EPQ on Mouth Cancer. I thoroughly enjoyed it".

ART

Why choose Art?

Creativity is a quality that enables you to stand out from your peers. Art A Level allows you to explore and develop your creative processes and thoughts. The pupils who have taken the subject at A Level have gone on to study a wide variety of degrees and art has enhanced their chances of success. The subject allows you to:

- explore your intellectual, imaginative, creative and intuitive capabilities;
- develop investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills;
- gain an aesthetic understanding and critical judgement;
- enhance independence of mind in developing, refining and communicating your own ideas, and own intentions and your own personal outcomes;
- develop an interest in, enthusiasm for and enjoyment of art.

Possible careers and courses that link to Art

Everything that is man-made has been designed: from the building you are in to the clothes that you wear to the cars you drive to the programmes you watch, the career opportunities are endless. The range of art and design career opportunities is vast, including: advertising, architecture, computer aided design, interior design, product and industrial design, fine art, graphic design, television, exhibition design, fashion, conservation and restoration, theatre design, education, textile design and museum work.

Course details

Examination board: Edexcel Syllabus Code: A: 9FA0

Course Content

First year of A level
Coursework is based on the theme "Environment"
Study visits enable students to access and experience the visual elements first hand and are an essential component of the coursework. The visits help students to experience how artists have responded to the environment.

The range of concepts, techniques, materials and strategies looked at develop knowledge and understanding beyond GCSE Level. Students utilise a range of strategies based upon the work of credible artists and find their own artistic sensitivities, developing final pieces using personnel themes. We develop work in 2-D, painting, collage, etc. and 3-D sculpture in mixed media and clay.

Second year of A LEVEL
Along with exams and coursework, there is an emphasis on a 3000 word essay running in conjunction with an annotated sketchbook. As art history is an integral component of the course, we hope to provide a study visit to Paris to ensure students are supported with this aspect of the syllabus. Students select artists, pieces and imagery personal to them and undertake a structured analysis through a work journal un-wrapping each core visual concept in terms of studies analysis and interpretation. Students carry out visual research relating to their own emerging theme based on art seen in the city, from Impressionism, Modernism, Abstraction and Cubism.

Method of Assessment

A Level: 60% coursework 40% exam

Overview of assessment

A Level
Coursework is internally set, assessed by the teacher and externally moderated. This component allows students opportunities to generate and develop ideas, research primary and contextual sources, record practical and written observations, experiment with media and processes, and refine ideas towards producing personal resolved outcome(s). Students are required to address each of the Assessment Objectives which incorporate three major elements: supporting studies, practical work, and a personal study. Supporting studies and practical work will comprise a portfolio of development work and outcomes based on themes and ideas developed from personal starting points.

The personal study will be evidenced through critical written communication showing contextual research and understanding in 3000 words of continuous prose, which may contain integrated images. The personal study comprises 12% of the total qualification and is marked out of 18.

Exams incorporate two major elements: preparatory studies and the 12–hour period of sustained focus. Preparatory studies will comprise a portfolio of practical and written development work based on the Externally Set Assignment. During the 12-hour period of sustained focus under examination conditions, students will produce final outcome(s) extending from their preparatory studies in response to the Externally Set Assignment.

The Externally Set Assignment is released on 1 February and contains a theme with suggested starting points. Students have from 1 February until the commencement of the final 12–hour period of sustained focus to develop preparatory studies. The 12–hour period of sustained focus under examination conditions may take place over multiple sessions (a maximum of five, within three consecutive weeks)

Student perspective

"Exercise your creative side as well as your academic, by taking this challenging and exciting course. You'll develop ideas, try new techniques and enjoy the experience"

Further information
http://www.edexcel.org.uk/home/
http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/topics/topic_art.html
http://www.bbc.co.uk/timelines/zp7bgk7
http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on
http://www.theartstory.org/section_movements_timeline.htm

BIOLOGY

Why choose Biology?

Biology is the scientific study of life. It involves the investigation of living organisms and life processes from the molecular, through cells and individual organisms to populations and whole communities of animals and plants.

Possible careers and courses that link to Biology

Many students who choose Biology enjoy the subject so much they eventually choose a biologically related degree course, including medicine, dentistry and veterinary science. Others go on to careers in law, computing, accounting or teaching. It is a rewarding and challenging course, which develops many skills essential for a successful and potentially very diverse career.

Course details

Examination board: OCR Syllabus Code: A: H420

Course Content

1	Development of practical skills in biology	1.1 Practical skills assessed in a written examination 1.2 Practical skills assessed in the practical endorsement
2	Foundations in biology	2.1.1 Cell structure 2.1.2 Biological molecules 2.1.3 Nucleotides and nucleic acids 2.1.4 Enzymes 2.1.5 Biological membranes 2.1.6 Cell division, cell diversity and cellular organisation
3	Exchange and transport	3.1.1 Exchange surfaces 3.1.2 Transport in animals 3.1.3 Transport in plants
4	Biodiversity, evolution and disease	4.1.1 Communicable diseases, disease prevention and the immune system 4.2.1 Biodiversity 4.2.2 Classification and evolution
5	Communication, homeostasis and energy	5.1.1 Communication and homeostasis 5.1.2 Excretion as an example of homeostatic control 5.1.3 Neuronal communication 5.1.4 Hormonal communication 5.1.5 Plant and animal responses 5.2.1 Photosynthesis 5.2.2 Respiration
6	Genetics, evolution and ecosystems	6.1.1 Cellular control 6.1.2 Patterns of inheritance 6.1.3 Manipulating genomes 6.2.1 Cloning and biotechnology 6.3.1 Ecosystems 6.3.2 Populations and sustainability.

Method of Assessment

All three externally assessed components (01–03) contain some synoptic assessment, some extended response questions and some stretch and challenge questions.

Paper 1:
This component is worth 100 marks, is split into two sections and assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 3 and 5. Learners answer all the questions.

Section A contains multiple choice questions. This section of the paper is worth 15 marks.

Section B includes short answer question styles (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions. This section of the paper is worth 85 marks.

Paper 2:
This component is worth 100 marks, is split into two sections and assesses content from teaching modules 1, 2, 4 and 6. Learners answer all the questions.

Section A contains multiple choice questions. This section of the paper is worth 15 marks.

Section B includes short answer question styles (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions. This section of the paper is worth 85 marks.

Paper 3:
This component assesses content from across all teaching modules 1 to 6.

Learners answer all the questions. This component is worth 70 marks. Question styles include short answer (structured questions, problem solving, calculations, practical) and extended response questions.

Student perspective

"As an aspiring medic, A Level Biology has developed my research and problem-solving skills whilst also furthering my knowledge of human systems. The course has been interesting and challenging and I have thoroughly enjoyed it."

"Studying Biology has given me an insight into the fundamental aspects of human life. The topics are interesting and lessons are engaging."

"The wide range of topics covered in Biology has helped me narrow down which topics I particularly enjoy and want to study at university. It gives you such a broad range of knowledge but also lets you study topics in detail."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

A wider reading list will be provided at the start of the course. A good place to start is reading journals such as Scientific American and Nature, or the works of Nick Lane and Steve Jones. Good libraries have a wealth of titles.

BUSINESS

Why choose Business?

Business is about understanding how organisations operate, compete, and make decisions in an ever-changing environment. Every day we are affected by business decisions, from the products we buy to the services we use. This course explores how businesses are structured and how they make effective decisions in areas such as marketing, finance, operations, and human resources. Students examine the importance of controlling costs, increasing sales, managing people effectively, developing successful products, and understanding customers and markets.

From small business start-ups to large multinational corporations, the course is firmly rooted in the real world and reflects the fast-changing nature of modern business. The new specification introduces exciting and contemporary topics including ethical and environmental decision-making, sustainability, employee wellbeing, diversity, social media and influencer marketing, artificial intelligence, digital technology, dynamic pricing, activism, and the impact of global business issues. Students will also develop analytical and numerical skills through the interpretation of business data, ratios, percentages, and financial information to support effective decision-making.

Possible careers and courses that link to Business

Students who study A Level Business have access to a wide range of opportunities. Many progress to university, apprenticeships, graduate schemes, management roles, or use the entrepreneurial skills gained to start their own businesses. The course develops valuable transferable skills including leadership, communication, problem-solving, decision-making, teamwork, and financial awareness.
Many students go on to study subjects such as Business Management, Marketing, Finance, Economics, Accounting, and Human Resource Management. Common career paths include accountancy, marketing and public relations, management consultancy, banking and finance, retail management, and production management. Combined with subjects Economics, A Level Business can open even wider university and career pathways

Course details

Examination board: AQA Syllabus Code: A: 7318 (New Specification)

Course Content

The A Level course requires students to study:
Learners of this course should study business in a variety of contexts (eg different sized businesses, different sectors, UK focused and multinational, business to business, business to consumer and a range of different markets and business situations) and consider topics such as:

- the functional areas of business namely marketing, finance, operations and human resources
- the impact of digital technology on business
- the influence of ethical and environmental issues on business decisions
- the external environment of business
- the importance of the context of business in relation to decision-making
- strategic planning
- how business activities affect competitiveness
- the interrelated nature of business activities
- use of non-quantitative and quantitative data in decision-making (including the interpretation of index numbers and calculations such as ratios and percentages).

Method of Assessment

A Level Business new specification aims to assess:

- specific topics assessed on specific papers – supporting clearer, more focused preparation
- a simplified approach to command words – helping students understand what's required at different levels of response
- consistent paper structure – building student confidence and familiarity
- a practical approach to assessing quantitative skills in real-world business contexts.

There are three written papers worth 90 marks each. All three papers are equally weighted.
Each paper has two case studies (for the most part, these tend to be real life businesses for example, exam sample material is focused around business such as Shein and Gymshark). Each case study will be followed by five compulsory questions worth 45 marks in total.

Student perspective

"It is a subject which will help me in whatever I do when I leave school."

"Business is a good subject for someone who likes to deal with real situations."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

BBC Business News
The Guardian Business
Financial Times
The Economist
https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/business/a-level/business-7138
tutor2u.net
AQA A Level Business (textbook)
www.graduate-jobs.com/degree/business

CHEMISTRY

Why choose Chemistry?

Chemistry is at the heart of life. All life processes such as respiration and digestion involve chemical reactions. Most substances that we depend on, such as plastics, alloys, detergents, clothing fibres, solvents, medicines, fertilisers, explosives, etc. have been developed by chemists. Many students find that Chemistry becomes even more fascinating and fulfilling as they study it at A Level.

The main reasons for choosing Chemistry are enjoyment of the subject and the ability to do it. However, Chemistry is also a very highly respected subject with university admission tutors and employers. The subject brings together a wide range of skills in a unique way, including for example problem-solving, practical, theoretical, conceptual and mathematical skills.

Many students take Chemistry as their one and only science and are very successful indeed. However, with Chemistry being the central science, many students take Chemistry alongside Biology and/or Physics. Many also study some Mathematics (AS or A Level), which is helpful but by no means essential.

Possible careers and courses that link to Chemistry

Chemistry is an essential entry requirement for some courses, including medicine, veterinary science, dentistry, life sciences, pharmacy, environmental sciences, chemical engineering and food science. Many of our students also go on to study Chemistry and related courses at university.

However, a qualification in Chemistry is one of the most valuable around, opening many doors due to the skills it develops. Many of our students use these skills to help entry to a wide range of course in areas such as law, the humanities, languages, computing, business and management, maths, etc.

Course details

Examination Board: AQA Syllabus Code: 7405

Course content

There are three main areas:

Physical chemistry	this is the study of the underlying principles and concepts (e.g. structure & bonding, amount of substance, redox)
Organic chemistry	this is the study of compounds containing carbon (e.g. alkanes, alkenes, alcohols)
Inorganic chemistry	this is the study of other substances and is focused around the Periodic Table (e.g. group 2, group 7, transition metals)

Chemistry is a practical subject and the RGS course contains much practical work. Students usually work individually and we teach you a wide range of skills. We cover the core practicals but do much more practical work in addition. This is to ensure you are well trained as a practical chemist and to prepare you for the significant amount of questions on practical work in the written exams.

Method of Assessment

A level: There are three examinations with a mixture of multiple choice, short and long answer questions.

Practical endorsement: Teachers assess your ability carry out, analyse and evaluate practicals while you do them. This leads to the practical endorsement, which is graded as pass/fail.

Student perspective

"Chemistry is a challenging and rewarding subject. The practical's bring the topic to life. If you found the GCSE course interesting then you will find the A Level course even more so."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

www.chemguide.co.uk
http://www.rsc.org/learn-chemistry

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Why choose Classical Civilisation?

We study the civilisation, history, culture and mythology of ancient Greece and Rome. On this course, we cover a fascinating range of sources from the great epics of Virgil and Homer to the tragic plays of Euripides, Sophocles and the comedies of Aristophanes or the wonderful sculptures of such artists as Polykleitos and Praxiteles. To complete our studies we will study Classical views on love and relationships. If you enjoy challenging but stimulating discussion, reading and writing, then this is an ideal subject.

Possible careers and courses that link to Classical Civilisation

Classical Civilisation A Level is obviously highly valued by Classics Departments at university but also by a range of other departments such as Drama, English, History, History of Art, Philosophy and Politics. Classical Civilisation is listed by several major universities, such as UCL as a preferred A Level subject or on the list of generally suitable arts subjects at Trinity College Cambridge. It is also listed as a suitable subject for those studying Classical subjects and Philosophy at Russell Group universities. Students who studied A Level Classics go on to study a very diverse list of subjects such as medicine, veterinary science and even Chemistry. In terms of employment the highly useful skills of being able to write a well-structured extended response, to appreciate the views of others and cultural sensitivity, as well as the ability to think creatively and to clearly articulate those ideas, is highly valued by many employers.

Course details

Examination Board OCR Syllabus Code: A: H408

Course content

Year 12
Unit 1 The World of the Hero (H408/11)
This is an in-depth study of Homer's Odyssey, one of the first great works of literature. This Epic poem tells of the homeward journey of Odysseus from the Trojan War and the adventures and challenges he faces in returning home.
This is a component focused solely on literature in translation.

Unit 2 Culture and the Arts
We will study either Greek Theatre (H408/21) or Greek Art (H408/24)
Greek Theatre. This is a component that will involve the study of visual and material culture combined with the study of literature. In this course, we will study Sophocles' Oedipus the King, Euripides' Bacchae and Aristophanes' Frogs. We will also study the buildings and festivals at which these plays were performed and how they were performed.
Greek Art. In this course, we will study the development of freestanding and architectural sculpture and vase painting in ancient Greece. This is a course based entirely on visual sources and includes some of the most famous works of Greek art.

Year 13
Unit 1 The World of the Hero (H408/11)
This is an in-depth study of Homer's Odyssey and Virgil's Aeneid. This course will compare the Odyssey with its Roman counterpart. The Aeneid is the story of Aeneas and his destiny to escape Troy and found the Roman race.
This is a component focused solely on literature in translation

Unit 3 Beliefs and Ideas (H408/32)

We will study the topic of Love and Relationships in the Classical World.
This is a component, which involves the study of an area of Classical thought in combination with either the study of literature in translation or visual/material culture.

Method of Assessment

Two written exams of 1 hour and 45 minutes and 1 written exam of 2 hours and 20 minutes.

Student perspective
“Despite not taking Classics at GCSE I achieved an A at A Level. This is all due to the Classics Department and their enthusiasm and commitment to helping students. In depth discussion and encouraged participation make lessons easy to engage with. Personally, I have found the course incredibly interesting and the wide variety of content means there is something for everyone.” Helen A Level student

“The best lesson of the week” Lucy A Level student

'Classics is fun as well as being an interesting and rewarding subject.' Anna A Level student

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY – PRODUCT DESIGN

Why choose Design Technology?

Almost everything we use has been designed, developed and manufactured: the transport we choose, the clothes we wear, the technology we use, and the furniture we select, has all been designed by someone, somewhere. Product Design will continue your journey from GCSE Design Technology towards enhanced and sophisticated products at A Level.

You will have a creative or technical side and enjoy practical tasks with a variety of materials; you will enjoy challenging accepted norms, and have a desire to improve products with which you interact. You might be a 'button presser' or just enjoy 'nice things' or question why things are the way they are.

Possible careers and courses that link to Design Technology

Product design can lead to many career paths such as: Engineering, Architecture, Design, Fashion, Graphic Design, Product Design, Industrial Design, Automotive Design, Aeronautic Design and Interior Design. Product Design prepares you with transferable skills of work ethic, ability to work independently, problem solving, research skills, evaluations methods, communication skills, practical ability, and health and safety awareness.

Course details

Examination board: AQA - DT: Product Design Syllabus Code: A: 7552

Course Content
During the Lower 6th year we will undertake a variety of mini projects. These projects will be selected to be suitable to the candidates who has elected to undertake the course. Projects might include furniture design, CAD / CAM, technical, client-centered, anthropometrics, materials, graphics etc. This year will be the opportunity for all students to explore the subject area and improve their design and making abilities. We will deliver the theory mainly through project work throughout the year. Students will be encouraged to 'open their eyes' to the world around and to start to appreciate more fully the impact design has on society and our lives.

A Level

Paper 1
Core technical principles and core designing and making principles. 30% of A Level.
Mixture of short answers and extended response

Materials and applications
Design communication
Efficient use of materials
Feasibility studies
Intellectual property
Design theory
Tools techniques and processes
Project management
Requirements of product design
Digital design and manufacture
Health and safety
Manufacture, maintenance and repair
Enterprise and marketing
Design processes
Accuracy
Design for manufacture

Paper 2
Specialist knowledge, technical, and designing and making principles. 20% of A Level
Short answers based on visual stimulus
Mixture of short answers and extended response

Material characteristics	Material properties
Adhesives	Finishing techniques
Forming processes	Industrial / commercial processes

Non-Examined Assessment (NEA), 45 Hours, 50% of A Level.
Practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles and specialist knowledge

A – Paper 1	2.5 hour written paper - 30% of A Level
A – Paper 2	1.5 hour written paper 20% of A Level
A - NEA	Controlled assessment – 50% of A Level

Student perspective

"I have found Design Technology constantly engaging due to the wide range of materials, techniques and products used and made, throughout the school"

"I like how you can tailor a project to show your own skills"

"I like the atmosphere of DT; it is a very independent and varied subject."

"I have found design technology constantly engaging due to the wide range of materials, techniques and products used and made throughout the school. My favourite part of DT is the relaxed atmosphere and the encouragement of independent learning."

"I like how you can tailor a project to show your own skills."

"Knowledgeable and fun teachers make the DT experience very enjoyable."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

Grand Designs (Channel 4 on demand)	TED Talks
The Design of Everyday things	YouTube: - Think like a designer
Emotional Design	Technologystudent.com
100 things every Designer needs to know	Open your eyes and 'look'

ECONOMICS

Why choose Economics?

Although the course requires no previous knowledge, Economics is recognised as a challenging A-level. Students should follow economic developments and think critically about contemporary economic issues. Economics will help you to understand current affairs relating to the economy and some of the real forces which act upon us all as consumers, producers and citizens. It will enable you to offer informed comment on important economic problems and government economic policies.

The course will provide you with a good knowledge of developments in the UK economy and government economic policies over the past 25 years. Students will develop the knowledge and skills needed to understand and analyse data, think critically about issues and make informed decisions. Students will also develop your quantitative skills and appreciate that, when evaluating arguments, both qualitative and quantitative evidence are important. The course places emphasis on analysing problems and alternative solutions, rather than merely describing them. Our approach to Economics is to apply economic theory to support analysis of current economic problems (for example those listed below).

- How should be address the issue of rising inequality of both income and wealth?
- Why is the financial sector so important to the UK economy? What causes financial crises?
- Is Amazon a monopoly, and if so, how does this affect us?
- Where does money come from?
- Should Britain prioritise a trade deal with the USA over the EU?
- Why is the Bank of England so worried about inflation and deflation?
- What is the best way to tackle the budget deficit? Will this lead to higher taxes and less government spending?
- How can economics help us explain why pollution occurs and what we can do about it?
- Why do we still have a gender pay gap?
- What are the consequences of the UK being a 'low growth' economy?

Possible careers and courses that link to Economics

Economics graduates normally do well in the jobs market. Many economic graduates go into banking and finance. It's quite common for economics graduates to go into jobs such as accountancy, actuarial science, and management consultancy. Nine of the top ten occupations held by economics graduates employed in the UK are business, finance or HR professions, with more than 500 graduates in the top occupation of finance and investment analyst/adviser. However, many economics graduates work in the civil service and as economists for the Bank of England, news agencies or organisations in the non-profit sectors.

Student perspective: "Hard work, but fun and interesting."
"Doing economics has allowed me to get in the university of my choice."

Course details

Examination board: AQA Syllabus Code: A: 7136

Course Content

A-level builds on knowledge and skills learned at AS-level.

The operation of markets and market failure and the national and international economy

Topics include:

- Price determination in a competitive market and concentrated markets
- The market mechanism, market failure and government intervention in markets
- How the macroeconomy works : the circular flow of income and AD/AS analysis
- Macroeconomic policy: including economic growth; inflation and international trade
- The measurement of macroeconomic performance and the international economy
- Financial markets and monetary policy. Fiscal policy and supply-side policies
- Perfect competition, imperfectly competitive markets and monopoly
- The labour market and the distribution of income and wealth: poverty and inequality

Method of Assessment

AS: External examination – two written papers (1 hour 30 minutes each)

Paper 1: The Operation of Markets and market failure

Paper 2: The National Economy in a Global Context

A -level: External examination – three written papers (all 2 hours)

Paper 1: Markets and Market Failure

Paper 2: The National and International Economy

Paper 3: Economic principles and Issues

AS marks do not contribute to A-level

Student perspective

“Hard work, but fun and interesting.”

“Doing economics has allowed me to get into the university of my choice.”

Recommended reading/references/useful links

- AQA A-level Economics (textbook)
- http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects
- http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/Pages/home
- Welcome to GarysEconomics

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Why choose English Literature?

English Literature is a rich and varied subject which will allow students to develop a set of extremely valuable and highly transferrable skills while studying a range of challenging, enjoyable texts that will give them a better understanding of themselves, the world and their place in it. The texts themselves draw upon a range of genres and time periods, are all of canonical value and include the best of both English and American literature (including the plays of Tennessee Williams and novels such as Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*.)

A Level English classes are dominated by discussion and debate and this helps to develop students' confidence and their communication skills. Teachers will share their own specialist knowledge and insight into texts, but they will also expect students to be ready to explore their own creative interpretations and ideas. This is a subject where we aim to develop independent thinkers and where the voice of each individual student is important. As well as these vital qualities of independence, creativity and intellectual confidence, the subject will also develop some key transferrable skills, such as the skills of analysis, close reading, debate, research and of course the ability to write a finely structured, nuanced literary essay.

Possible careers and courses that link to English Literature

English Literature is a highly respected course, perhaps because of the wide range of high-level skills it helps to develop, but also because of the level of emotional and intellectual maturity, it helps to develop. As such, a good grade in English Literature can open many doors with both employers and university admissions tutors. Courses and careers in law, publishing, journalism, the media, education, advertising, marketing and public relations are popular options, but in truth, English graduates can be found in more or less every industry. Careers in the civil service, finance and business would also be career routes where an English degree would be of great value.

Course details

Examination Board: AQA Syllabus Code: A: 7712

Course content

At the start of the course, students embark on a crash course in literary criticism as they are introduced to different modes of reading literary texts, including Marxist, feminist and postcolonial approaches. In exploring these different critical theories, students will encounter a range of texts that will stretch their experience beyond the confines of the list of set texts while developing some of the fundamental skills that will underpin much of their work in the coming two years. Throughout the course, students will regularly engage with a range of supplementary literary texts that will help revise these skills and prepare students for the unseen analysis required in the final examinations.

Three of the set texts will be studied in the first year of the course; including the Shakespearean drama for the Love through the Ages paper, (usually this is Shakespeare's battle of the sexes *The Taming of the Shrew*). Students also study two texts from the Modern Times paper: Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* and Tennessee Williams' play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. All of these texts are studied against the wider social, cultural, political and literary history in which they were produced and are received: for the Modern Times paper, this means reflecting on the rapid social, cultural and political changes which have shaped the modern world since the end of the Second World War.

.

Towards the end of the first year, students begin to work on their Non-Examined Assessment (coursework) essay. Students must write a 2500 word essay on two texts, one of which must have been written before 1900. Students are given support and guidance and detailed reading lists, but they are encouraged to embrace the freedom and independence this element of the course affords. This is the part of the course where the students can select the texts they wish to study and the precise focus of their essays. The reading and research for the NEA continues over the summer so that students can return in the U6th ready to draft and complete their final essays in the autumn term.

As well as seeing students complete their NEA essays, the second year of the course also sees them engage with some of the more challenging set texts, including Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and the AQA anthology of Post-1900 Love Poetry (both studied for the Love Through the Ages course), as well as Owen Sheers' collection of poems *Skirrid Hill* (the final text on the Modern Times paper).

In the final stages of the course, all of the set texts are thoroughly revised and there is a concerted effort on the exam skills and technique required to ensure students' success in the summer.

Method of Assessment

Paper 1 – Love through the ages (40% of A Level course, 3 hours, open book in section C)

Paper 2 – Modern Times (40% of A Level course, 2½ hours, open book)

Non-Examined Assessment (20% of A Level course, 2500 word comparative essay)

Student perspective

'It develops skills that will be important throughout life.'

'It has remained interesting and exciting throughout A Level.'

'It really is so much fun. Everyone always gets really involved in all the discussions.'

Recommended reading/references/useful links

Apart from reading some of the set texts listed above, students would be well served to read more widely around the key thematic areas upon which the course focuses upon: 'Love through the Ages' and 'Modern Times'.

FRENCH

Why choose French?

French is not just one of the world's top ten most spoken languages; it is the language of our closest neighbours and one of the official languages of organisations such as the UN and EU. The French A Level course equips students to communicate at a high Level with native speakers, not only day-to-day matters, but regarding issues such as social justice, the environment, democracy, and francophone music. An exciting element of the curriculum is the chance to study a French film during Year 12 and a literary text during Year 13.

Possible careers and courses that link to French

Communication is a top skill required in medicine, business, media, politics, design…all walks of life. A Level French is very well-regarded by universities, even for students going on to study non-linguistic courses, due to the range of disciplines entailed. A knowledge of French can open many doors in the international job market. For this reason, graduates who have language skills stand a higher chance of getting jobs than those without. Linguists also have the capacity to earn more, due to the opportunities open to them, rather than monolinguists.

Course details

Examination board: EDUQAS Syllabus Code: A800QS

Course content

The WJEC Eduqas A level in French provides an engaging and exciting opportunity for students to build on their previous study of French. Through social, intellectual, historical and political cultural themes students will be able to develop their linguistic knowledge and cultural understanding of the countries/communities where the language is spoken. An opportunity to study literature and film will allow students to undertake a deeper analysis of language structures and increase their cultural awareness as part of an integrated approach to language learning. A strong focus is placed on building students' confidence and fluency in spoken French using relevant and topical themes. The requirement to research an area of personal interest related to the country/communities where French is spoken will enhance students' cultural appreciation and enable them to gain a greater awareness of intercultural differences. Recently, we have studied the film 'Intouchables'. The novel studied in recent years is Delphine de Vigan's *No et Moi*.

Method of Assessment

Component 1: Speaking Non-exam assessment
21-23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation)
30% of qualification

Component 2: Listening, Reading and Translation Written examination
2 hours 30 minutes
50% of qualification

Component 3: Critical and analytical response in writing (closed-book) Written examination
2 hours (1 essay on the film, 1 on the book)
20% of qualification

Areas of interest	Social issues and trends	Political, intellectual and artistic culture
Themes Sub themes	**Being a young person in French-speaking society** • Families and citizenship *Changing family structures; the changing nature of marriage and partnership; being a good citizen* • Youth trends and personal identity *Trends in fashion, how young people respond to modern technology; relationships with others and peer pressure* • Education and employment opportunities *The education system and student issues; work and travel opportunities and the changing work scene*	**Understanding the French-speaking world** • Regional culture and heritage in France, French-speaking countries and communities *Festivals; customs and traditions; historical sites; museums and galleries* • Media, art, film and music in the French-Speaking world *Trends in media and art; film and music in the lives of young people*
Themes Subthemes	**Diversity and difference** • Migration and integration *Reasons for migration; factors which make migration/ integration easy/ difficult* • Cultural identity and marginalisation *Reasons for marginalisation; ways to eliminate marginalisation* • Cultural enrichment and celebrating difference The positive aspect of a diverse society • Discrimination and diversity Life for those who are discriminated against	**France 1940 – 1950: The Occupation and post-war years** • June 1940 – May 1945 *Life in occupied France; the French Resistance* • The cultural dimension in occupied France *The political context of theatre and cinema productions* • 1945 – 1950 *Rebuilding and restructuring society in post-war years*

Student perspective

"…more demanding than GCSE… a lot more focus on French culture and literature, which is very interesting."

"We found the teaching very enthusiastic."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

A level specification template (eduqas.co.uk)

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Why choose Further Mathematics?

Further Mathematics is for those students who have a natural affinity and love for mathematics. The course broadens students' exposure to a variety of areas of mathematics by introducing new concepts as diverse as complex numbers and decision mathematics. The course encourages students to apply new methods and techniques in a range of different contexts and, as a result, they will broaden their mathematical experience.

Possible careers and courses that link to Further Mathematics

Further Mathematics is useful for students who plan to study Mathematics, or another subject with high mathematical content (including engineering and computer science), at one of the best universities.

Course details

Examination board:	OCR	Syllabus Code:	AS: H235 A: H245

Course content

AS LEVEL

Students cover the following modules:
Pure – roots of polynomial equations, complex numbers and matrices, vectors.

Statistics – permutations and combinations, probability distribution, chi-squared tests, correlation, linear regression.

Mechanics – dimension analysis, work/energy/power/momentum, centre of mass.

A Level

Students study:
Pure – polar co-ordinates, hyperbolic functions, differentiation, volume of revolution, summation of series, modelling, integration, differential equations, vectors, complex numbers.

Mechanics – motion in a circle, further dynamics and kinetics, rigid bodies

Statistics – continuous random variables, linear combinations of random variables, hypothesis testing and confidence intervals

Method of Assessment

AS Level: Three exam papers, 1hr 15min each

A Level: Four exam papers, 1hr 30min each

N.B. There is no coursework.

Student perspective

"It doesn't feel like you have too much maths in the week! All the lessons are very different and require different skills."

"Further maths makes normal maths far easier in comparison and the maths skills learnt in further maths are so broad that they can be applied in many subjects."

"I would recommend anyone who truly enjoys learning and especially taking and enjoying the sciences to seriously consider doing further maths."

Further information

Go to www.mathspanda.com and click on the AS FM and A2 FM links for more information.

The page Beyond_the_classroom (mathspanda.com) has useful links to podcasts and book suggestions to further your understanding of mathematics as a topic.

GEOGRAPHY

Why choose Geography?

Geography is all about exploring the dynamic and changing world around us. It gives students the opportunity to learn about diverse landscape, understand threats to these environments and try to find solutions to manage global issues.

Possible careers and courses that link to Geography

Cartographer
Commercial/residential surveyor
Environmental consultant
Geographical information systems officer
Planning and development surveyor
Secondary school teacher
Town planner
Transport planner
Tourism officer
Nature conservation officer
Market researcher
Logistics and distribution manager
Landscape architect
International aid/development worker

Course details

Examination Board Edexcel Syllabus Code: A: 9GEO

Course content

A Level: Over the two-year period, students will explore and study four different units of study; two physical and human topics. In the first year the content includes; Globalisation, Regenerating Places, Coastal Landscapes and Change and Tectonic Processes and Hazards. In the second year, the additional topics covered are the water cycle and the causes and consequences of water insecurity. The carbon cycle and energy insecurity are also covered in preparation for the Physical Paper 1. Superpowers and global development and connections are investigated for Human Paper 2 along with the topic of migration, identify and sovereignty.

The course covers contemporary issues and Paper 3 focuses on actions and futures in connection to a core unit of study from either the AS or A Level course. An information booklet is provided in the examination as stimulus material for analysis and interpretation.

Coursework: The A Level course requires students to produce an independent investigation based around the four fieldwork days on offer to students across the two years of study. Students will be supported to come up with a research title and then will complete this element independently.

Method of Assessment

A Level: 80% examination including a mixture of short and long questions ranging from multiple choice to 18 marks plus the extended independent investigation (20%). Three written papers.

Coursework - Non- Examined Assessment (NEA) worth 20% of the final grade.

Four days of fieldwork are carried out over the two years, 2 days in the first year and 2 days in the second year in contrasting environments.

Student perspective

- "I thoroughly enjoy geography and I love learning about the diversity of life on our planet."
- "A level geography has much more detail and you investigate more scientific areas in physical geography than at GCSE."
- "Human geography is really interesting because it investigates political and historical aspects of numerous countries."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

www.theeconomist.com
Geography Review magazine
TED talks
Worldmapper
Geofactsheets
BBC News

GERMAN

Why choose German?

With the UK Government announcing that the UK needs more German speakers, this higher qualification will be a useful skill for the future. It will allow students to develop their communication skills, learn more about German-speaking cultures, widen their general knowledge and increase possible job opportunities in the future.

Possible careers and courses that link to German

German is a highly respected subject qualification when applying for any course at university: medicine, business, media, politics, design…all walks of life. Germany is a world leader in Science, Technology, Engineering and Automotive, therefore the ability to speak German will be invaluable in these sectors. Those who go on to study German hold a niche language, which has far fewer UK graduates than Spanish or French. As a result, where language abilities are required, German speakers are very highly valued. Germany is the UK's second biggest trading partner.

Course details

Examination board: EDUQAS Syllabus Code: A810QS

Course content

The WJEC Eduqas A level in German provides an engaging and exciting opportunity for students to build on their previous study of German. Through social, intellectual, historical and political cultural themes students will be able to develop their linguistic knowledge and cultural understanding of the countries/communities where the language is spoken. An opportunity to study literature and film will allow students to undertake a deeper analysis of language structures and increase their cultural awareness as part of an integrated approach to language learning. A strong focus is placed on building students' confidence and fluency in spoken German using relevant and topical themes. The requirement to research an area of personal interest related to the country/communities where German is spoken will enhance students' cultural appreciation and enable them to gain a greater awareness of intercultural differences. Recently, we have studied the film Das Leben der Anderen in Year 12 and students in Year 13 are currently studying the play *Der Besuch den alten Dame* by Dürrenmatt.

Method of Assessment

Component 1: Speaking Non-exam assessment
21-23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation)
30% of qualification

Component 2: Listening, Reading and Translation Written examination
2 hours 30 minutes
50% of qualification

Component 3: Critical and analytical response in writing (closed-book) Written examination
2 hours (1 essay on the film, 1 on the book)
20% of qualification

Areas of interest	Social issues and trends	Political, intellectual and artistic culture
Themes Sub themes	**Being a young person in German-speaking society** • Families and citizenship *Changing family structures; the changing nature of marriage and partnership; being a good citizen* • Youth trends and personal identity *Trends in fashion, how young people respond to modern technology; relationships with others and peer pressure* • Education and employment opportunities *The education system and student issues; work and travel opportunities and the changing work scene*	**Understanding the German-speaking world** • Regional culture and heritage in France, French-speaking countries and communities *Festivals; customs and traditions; historical sites; museums and galleries* • Media, art, film and music in the French-Speaking world *Trends in media and art; film and music in the lives of young people*
Themes Subthemes	**Diversity and difference** • Migration and integration *Reasons for migration; factors which make migration/ integration easy/ difficult* • Cultural identity and marginalisation *Reasons for marginalisation; ways to eliminate marginalisation* • Cultural enrichment and celebrating difference *The positive aspect of a diverse society* • Discrimination and diversity Life for those who are discriminated against	**The making of modern Germany: 1989 onwards** • Initial and subsequent process of reunification *Social and political changes linked to reunification; the events of autumn 1989* • Social cohesion in present-day Germany *Social and community challenges facing contemporary Germany* • The economic impact of united Germany *The economic advantages and challenges linked to reunification*

Student perspective

"You are taught in friendly groups and you do lots of interesting activities"

"German is brilliant: it is very interesting and also fun at the same time"

"German is not easy, but it's a fun language to learn and lessons are always entertaining".

Recommended reading/references/useful links
A level specification template (eduqas.co.uk)

HISTORY

Why choose History?

A Level history affords students the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the past through an examination of some truly fascinating topics. The British history unit develops the understanding of parliamentary democracy in Britain, examining the impact of some of our most famous politicians including Disraeli, Gladstone, Asquith, Lloyd-George, Churchill and Atlee. Students will assess the impact of both world wars and the changing face of British politics. The Cold War unit examines the 1945-1991 period from the post-war consensus to the development of the hydrogen bomb and the eventual fall of Communist regimes in Europe. Students assess the impact of the Korean War, Vietnam War, Sino-Soviet relations and many more areas. With a clear link to present day concerns in international relations, the Cold War remains one of the most important topics covered in modern history. The third unit is a coursework unit and entails an examination of slavery and abolition in the first hundred years of the United States' history.

Possible careers and courses that link to History

Careers include but are not limited to: Business (for example the current CEOs of YouTube and Chipotle are history graduates), The Civil Service, the diplomatic service and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, law, research, archival work, academic posts, and teaching.

Course details

Examination board: AQA Syllabus Code: A: 7042

Course Content

Unit content for British History
This option allows students to study in breadth issues of change, continuity, cause and consequence in this period through the following key questions:

How did democracy and political organisations develop in Britain?
How important were ideas and ideologies?
How and with what effects did the economy develop?
How and with what effects did society and social policy develop?
How and why did Britain's relationship with Ireland change?
How important was the role of key individuals and groups and how were they affected by developments?

Timescale: You will study from Gladstone and Disraeli to the Labour election victory of 1964

Unit content for World History
This option studies in depth the evolving course of international relations during an era of tension between communist and capitalist powers, which threatened nuclear armageddon. It explores concepts such as communism and anti-communism, aggression and détente and also encourages students to reflect on the power of modern military technology, what hastens confrontation and what forces promote peace in the modern world.

How did the Cold War start?
Why was Berlin such an important city during the period?
How did the Cold War turn hot in Asia?
How close was the world to Armageddon during the Cuban Missile Crisis?
Why was there a period of détente?
Why did Communism collapse in Eastern Europe?

Timescale: You will study from the Yalta agreement to the collapse of communism in the USSR in 1991

Unit content for Unit 3: Coursework
A personal study responding to a question chosen by the student from options presented to the class, exploring the causes of improvements in African-American civil rights between 1770 and 1870. Students will examine the changing nature of US politics and the efforts that ultimately resulted in slavery's abolition in 1865, studying the different forms of African-American protest as well as how the political system, actions of presidents and the role of conflict combined to lead to the abolition of slavery in the United States of America.

Method of Assessment

Two examinations at the end of the two-year course including source and non-source questions plus coursework.

Student perspective

"The course is really fascinating, especially the Cold War, and because of this it has inspired me to study politics and international relations at university"

"Through studying history I have been able to appreciate how events such as the political pragmatism between JFK and Khruschev during the Cuban missile crisis are still influential in the modern world"

"History has led me to direct my curiosities in a way which makes me desire to pursue a related course at degree level"

MATHEMATICS

Why choose Mathematics?

Mathematics is a great subject for making you think as well as providing you with plenty of personal challenge that will allow your character to grow. The opportunities to explore different approaches to a range of problems are evident throughout the course and the strategies that students develop will have many benefits to their learning in other areas: finding the right answer can be a highly rewarding and enjoyable experience.

Mathematics can be studied with any combination of subjects to enhance a student's learning experience and it is highly regarded by universities and employers alike – it is the most popular A Level in the country. In addition, mathematics is one of the few subjects comfortable working with words, numbers, diagrams, tables, graphs and equations it is great training in communication.

Possible careers and courses that link to Mathematics

Mathematics is necessary for most careers in engineering, finance and science but it is highly regarded by any university for any course.

Course details

Examination board: OCR Syllabus Code: AS: H230
A: H240

Course Content

AS Level
Students cover the following modules:

Pure - indices and surds, polynomials, coordinate geometry and graphs and differentiation, logarithms, integration, trigonometry, binomial theorem, proof, vectors in 2-D, modelling.

Statistics - probability, representation of data, discreet probability distributions, correlation/regression, sampling, hypothesis testing, study of large data sets.

Mechanics – equations of motion, kinetics, Newton's Laws.

A Level
Students study:

Pure – trigonometry, functions, differentiation, integration and numerical methods, sequences, algebra and graphs, differentiation, integrations, vectors in 3-D and first order differential equations.

Mechanics – force as a vector, equilibrium of a particle, Newton's laws of motion, functional forces.

Statistics – normal distribution, hypothesis testing, conditional probability.

Method of Assessment

AS: two papers, 1h 30m each
A Level: three papers, 2 hours each

N.B. There is no coursework.

Student perspective

"Very challenging subject from which you gain a lot of reward from for your efforts. It takes time to understand but after a while it comes together."

"A very interesting subject but be prepared for the step up in both difficulty and workload."

"Maths can be hard but the sense of achievement you get when your answer to a tough question is right is unbelievable."

"The jump from GCSE to A Level was surprising but I have enjoyed maths as it has been challenging and rewarding."

"Really challenging but one of the most satisfying A Level because you can usually tell or work out if you've done it right!"

"A Level maths is my favourite subject because it is challenging yet very enjoyable."

Further information

Go to www.mathspanda.com and click on the AS Ma and A2 Ma links for more information.

The page Beyond_the_classroom (mathspanda.com) has useful links to podcasts and book suggestions to further your understanding of mathematics as a topic.

MUSIC

Why choose Music?

A Level Music is a highly academic subject that develops skills in analysis, logic and source evaluation. That being said, it is a highly creative subject allowing students to discover and develop new ways of expressing a range of emotion through composition and performance. It develops confidence in their own ability and encourages them to assert their own authority in their research. The skills acquired in A Level Music equip the student not only for studying Music at university, but also for many other subjects at degree Level.

Possible careers and courses that directly link to Music

Professional Performer/Artist	Teaching	TV/Radio/Media
Sound Engineering/Producing	Publishing	Professional Composer/Arranger
Academia/Musicologist	Arts Admin	Music Therapy

Course details

Examination board: WJEC/EDUQAS Syllabus Code: A: 601/8146/1

Course content

A Level

EDUQAS has refined the way in which the A Level can be assessed. Students follow one of two pathways depending on their strengths; Performance or Composition

<u>Composition Pathway</u>
Performance 25%:
6-8 minute recital (Visiting Examiner)
Composition 35%:
3 Compositions totalling eight minutes
Listening and Analysis 40%

<u>Performance Pathway</u>
Performance 35%:
10-12 minute recital (Visiting Examiner)
Composition 25%:
2 Compositions totalling 4 minutes
Listening and Analysis 40%

Three areas of Study are taught in preparation for the examination:

1. Western Classical Tradition – 17560 – 1900 (This included the detailed study of 1 symphony)
2. A choice of :
    a. Rock and Pop
    b. Musical Theatre
    c. Jazz
3. Either
    a. Contemporary Music of 20th Century (2 Set detailed study pieces)
    b. Or Contemporary Music of the 21st Century (2 set detailed study pieces)

Other Information:

It is essential that A Level music students take an active role in the extra-curricular life of the music department; it is important that students immerse themselves in ensemble performance in order to complement their studies of such music and prepare them for assessed performance. There are opportunities for Sixth Form students to develop skills in leading and directing ensembles according to their instrumental/vocal experience. A Level music students will make regular trips to concerts and productions to support their learning.

Student perspective

"Music has always been a passion of mine and studying it at A Level has let me explore this diverse subject further."

"The A Level works well for musicians who have the ability in performance and composition. The A Level course gives more flexibility to candidates, enabling them to choose an area of study appropriate to their interests."

"Music offers a diverse set of study options at university and is highly valued by employers."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/music/as-a-level/

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Why choose Physical Education?

Studying A Level Physical Education will give you an insight into the world of sports performance. The combination of physical performance and academic challenge provides an exciting and stimulating opportunity for students. Have you ever wondered?

- Why some people can run faster than others?
- How your personality affects your performance?
- Why people take drugs?
- How technology can help you?
- What the physiological effects of playing sport has on your body?
- How force and motion act on the body and how they can be used in physical activity to our advantage?
- How the media and big business influence sport?
- How sport has evolved into its present day format?
- The impact politics has on sport and major games?

Possible careers and courses that link to Physical Education
The course provides a pathway into careers such as Physiotherapy, Sports Journalism, Sports Psychology, PE teaching, Sports coaching, performance analysis and Sports science courses.

Course details

Examination Board: OCR Syllabus Code: H555

Course content

A Level

Component 1: Physiological factors affecting performance: applied anatomy & physiology, exercise physiology, biomechanics

Component 2: Psychological factors affecting performance: skill acquisition, sports psychology

Component 3: Socio-cultural issues in physical activity and sports: sport and society, contemporary issues in physical activity and sport.

Component 4: Performance in physical activity (non-examined unit) Students are assessed in their chosen sport (either performing or coaching). Learners will also be assessed in the Evaluation & Analysis of Performance for Improvement.

Method of Assessment

Three externally assessed written papers:

Component 1 (30%), component 2 (20%), component 3 (20%)

A Non-Exam Assessment: one practical performance, as performer or coach and one synoptic interview (30% of total A Level)

Student perspective
'I chose to study A Level PE because I enjoy both performing and coaching in a variety of sports. Taking A Level PE has given me a greater understanding of the theory behind sports performance and coaching. It's great that we have the opportunity to apply our learning to practical situations.'

'I chose A Level PE because I enjoy learning about the human body in great depth and having a greater understanding of the processes taking place when performing in sport. I also find A Level PE compliments my other subject areas really well'.

Recommended reading/references/useful links
PE Review, My PE Exam (the everlearner), OCR PE Physical Education

www.brianmac.co.uk/psych.htm
www.ocr.org.uk/

PHYSICS

Why choose Physics?

Physics is unique. No other subject allows you to gain such a deep understanding of the way the world works. You will learn how both the ordinary and extraordinary can be explained with ideas that are profound, imaginative and beautifully simple. Physics will give you the ability to communicate complex ideas, a hunger to make sense of patterns, the capacity to look past the superficial, and fluency with mathematics that will allow you to make predictions and solve problems.

Possible careers and courses that link to Physics

Physics leads on to a very wide range of courses and careers. These include astrophysics, banking, computer programming, electronics, energy industries, engineering, geophysics, law, medical physics, meteorology, research, teaching, science journalism and the space industry to name but a few.

Course details

Examination board: AQA Syllabus Code: 7408

Course content

Year	Unit	Title	Detail
12	1	Measurements and their Errors	Practical skills and quality of measurement
12	2	Particles and Radiation	Matter and Radiation, Quarks and Leptons, Quantum Phenomena
12	3	Waves	Waves and Optics
12	4	Mechanics and Materials	Forces in Equilibrium, Forces in Motion, Newton's Laws, Momentum, Work, Energy, Power, Materials
12	5	Electricity	Current, DC Circuits
13	6.1	Further Mechanics	Thermal Physics, Gases
13	6.2	Thermal Physics	Motion in a Circle, Simple Harmonic Motion
13	7	Fields and their Consequences	Gravitational Fields, Electric Fields, Capacitors, Magnetic Fields, Electromagnetic Induction
13	8	Nuclear Physics	Radioactivity, Nuclear Energy
13	9-13	Option Module	Either: Astrophysics, Medical Physics, Engineering Physics, Turning Points in Physics or Electronics

Unit 1 – Measurements and Errors
This unit underpins all the others as it develops the skills required when carrying out practicals and using equations to solve problems.

Unit 2 – Particles and radiation
You will build upon your knowledge of atomic structure and introduce particle accelerators, particle detectors and the standard model of sub-atomic particles. You will also study quantum physics and learn about the photoelectric effect and wave-particle duality.

Unit 3 – Waves
You will build upon your knowledge of waves as well as introduce polarisation, superposition, stationary waves, refractive index, the lens equation, diffraction.

Unit 4 – Mechanics and Materials
You will build upon your understanding of forces and motion as well as learn about projectile motion. You will also develop your understanding of Hooke's Law and strain energy as well as introduce Stress, Strain and the Young Modulus.
Unit 5 – Electric Circuits
You will build upon your knowledge on electric circuits and introduce EMF and internal resistance, and the electrical property resistivity.
Topic 6.1 – Further Mechanics
You will develop your understanding of both momentum and circular motion. You will also learn about Simple Harmonic Motion as well as free and forced oscillations.
Topic 6.2 – Thermal Physics
You will develop your ideas regarding temperature and kinetic theory as well as introducing ideal gases.
Unit 7 – Fields
You will be introduced to the gravitational fields around masses. You will also learn more about electric and magnetic fields and forces, electromagnetic induction and A.C. as well as introducing capacitors.
Unit 8 – Nuclear Physics
You will learn more about radioactive decay, and the processes of fission and fusion.

While studying these units you will develop practical skills that include planning experiments, collecting data, analysing experimental results and making conclusions. These skills are assessed throughout the course via 12 core practicals, which you write up in a practical book. Your teachers mark these, allowing you to see which areas require more development in the next experiment. You must have developed competency in each skill area by the end of the course. It is a requirement of the A level that you carry out all the practicals and show competency in all skill areas.

You will also gain an appreciation of how scientific models are developed and evolve, the applications and implications of science, the benefits and risks that science brings, and the ways in which society uses science to make decisions.

Method of Assessment

Paper 1	**Paper 2**	**Paper 3**
Content Sections 1 – 5 and 6.1 (Periodic motion)	**Content** Sections 6.2 (Thermal Physics), 7 and 8 Assumed knowledge from sections 1 to 6.1	**Content** Section A: Compulsory section: Practical skills and data analysis Section B: Students enter for 1 option module
Assessed • written exam: 2 hours • 85 marks • 34% of A-level	Assessed • written exam: 2 hours • 85 marks • 34% of A-level	Assessed • written exam: 2 hours • 80 marks • 32% of A-level
Questions 60 marks of short and long answer questions and 25 multiple choice questions on content.	Questions 60 marks of short and long answer questions and 25 multiple choice questions on content.	Questions 45 marks of short and long answer questions on practical experiments and data analysis. 35 marks of short and long answer questions on optional topic.

PRACTICAL ENDORESMENT	You will receive a practical endorsement alongside your A Level grade – this will be recorded as PASS/FAIL on your certificate from the exam board. You will need to complete the 12 core practicals and keep evidence your competency in all five skill areas in your practical book. You need to complete all the core practicals and show evidence of your competency in all skill areas in your practical book.

Student perspective

"There are less facts to learn in physics than in most other subjects, but more concepts to understand. This makes it easier if you do understand the concepts but harder if you do not."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

Visit the AQA website to obtain a copy of the AQA GCE in Physics specification.

Visit: http://www.iop.org/careers/i-am-at-school-college/index.html for information on careers in physics.

Discuss the suitability of studying this subject with your Physics teacher.

Read through your GCSE physics notes and make sure you understand them.

Read "A Briefer History of Time" by Stephen Hawking – a physics book with only 1 equation in!

POLITICS

Why choose Politics?

The world has changed profoundly since 2016; Brexit, the election of Donald Trump, the possibility of changes within the Union for Scotland and Ireland, and governments' responses to the Covid crisis have made the need for us all to enhance our Political understanding vital. As the voters of the future, the importance of understanding the world we live in, how two of its major governments work, and what its different ideologies are cannot be understated.

If you have ever asked yourself why the Prime Minister or President can't react more strongly to a given issue, what the role of parliament / congress is, how much political power The Queen has, how Donald Trump was able to be elected and not removed from office following his impeachment or whether the Brexit vote was binding or not, then this course is for you.

Possible careers and courses that link to Politics

Careers include but are not limited to: Local and National Government, The Civil Service, The Diplomatic Service and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Business, Law, Research, Academic and Teaching posts.

Course details

Examination board: AQA Syllabus Code: 7152

Course content

• Component 1 – The Government and politics of the UK, exploring the development of the British political system, and how institutions like Parliament, the Cabinet and the Prime Minister, the Supreme Court coexist, and how political parties, elections, lobbying, the media, etc. play a role in shaping our democracy.

• Component 2 - The Government and politics of the USA & Comparative politics, exploring the structure of the US federal and state governments, and the ways in which Congress, the President and the Supreme Court interact. This component also seeks to allow students to compare the US system to the British system, and understand how different theories can be applied to explain political events and systems.

• Component 3 - Political ideas (Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism & Feminism). This component gives students an understanding of the underpinning political philosophies, and charts the changing character of liberalism, conservatism, socialism and feminism in response to key contextual events such as the Industrial Revolution, the World Wars, the Cold War, globalisation, etc.

• Each component is assessed through a 2 hour written exam worth 77 marks (33⅓ % of A-level) TTL = 231 marks, including short (9 marks) and longer (25 marks) answer questions, and a response to a source stimulus (25 marks).

Method of Assessment

Three examinations at the end of the two-year course, one on each unit.

PSYCHOLOGY

Why Choose Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and behaviour. It is a wide-ranging and engaging subject that explores why people think, feel and act the way they do.

For most students, Psychology is a completely new subject at A Level. However, it shares many skills and ideas with subjects such as Biology, Mathematics and Geography. Throughout the course, you will develop skills in scientific investigation, essay writing, evaluation of evidence and the use of mathematical data.

Psychology complements a wide range of other subjects and helps students build transferable skills that are valuable for further study and employment. Exams include a mixture of short-answer questions and longer essays that assess your understanding of psychological theories, research studies and applications.

Possible Psychology Careers and Courses

An A Level in Psychology provides excellent preparation for many university courses and career pathways. These range from psychology-specific careers, such as counselling, clinical psychology or child psychology, to wider fields including medicine, business, social work, law and education.

Because Psychology focuses on understanding people, it is increasingly valued by universities as a science-based subject. Many medical schools now accept Psychology as one of the two required science A Levels, alongside subjects like Biology or Chemistry.

Course Details

Examination board: AQA Syllabus Code: 7182

Course Content

Paper One: Introductory Topics in Psychology

In Year 12, alongside key research methods in psychology, you will study areas of psychology that have influenced the way we now live our lives. These topics will introduce you to some famous studies and the way that psychologists develop and apply their theories:

Memory: Learn about different models of memory and the research used to test them. You will also explore real-life applications, such as how knowledge of memory can help the police when questioning eyewitnesses.

Attachment: Discover how early childhood experiences influence emotional and social development, and how failing to form strong relationships in infancy can affect adult relationships later in life.

Social Influence: Explore why people conform to group behaviour or obey authority figures, and why some people resist. You will study famous psychological research, including Milgram's obedience experiments.

Clinical Psychology and Mental Health: Examine what mental illness is and how psychologists explain and treat conditions such as OCD, phobias and depression, using both psychological and biological approaches.

Paper Two: Psychology in Context

Mainly covered in Year 12, these topics are key to understanding where Psychology started and how it is progressing into the future due to developing technologies in both biology and artificial intelligence.

Approaches in Psychology: Study different ways psychologists explain, investigate and treat behaviour, including biological, cognitive and behavioural approaches.

Biopsychology: Explore how the brain, nervous system and biological processes influence behaviour. You will learn about modern methods used to study how the brain works.

Research Methods: Develop skills in designing psychological research, evaluating different research methods, and analysing data using statistical techniques.

Paper 3: Issues and Options in Psychology

In Year 13, alongside key issues and debates in Psychology, you will study areas of Psychology that link closely to real-world careers:

Cognition and Development: Learn how intelligence and social abilities develop during childhood, with clear links to education and neurodiversity.

Schizophrenia: Examine how this mental illness is diagnosed, explained and treated, providing insight relevant to careers in medicine and social care.

Forensic Psychology: Explore the causes of criminal behaviour and how offenders are managed, supporting interests in law, criminology and politics.

Student Perspective

“I chose Psychology as it was different from the subjects I studied at GCSE and I wanted to learn something new. I also liked that it links to lots of other subjects and keeps my options open for university.”

“I chose Psychology because it includes elements of Maths, Science and English. I wanted to keep developing all of these skills at A Level.”

“I enjoy Psychology because we are learning about people, so everything feels relevant and interesting.”

Recommended Reading/Useful Links

Full course specification: https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/psychology

Careers in psychology (British Psychological Society): https://www.bps.org.uk/find-your-career-psychology

Accessible explanations of psychological topics: https://www.simplypsychology.or

RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Why choose Religious Studies?

At some point in our lives we are confronted with ultimate questions such as, 'Is there a God?' 'Where did the universe come from?' 'Is there a life after death?' 'How do I know what is right or wrong?' 'Is there a purpose to life?' 'Are we alone in the universe?' Reflecting on such questions is one of the things that make us human. Religious Studies is a unique subject that provides you with an opportunity to explore such questions in depth through philosophy, religion and ethics. As such, it involves thinking deeply, analysing and evaluating thought systems, religions, values and concepts and the chance to develop your own worldview. The subject's key skills are clear and coherent communication, the ability to understand and represent other people's points of view, the ability to present persuasive arguments and the skill of reading, analysing and synthesizing information, ideas and different types of literature. The subject can be combined with any other A Level and is a useful qualification for a wide variety of university degree subjects, including Economics, English, Geography, History, Law, Medicine, Philosophy, Politics, Psychology, Sociology and Theology.

Possible careers and courses that link to Religious Studies

The skills involved in religious studies are relevant in any career which requires clear thinking, careful analysis, balanced evaluation, effective communication and good presentation of ideas, e.g: law, journalism, radio and television, police, social services, politics and public administration, teaching, the health service, working with children, tourism and advertising.

Course details

Examination board: OCR Syllabus Code: H573

Course Content

1. Philosophy of Religion

The philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and Descartes with particular reference to existential reality and what it means to be human – the mind, body and soul debate. Arguments about the existence of God – Aquinas, Paley, Hume, Anselm and Kant. Religious experiences, e.g. mysticism, conversion – is God just a figment of our imagination? The problem of evil and suffering – how can an omnipotent, omnibenevolent God exist in the face of so much suffering in the world? Augustine, Irenaeus, Hick

2. Religion and Ethics

Aquinas' natural law theory; Fletcher's situation ethics; Kant's deontological ethics; Utilitarianism - Bentham and Mill. How these theories are applied to euthanasia and business ethics. Different theories about conscience. Sexual ethics – pre-marital sex, extra-marital sex and homosexuality.

3. Developments in Christian Thought

Developments in Christian Thought explores the doctrines, dogmas and teachings that Christians live by. What exactly does it mean to claim to be a Christian? What is the nature and purpose of human life? Who is Jesus Christ and what exactly does it mean to live a life of Christian moral principles and actions? What are the implications of Christian beliefs and teachings on ethics?

Method of Assessment

There are three examinations– one for each of the three modules.

There are **two assessment objectives:**
AO1 - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of religion and belief, including:
• religious, philosophical and/or ethical thought and teaching
• influence of beliefs, teachings and practices on individuals, communities and societies
• cause and significance of similarities and differences in belief, teaching and practice
• approaches to the study of religion and belief

AO2 - Analyse and evaluate aspects of, and approaches to, religion and belief, including their significance, influence and study.

A01 is given 40% in the examination and A02 60%

Student perspective

"I enjoy RE because it gives me the opportunity to think about some of the really big issues in life. It certainly stretches your mind."
"RE gives you the chance to study some great thinkers and to discuss their ideas."
"RE helps you to think and critically evaluate your own beliefs and those of others. It makes you think for yourself and not just accept what other people tell you."
"It's interesting, challenging and different from my other subjects."
"RE has helped me to become a more confident and broad minded person."

SPANISH

Why choose Spanish?

Alongside English, and Arabic, Spanish is one of the great 'world' languages. It is spoken by hundreds of millions across not only Spain, but also the South and North American continents, and was placed in first position in a 2017 British Council ranking of foreign languages by usefulness across a wide range of categories. The Spanish A Level course takes students to a very high level, equipping them for adventures such as studying abroad, holidays, work, and certainly for lively debate – the staple of any good Spanish conversation!

Possible careers and courses that link to Spanish

Spanish has long been associated with tourism, but there are many other sectors (for example Food, Energy and Construction) where a knowledge of Spanish often enables employees to be promoted to interesting and better-paid positions more easily. Translation and interpreting offer some graduates opportunities, while the likely shortfall in Primary and Secondary language teachers in the UK will also provide many openings for future Spanish students. There are some superb business courses at Spanish universities, often taught in English, for which Spanish A Level would be an asset.

Course details

Examination board: AQA Syllabus Code: 7692

Course content

The Spanish A Level course is modern in its scope, covering a great many relevant topics which promote debate on issues that affect cultures across the world. In the Lower Sixth, there are units on modern and traditional values, cyberspace, equal rights, the cult of celebrity, Spanish regional identity, and the cultural landscape of the wider Hispanic world. In the Upper Sixth, students study topical and sometimes controversial topics, such as immigration, racism, integration, political engagement amongst young people, and popular movements. There is also a historical unit looking at monarchies, republics and dictatorships across the Spanish-speaking world. In the Lower Sixth, pupils study a film, with Pedro Almodóvar's film Volver being a firm favourite over the last couple of years. At Upper Sixth level, students study a novel or play. García Márquez's *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, and Lorca's *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* have both proven popular in recent years.

Method of Assessment

Paper 1. 40% of A Level

Listening
Reading
Translation into English
Translation into target language (with a short accompanying passage on the same topic area to provide support)

Paper 2. 30% of A Level

2 essays – one on a film and one on a text.
Requirement to answer both analytically and critically.
Grammar is assessed.

Paper 3 is a speaking exam. 30% of A Level

Exam starts with student receiving stimulus card relating to one of the four subthemes studied. Five minutes preparation allowed.
Discussion of the issue on the stimulus card.
Student speaks on their Individual Research Project (any topic that interests them and is relevant to Spanish-speaking countries.)

Student perspective

"The topics, particularly the cultural topics at A Level, are very interesting and enjoyable."
"The highlight of Lower Sixth Spanish was the trip to Madrid, which, as well as giving me the opportunity to practise the language and provided me with an opportunity to see some interesting Spanish culture."

Recommended reading/references/useful links

www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-Level

EXTENDED PROJECT RESEARCH (EPQ)

Why do an Extended Project?

The EPQ is a fantastic opportunity for students to explore a topic beyond their A Level subjects, as well as develop the skills which will help them be successful in higher level academic study. Past students have completed projects which range widely across the arts and sciences, which have often contributed to students achieving a place at their first-choice university. A selection of research areas undertaken by recent students include: writing a novel inspired by the folklore of the Yorkshire moors; investigating the ethics of the legal principle of 'joint responsibility'; determining whether the Russian invasion of the Ukraine was due to Putin; writing, performing and recording an Extended Playlist of 4 songs; assessing which of the organs of the human body is the most difficult to replicate artificially.

Where can an EPQ lead?

Universities place great value on the EPQ, since it demonstrates a range of undergraduate-level skills and experience, whilst demonstrating also the student's interest in their subject, and their ability to be self-motivated and independent learners. An EPQ is the equivalent of half an A Level, worth up to 28 UCAS points (for an A* grade), and is taken into account as part of university applications.

Course Details

Examination Board: AQA Syllabus Code: Level 3 EPQ (7993)

Course content

The EPQ is available to all students, and is launched in the January of the Lower Sixth. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to engage in research and reading beyond the bounds of the curriculum, and to investigate a topic or theme of particular interest to them; the choice of options is boundless.

The project itself involves the completion of a 5000 word essay (or the completion of an artefact alongside a 1000 word commentary) followed by a presentation to an invited audience. The submission of a detailed Production Log, recording the student's progress and reflections during the project, is just as important and is an essential requirement of this qualification.

There is a taught component, focusing on research skills, critical thinking and academic writing, but the final project is completed independently. This enables the students themselves to take responsibility for the management, timing and completion of the project. However, each student has a Supervisor within school to offer advice and support and guide them through the process.

Method of Assessment:

The completed project will comprise of an essay of up to 5000 words, or an artefact accompanied by a 1000-word commentary, a completed Production Log and Assessment Record. , an annotated planning chart and resource evaluation sheet. The student must also do a presentation to deliver their findings and discuss the skills they have learned to a non-specialist audience. The project, Production Log and presentation will be assessed by the student's supervisor using the following assessment objectives.

Assessment Objectives

Manage
Identify, design, plan, and carry out a project, applying a range of skills, strategies and methods to achieve objectives.

Use Resources
Research, critically select, organise and use information, and select and use a range of resources. Analyse data apply relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any links, connections and complexities of the topic.

Develop and Realise
Select and use a range of skills, including, where appropriate, new technologies and problem-solving, to take decisions critically and achieve planned outcomes.

Review
Evaluate all aspects of the extended project, including outcomes in relation to stated objectives and own learning and performance. Select and use a range of communication skills and media to present evidenced outcomes and conclusions in an appropriate format.

The assessed project will be moderated within school by the EPQ co-ordinator, and then the school's marks will be sampled and moderated by the examination board to confirm the marks.

Student perspective

"My EPQ was the best preparation for university"

"This was the best part of my Sixth Form, because I really wanted to do it"

"I found my first undergraduate essay much easier than some of my friends – because of my EPQ"

Recommended reading/references/useful links

'What Makes a Standout Student: Why do an EPQ?": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kUmk20I74o

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

As part of the sixth form programme of study, each student takes part in a selection of enrichment activities during the course of both Lower and Upper Sixth years.

Wednesday afternoons – extra-curricular enrichment

Societies

Student run societies are held on a weekly basis, e.g. **Medics, Law, Sports, Economics, Astronomy, Musical Theatre, Craft and Languages Societies**. Alternatively, students are encouraged to set up dedicated study-groups.

Enrichment

On Wednesday afternoons all students take a break from studies, and enjoy extra-curricular and recreational activities, ranging from **sport**, **music**, **art reading** or the **Young Enterprise** and **Prince's Trust** projects.

There is also the opportunity to undertake voluntary work in a number of areas in the local community, which is particularly useful for those seeking to undertake university courses in medicine, veterinary medicine or teaching, for whom work experience is particularly important. However, it is open to all students and is a very rewarding way to meet people, to learn new skills, and to give something back to the community around you.

Students may opt for an activity from a broad range of options, and can then change options, if they so choose, each term.

Friday mornings – Sixth Form Personal Development

Friday sessions are given over to a more academic focus. We arrange a wide programme of presentations and visiting speakers on topics relevant to sixth form students during the year. Such presentations range from information about universities, apprenticeships and gap years, to workshops on driving awareness, sexual health, assertiveness and dealing effectively with pressure.

Alongside these presentations we run an extensive programme of post-school choices workshops which will provide you with a wealth of information on the options open to you beyond school, and support in successfully making these choices, as well as a carousel of skill-based sessions on topics such as interview technique, debating, current affairs etc.

CAREERS DEPARTMENT

Careers Department

Careers, Enterprise and Work Experience and is run by Mr R Walker. The aim of the department is to equip students with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to make informed decisions about learning through a variety of career opportunities, which are designed to cover the full range of career and educational pathways available. Students are supported with personalised, impartial information, advice and guidance to help build up the confidence to take charge of personal career development and manage progression through learning and work. Students are encouraged to consider a broad and ambitious range of options and to move forward post-18 in order to achieve their full potential.

Careers Provision

The careers and work related learning activities cover the full range of post-18 options delivered through a combination of events, information, visits, activities and classroom learning. Through Tutorials, students are offered support with decision making related to post-18 options and career management. All Lower Sixth students are offered the opportunity to take part in CV preparation and practice interviews with external providers in the autumn.

Work experience week takes place in July 2027. This is highly recommended to take part despite the cost! Parents are asked to contribute the cost of the health and safety checks, which is currently £32 per student.

A Careers Fair is organised annually with a very large number of top UK businesses and top universities attending in order to offer advice and information to school leavers.

Mr Walker arranges a wide variety of guest speakers from a wide range of industries e.g. medical, engineering, law, education and finance.

Careers notices are issued via the weekly Sixth Form bulletins and by email, giving details of courses, taster days and opportunities at universities and within industries, which students are actively encouraged to attend.

For those interested in medicine, volunteering opportunities are normally organised in local hospitals. Presently, Harrogate Hospital only allows students to volunteer and to undertake direct work experience when they have completed 50 hours of volunteering.

In addition to other opportunities offered through Wednesday enrichment, MMIs or Multiple Mini Interviews for aspiring medical students. These take place in the autumn term with the support of our local GPs.

There are also a number of virtual work experience placements coming on stream and these opportunities are regularly highlighted to student via the weekly bulletins.

Advice and guidance can be given on the many university admissions tests e.g UCAT admissions tests.

For students interested in a law career, the school takes part in the annual Bar Mock Trial and the Bradford University Mock Trial competition. Students can also take part in the annual Leeds Beckett University Human Rights Conference.

Careers Advice and Guidance

Impartial careers advice and guidance is offered to all students together with support from a range of external sources including employers, former students and university representatives. Careers advice and guidance appointments can be arranged throughout the year. Feedback and individual discussion are an important part of the careers programme. Student are encouraged by Mr Walker to make the most of the information, advice and guidance which is available in order to explore and prepare for future opportunities matched to students' individual talents, interests and aspirations.

Additional Careers Information

Our website www.ripongrammar.co.uk/academic/careers is intended to be a starting point to research all your post 18 options. This contains sections on higher education, school leaver employment, study abroad, gap years and work experience as well as links to a wide range of other recommended on-line careers resources.

Student Reflections :

"Research widely and be open minded to all opportunities"

"Start as early as possible and use the websites provided by the Careers Adviser

"Talk to professionals in the field of work that interests you"

"Talk to professionals in the field of work that interests you"

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further information on the admissions process please see the Sixth Form section of our website or email admissions@ripongrammar.com

The website also has information on:

- Sixth form life
- Boarding
- Uniform
- Transport/ Bus Routes
- Policies
- Governors and their Annual Report
- Previous newsletters
- Academic information by department
- Exam result statistics
- Friends of Ripon Grammar School (Parents' Association)

For all other enquiries please contact the Sixth Form Co-ordinator Mrs. Karyn Feingold feingoldk@ripongrmmar.com