Hurst



Choices Information

September 2027 entry

Sixth Form

Welcome



Dear Student

Being a Sixth Former is very different to studying for your GCSEs, particularly at Hurst. You will have the chance to become a genuine expert in your chosen subjects – which means you really need to love those subjects! So, this booklet deserves your serious attention.

Reading through might just confirm your plans to study subjects you fell in love with years ago. I hope, too, that you will explore other subjects you haven't considered, perhaps because you didn't even know that they existed. Please use these subject guides as a prompt for discussion with your friends, teachers and family.

On each page we have set out the essential content of each subject and how it is assessed, explaining in simple terms what each component is 'worth' in the qualification as a whole. Each Head of Department has navigated you through the two year specification, so that you get a good sense of how areas within the subject interact. The booklet kicks off with information about the matriculating requirements into our Sixth Form, and outlines the GCSE grades needed to ensure that you will succeed in each subject at Sixth Form level. This, of course, is only half of the battle; your interest and passion for the subject, combined with your preparedness to work hard, are just as important indicators as to the result you will come out with at the end of your two years. Academic ability is important when it comes to attaining good grades, but how you choose to 'turn up' will play a far more important role in determining your outcomes in terms of enjoyment, fulfilment, and exam success. At Hurst we always review our academic offering and look to respond to the desires of the incoming Sixth Formers whenever we can. We have introduced new A-level subjects in the last few years to meet the demand from those wanting to develop their specialist interests, in addition to BTECs in Business and Sport, which are normally offered in conjunction with an A-level. We aim to listen to our students and respond to your needs; really wanting to study a subject or course is an admirable place from which to begin your learning. You will find our courses varied and engaging, and whichever combination of qualifications and subjects you choose, you will encounter passionate and expert teachers who will guide you through the whole process.

But this booklet isn't about us - it's about you. Be honest with yourself about your values, your passions, your strengths and weaknesses, and you'll hopefully find this choice pretty straightforward. If you do need a hand, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely

Brian Schofield
Head of Sixth Form



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Sixth Form entry

To matriculate into the Sixth Form at Hurst, students require at least four grade 7 GCSEs. They should have a 7, 8 or 9 grade in the subjects that they intend to study and, where a student wishes to start a new subject which they have not studied before, they need to have achieved a 7-9 in a GCSE subject closely related to it (i.e. for Economics, ideally a student should have a 7-9 in Maths GCSE). Students should also have a minimum of a grade 5 at GCSE in Mathematics and English, although some subjects will require higher grades – please check each subject entry criteria in this booklet.

We recognise the need to be flexible and to operate on an individual student basis, working closely with each student on their choices, to establish what will be the best programme of study for them. In addition to A-level, we run a BTEC in Business, a BTEC in Sport and Extended Project Qualifications.

For further information, please contact **admissions@hppc.co.uk**



Subject Entry Requirements

Subject	Minimum Entry Requirements
Art and Design: Fine Art	GCSE Grade 7 in GCSE Art and Design and Grade 6 in English Language
Art and Design: Photography	GCSE Grade 6 in English Language
Biology	GCSE Grade 7 in Biology, Grade 7 in another Science and Grade 7 in Mathematics
BTEC - Business	GCSE Grade 6 in English Language and Grade 6 in Mathematics
Business	GCSE Grade 6 in Mathematics
Chemistry	GCSE Grade 7 in Chemistry, Grade 7 in another Science and Grade 7 in Mathematics
Classic Civilisation	GCSE Grade 6 in English Literature
Computer Science	GCSE Grade 7 in Computer Science
Dance	GCSE Grade 6 in English Language and Grade 6 in Dance
Design and Technology: Product Design	GCSE Grade 7 in Design and Technology is recommended
Drama and Theatre	GCSE Grade 7 in Drama or Grade 7 in English Language or English Literature
Economics	GCSE Grade 7 in Mathematics and Grade 7 in English Language or English Literature
English Literature	GCSE Grade 7 in English Language and English Literature
French	GCSE Grade 7 in French
Geography	GCSE Grade 7 in Geography and Grade 6 in English Language
History	GCSE Grade 7 in History and Grade 6 in English Language
Latin	GCSE Grade 7 in Latin
Mathematics	GCSE Grade 8 in Mathematics
Further Mathematics	GCSE Grade 8 in Mathematics and Grade 7 in Further Mathematics (if offered by your school)
Music	GCSE Grade 7 in Music (please see subject page for performance and theory requirements)
Physical Education	GCSE Grade 7 in PE (Grade 6 in Mathematics and English Language are recommended)
Physics	GCSE Grade 7 in Physics, Grade 7 in another Science and Grade 7 in Mathematics
Politics	GCSE Grade 7 in English Language plus Grade 7 in a Humanities subject in recommended
Psychology	GCSE Grade 7 in English Language and Grade 7 in a Science subject, plus Grade 6 in Mathematics
Religious Studies	GCSE Grade 7 in Religious Studies or Grade 7 in English Language or Grade 7 in History
Sociology	GCSE Grade 6 in English Language and Grade 7 in a Humanities subject
Spanish	GCSE Grade 7 in Spanish
BTEC – Sport	GCSE Grade 6 in PE and Grade 6 in a Science subject
BTEC – Business	GCSE Grade 6 in English Language and/or a Grade 6 in Mathematics

The Tutor System, Higher Education and Careers

The Tutor System

Sixth Form tutors are responsible for the students' welfare and academic progress. Meetings take place every week to set targets and to monitor progress by, for example, discussing Challenge Grade Reviews. Supporting the tutors are Heads of Year and there is a Head of Sixth Form overseeing the whole structure. Each student has more than one member of staff to encourage and support them, so that a number of key teachers get to know them well.

One of the main responsibilities of tutors is to provide guidance on a student's next steps. For those applying to university, the College's Head of Higher Education and Director of Futures work with tutors to advise on choice of course and higher education institution. Tutors also assist with the completion of UCAS forms including the preparation of personal statements. Hurst's UCAS references are accurate and valuable because of the close relationships between students and their teachers.

Higher Education

Most of our Sixth Form continues to university. Universities in the UK offer a plethora of courses, so it is essential that Sixth Formers are fully aware of the range of opportunities open to them. During the Lower Sixth, all students have at least one individual guidance meeting with a member of the Futures Team to discuss their options. Throughout the Lower Sixth, the UCAS application process is described, the decisions that need to be made are explained, and the resources available for undertaking the necessary research are detailed.

Shortly before the Lent half-term, parents are invited to join the year group at a Futures Evening when information is given by experts about life after Hurst. Lower Sixth students are encouraged to visit universities during the College vacations to cement their decisions. At the start of the Upper Sixth, UCAS applications are completed in consultation with tutors and the Futures Team. At the Parents' Evening held late in the Lent term, there is an opportunity to clarify the procedure when results are published and, on Results Day itself, advice is available to help resolve any queries. Once the student has left the College we are keen to keep in touch and we can provide further advice, including support with a UCAS application.

Some of you will want to apply to a Highly Selective University (HSU) – which include Russell Group, Oxbridge and medical, veterinary and dentistry courses). You will attend extra subject specific Societies (at least one per week) and extra subject specific sessions (at least one per week) that are designed to extend individuals beyond the constraints of their A-levels.

Students are also given support in preparing for university admissions tests. Specialist tutoring is given for UCAS personal statements that are due in earlier than other universities, and students are offered interview practice and advice. In addition, those applying for art college, drama courses or other performing arts programmes are given specialist support for their competitive application to these institutions, which may include additional entry requirements and earlier deadlines.

The aim of the Sixth Form is to achieve self-fulfilment, and we recognise that university is not for all. Hurst Sixth Formers have gone on to pursue (degree) apprenticeships, play professional sport or enter the workplace straight from school. Students who are considering a gap year can request one-to-one guidance meetings to discuss their options and to help them plan a constructive year. We also deliver safe travel sessions to all students, for those who wish to adventure abroad.

Careers

The Futures Department offers advice on a range of professions, delivered through assemblies, workshops and guidance meetings. Lower Sixth students have the opportunity to go through a rigorous selection process for the Hurst Work Experience Programme, which takes place during the summer vacation. We also support students with developing their CVs and preparation for interviews, in one-to-one guidance sessions as requested. We work closely with representatives from the Armed Forces to support any student's interest in a career in the Army, Navy or RAF.

Students are encouraged to participate in The Tycoon Enterprise Competition, a programme that enables students to set up and run their own businesses as well as compete in a national competition. This helps them to develop key transferable skills including leadership, communication and teamwork, as well as developing their overall business acumen.

As you would expect, every Sixth Form student also receives training in the use of Artificial Intelligence, both to aid study and to empower careers. Students are also exposed to modern Graduate Recruitment assessments and selection techniques, to help them become the most competitive possible future job-hunters.

University Destinations 2026

The Sixth Form leavers of 2026 achieved 87% A*–B grades in their A-levels. Below is a selection of the courses and universities that our Upper Sixth leavers are moving on to.

Course	University
Archaeology and Ancient Civilisations	Durham University
Architecture with professional placement	University of Bath
Biochemistry	University of Bristol
Business Accounting and Finance (PwC Flying Start programme)	Newcastle University
Business and Management with Study Abroad	Durham University
Chemistry	University of Oxford
Civil Engineering	University of Bristol
Classical Archaeology and Classical Civilisation	UCL (University College London)
Computer Science & AI with professional placement or study abroad	University of Bath
Economics	University of Warwick
Engineering	University of Cambridge
English	UCL (University College London)
Finance	University of Manchester
Fine Art	University of Leeds
Interior Design	Glasgow School of Art
International Business	The University of Edinburgh
International Relations	King's College London
LLB Law with Professional Placement	University of Exeter
Mathematics, Operational Research, Statistics and Economics (MORSE)	University of Warwick
Mechanical Engineering	Imperial College London
Medicinal and Biological Chemistry	The University of Edinburgh
Medicine	University of Nottingham
Medicine - MBChB Standard entry	University of Bristol
Medicine and Surgery	Newcastle University
Neuroscience	University of St Andrews
Philosophy and Theology	University of Oxford
Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE)	University of Warwick
Philosophy, Politics and Law	University of Birmingham
Psychology	The University of Edinburgh
Sport Management (with placement year)	Loughborough University
Theology, Religion, and Philosophy of Religion	University of Cambridge
Veterinary Medicine and Surgery	University of Nottingham

Course structures and choices

A-level course structure

All A-level courses are linear in structure with examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth year.

BTEC course structure

BTEC Level 3 Diplomas embody a fundamentally learner-centred approach to the curriculum, with a flexible, unit-based structure. Each unit is assessed through either coursework submissions, a supervised assessment or an external examination.

Additional Courses

In addition to their A-level and BTEC subject choices, students can choose to supplement their studies with one of the following options:

1. **Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)**
The Extended Project is a free-standing Level 3 qualification. Students may choose to take the EPQ as an extension of one of their GCE subjects; alternatively, the EPQ may explore an area of personal interest or activity outside the main programme of study. The EPQ involves extended independent work by the student and will require in total up to 120 'guided learning hours'. The EPQ is equivalent to half an A-level and there are UCAS points available: 28 for A*, 24 for A, down to 8 for grade E.

2. **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**
Our bespoke Artificial Intelligence (AI) course is designed to allow those with an interest in AI to understand the fundamental building blocks of machine learning and large language models such as Chat GPT, Claude or Co-Pilot, as well as how to use them in real-world settings. It also explores where companies such as Microsoft and Anthropic are likely to take their AI development in the future, as well as ensuring that students are ready for an increasingly AI driven workplace.



Learning Support

Most students no longer request Learning Support in the Sixth Form because they choose subjects in which they are both competent and confident. The Head of Learning Support is always available to discuss individual cases if there is a concern or a specific requirement.

Any previously completed specialist assessments should be submitted to the Head of Learning Support, in addition to details of access arrangements granted for GCSE examinations, or details about any pending assessments. Access arrangements will be reviewed to confirm they are still appropriate in accordance with current examination board requirements.

Sixth Form Choices

An annual Sixth Form Choices Morning is held for all prospective Lower Sixth Form students and their parents to hear more about the courses that interest them. Students are then required to rank their chosen subjects in order of preference, to enable the College to draw up the option blocks for their Lower Sixth year. If students are unsure as to which subjects to choose, they should consider subjects that they have enjoyed and check what subjects will be needed for any possible career choices they may make as they move on to university.

Option Blocks are adjusted each year to allow the maximum number of students to study their chosen subjects. Students select subjects from those within this booklet, but the College cannot guarantee that every combination of subjects will be possible. It should be noted that subject options are dependent on the number of students choosing them. If fewer than three students select a particular subject, it is possible that the subject will be withdrawn. As students submit their choices, variation in demand for subjects may result in changes to the composition of the blocks with, for example, some subjects being offered more than once. The range of possible subject combinations available will alter accordingly, and students will be kept informed as this process happens.



Art and Design: Fine Art/Photography

A-level

At A-level we offer Fine Art and Photography as separate subjects of the OCR course. Both are taught using a similar course structure, but students on the Photography course produce all work photographically, exploring digital and darkroom techniques in a dedicated studio and in dedicated groups. Those opting for the Fine Art course may choose to work through painting and drawing, printmaking, sculpture or alternative media such as: film, photography, installation and mixed media assemblage.

Choosing to follow one of the two courses in the Art Department enables students to experience a whole range of new processes and materials and to appreciate various art forms in a contemporary as well as in a historical context. Students explore and expand their visual language to a high level which is ideal preparation for further and higher education in general, or applying for an Art Foundation course.

Entry requirements

This is a practical subject with embedded academic elements that demand time and thought and it is expected that students will have achieved at least a grade 7 in GCSE Art and Design (Photography students do not have to have completed Art and Design at GCSE) along with at least a grade 6 in English Language. Students will require commitment, drive and enthusiasm and a desire to sustain and develop an idea through to its solution.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

The courses are flexible although built around a structured programme of projects. There are regular visits to museums and galleries throughout the course.

Assessment structure

Component 1: Coursework 60%

Students work from a broad range of themes and are guided through a series of techniques and process-led workshops to support their projects in their Personal Investigations route of Fine Art or Photography. They explore and develop many existing and new skills and are required to review their personal progress. Students are also taught how to analyse and critique their work in relation to established artists, designers or photographers.

As the course progresses independent and highly personal pathways are encouraged and developed via one to one and peer group tutorials. A body of work, including final outcomes, sketchbooks and other display materials, will be created by each student and the course will culminate in an exhibition.

Component 2: Externally Set Assignment 40%

This is launched in February of year two. Students must respond to themes from the Externally Set Assignment and produce their own creative outcome(s). Whilst this is a separate element to their coursework students will build upon their prior knowledge, skills and understanding. Preparatory work with supporting studies will be submitted with a timed element (15 hours) of unaided work produced under set task conditions.

Higher education and career opportunities

These courses are excellent preparation for the many career choices in the creative industries and many students undertake further study at Art College or other related establishments. Currently, the majority of students complete a full time, one year 'Art Foundation' Course before pursuing a degree in a specialist area of study such as Graphic Illustration, Three Dimensional Design, Fine Art, History of Art, Commercial Photography, Architecture and many more. Transferable skills acquired in creative problem solving, time management, independent approaches and risk taking are ideal preparation for future careers in the arts and any other area.

Biology
A-level

A-level Biology will enable students to acquire a systematic body of biological knowledge and an appreciation of its significance. It is a subject that can provide great enjoyment and respect for all living organisms.

This course develops many of the topics that students may have already studied and introduces some of the exciting areas of Biology in the contemporary world. Students may study, for example, the influence that genes have on our development, new gene and biotechnologies, environmental issues and aspects of human health.

It is hoped that this course will help students to gain some understanding of the dynamic and exciting nature of biology today, and an awareness of the ethical, technological and economic aspects of the subject.

Assessment is by examination and internally assessed laboratory based practical tasks.

Entry requirements

To be successful, students will need at least GCSE grade 7 in Biology, grade 7 in another Science and grade 7 in Mathematics. Those candidates who have studied Double Award Science will have some preparatory work to do but should be successful if they obtain two grade 7s and grade 7 in Mathematics.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

The department offers an exciting and up to date course on modern biology which is supported through the use of course specific textbooks and ICT resources. The course develops independent research and enquiry, experimental and investigative skills, modelling and data processing skills and discussion work.

Assessment structure

Biology is a linear course which requires the study of six modules: Practical Skills, Foundations in Biology, Exchange and Transport, Biodiversity and Disease, Communication and Energy and Genetics and Ecosystems. These modules are assessed externally by three examination papers.

The practical skills module (Module 1) will be taught across the two years of study to complement the other units. Practical work is assessed directly within the three exam papers and internally during core practicals (12 practical tasks) which make up the practical endorsement (separate to the main A-level qualification).

As part of the ecology and ecosystems topics, students will attend a field trip to complete sampling skills and an investigative report as part of their practical endorsement.

Higher education and career opportunities

The careers open to biologists range from pure and applied biology, teaching, medically orientated professions (including medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and nursing), environmental areas (including forestry, agriculture, marine biology and conservation) to working in industry (food, water, pharmaceutical etc.), or national and local government (environmental health, land use or planning). In addition to supporting scientific careers, it is important to recognise that A-level Biology is seen as a valued qualification and often compliments the study of subjects outside of Science. As Biology develops problem solving and analysis, students will gain highly valued skills and as such, an A-level in the subject does not exclude degree options in areas such as Law and Business.

Lower Sixth		Upper Sixth	
Module 2	2.1.1 Cell structure 2.1.5 Biological Membranes 2.1.6 Cell Division	Module 5	5.1.1 Communication and Homeostasis 5.1.2 Excretion 5.1.3 Neuronal communication 5.1.4 Hormonal communication 5.1.5 Plant and Animal responses
	2.1.2 Biological Molecules 2.1.3 Nucleic Acids 2.1.4 Enzymes		5.2.1 Photosynthesis 5.2.2 Respiration
Module 3	3.1.1 Exchange Surfaces 3.1.2 Transport in Animals 3.1.3 Transport in Plants	Module 6	6.1.1 Cellular Control 6.1.2 Inheritance 6.1.3 Manipulating genomes 6.2.1 Cloning and biotechnology
Module 4	4.1.1 Disease 4.2.1 Biodiversity 4.2.2 Classification and Evolution		6.3.1 Ecosystems 6.3.2 Populations and sustainability



Business
A-level

Business does what it says; we study businesses and how they operate. The approach to the course is less theoretical than Economics and involves studying how today's businesses carry out their various functions - including marketing, finance, people and operations management. The course looks at how external factors affect businesses (such as competition, consumer demand, the activities of pressure groups and ethical issues) and how businesses react to them. It also draws together the business functions and the external environment to study the objectives and strategies that businesses adopt. In the second year of the course there is a strong focus on global business, and the course content becomes increasingly contemporary and there are multiple opportunities to extend learning beyond the syllabus. The course also allows students to relate to their experiences with Young Enterprise and other extra-curricular activities.

Entry requirements

Students should be equipped with good written communication skills. Students should have the ability to use a variety of sources of information including textbooks, reference materials, government and business data, the internet and their own knowledge and experience of business. Business also requires a reasonable level of numeracy and for this reason candidates need to have achieved at least a grade 6 in GCSE Mathematics.

Subject choices

Business combines well with most other subjects although some might argue the apparent overlap with Economics is too great to make that a suitable combination.

A-level course structure - EDEXCEL examination board

The A-level course in Business is structured into four themes. Students are introduced to business in Themes 1 and 2 through building knowledge of core business concepts and applying them to business contexts to develop a broad understanding of how businesses work. Breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, with applications to a wider range of contexts and more complex business information, are developed in Themes 3 and 4, requiring students to take a more strategic view of business opportunities and issues. Students are encouraged to use an enquiring, critical and thoughtful approach to the study of business, to understand that business behaviour can be studied from a range of perspectives and to challenge assumptions.

Theme 1: Marketing and people

Students will develop an understanding of:

- Meeting customer needs
- The market
- Marketing mix and strategy
- Managing people
- Entrepreneurs and leaders

Theme 2: Managing business activities

Students will develop an understanding of:

- Raising finance
- Financial planning
- Managing finance
- Resource management
- External influences

Theme 3: Business decisions and strategy

This theme develops the concepts introduced in Theme 2. Students will develop an understanding of:

- Business objectives and strategy
- Business growth
- Decision-making techniques
- Influences on business decisions
- Assessing competitiveness
- Managing change

Theme 4: Global business

This theme develops the concepts introduced in Theme 1. Students will develop an understanding of:

- Globalisation
- Global markets and business expansion
- Global marketing
- Global industries and companies (multinational corporations)

Hurst

Assessment structure

There are three externally examined papers and all of these papers have the same structure:

- Each one comprises two sections
- Students answer all questions from both sections
- Sections A and B each comprise one data response question broken down into a number of parts, including one extended open-response question
- Duration: 2 hours
- 100 marks available

Paper 1: Marketing, people and global businesses

35% of the total qualification

Overview of content: Paper 1 will assess marketing, people and global businesses and questions will be drawn from Themes 1 and 4, and from local, national and global contexts.

Paper 2: Business activities, decisions and strategy

35% of the total qualification

Overview of content: Paper 2 will assess business finance and operations, business decisions and strategy. Questions will be drawn from Themes 2 and 3, and from local, national and global contexts.

Paper 3: Investigating business in a competitive environment

30% of the total qualification

Overview of content: Paper 3 will assess content across all four themes. Questions will be drawn from local, national and global contexts. For Paper 3, there will be a pre-released context document issued on the Edexcel website in November of the previous year. A new context will be given to centres each year and will relate to the examination series for the following summer. The context will focus on a broad context, such as an industry or market in which businesses operate. The question paper will be in two sections. The first section will focus on the broad context provided. This will be outlined to centres through the pre-released document. Questions will focus on the broad context. The second section will focus on at least one strand within the context provided, such as a particular business. Each section will contain unseen stimulus materials comprising quantitative and qualitative evidence. Students are required to apply their knowledge and understanding from Themes 1, 2, 3 and 4 and their understanding of the broad context to this evidence. Students cannot take any of their research or investigation data carried out as part of the pre-release into the examination.

Higher education and career opportunities

A-level Business provides an excellent foundation for a wide range of University courses and careers. It is one of the fastest growing subjects at degree level, with many degree courses combining Business or Management Studies with other subjects, including a modern foreign language.

Business can lead to career opportunities in both the private and public sectors, inside and outside the UK. Business prepares students for working in a range of environments in both the public and private sectors. It gives students confidence and an understanding about the workplace at all levels and even their own enterprise.

Chemistry
A-level

Chemistry is the study of the matter that makes up us, everything around us as well as the entire Universe. Chemists are at the forefront of the design and synthesis of new and exotic materials that change our lives; they are crucial to the discovery of new medicines and drugs that support our health. Chemists are a critical part of teams working to develop cutting edge technology such as modern lithium-ion batteries and the silicon wafers that microchips are etched into.

A-level Chemistry students can feed their curiosity whilst developing a key skills such as communication, problem solving and perhaps most importantly develop their ability to think. Extended practical work supports the student's learning making lessons both engaging and varied.

Entry requirements

To be successful students will need at least GCSE grade 7 in Chemistry, grade 7 in another Science and grade 7 in Mathematics. Those candidates who have studied Double Award Science will have some preparatory work to do but should be successful if they obtain 2 grade 7s and grade 7 in Mathematics.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

Course content

We follow the OCR Chemistry specification which is split into six areas:

1. Development of Practical skills in Chemistry

This will be integrated throughout the course and will help you develop the ability to plan and implement experiments and analyse and evaluate the results.

2. Foundations in Chemistry

The basic concepts of Chemistry are covered, such as atomic structure and structure and bonding; building on your GCSE knowledge and introducing you to the concepts that GCSE glossed over.

3. Periodic Table and Energy

Continuing to build on GCSE Chemistry, but with more in-depth explanation of the trends and patterns within the Periodic Table. This will also include understanding of the more quantitative topics of energetics and rates of reaction.

4. Core Organic Chemistry

You are introduced to the wide range of organic molecules, but also learn about methods of synthesis and analysis, such as Mass Spectrometry and IR Spectroscopy.

5. Physical Chemistry and transition elements

The mathematical heart of the course, this includes a much more in-depth analysis of areas of Physical Chemistry such as equilibria, entropy, free energy and pH. For variation it also includes the impressively colourful investigation of transition metal properties.

6. Organic Chemistry and Analysis

The study of more complex organic molecules including many biological examples and polymers and how they can be analysed using techniques such as chromatography and NMR spectroscopy

Assessment structure

This will consist of three exams.

Practical Assessment: All students will take a minimum of 12 practicals across the A-level course covering a common core list of apparatus and technique usage. There will also be questions in the exam papers that will test students' knowledge and understanding of their practical work.

Alongside their A-level grade based on their exams a 'pass' or 'fail' grade will be given for practical work in lessons.

Higher education and career opportunities

Universities value Chemistry's ability to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills making the subject highly desirable for huge range of degrees. In this context Chemistry is very successful combined with non-science subjects.

A-level Chemistry is a brilliant qualification for a wide variety of science and STEM based university courses as well as being an essential subject choice for anyone considering studying medicine, veterinary medicine or dentistry.

As the subject develops logical thought, numerical and communication skills, many employers consider it to be an excellent training for almost any occupation or profession. Those who go on to study Chemistry at University are sought after graduates with opportunities to undertake high level research, be involved in pharmaceutical drug discovery or use their skills in law, finance or consultancy roles in the city.

Classical Civilisation
A-level

Classical Civilisation investigates the World of Ancient Greece and Rome through its literature, art and architecture. Students may have studied some Classics earlier at school in the form of Greek and Roman mythology, or may have studied Greek or Latin at GCSE. Equally, students may have had no background in the Classics whatsoever before choosing A-level Classical Civilisation. The joy of the subject is that it is a new way of looking at the world for whoever takes it up.

Entry requirements

Students should have at least a grade 6 in GCSE English Literature because, even though no prior knowledge of Latin, Greek or Classical Civilisation is required and the texts are studied in translation, a large portion of the course involves studying works of literature. No prior knowledge of art and architecture is required. All students need to have is an open mind and willingness to learn.

Subject choices

Classical Civilisation fits in well with a whole range of other A-levels including English Literature, Languages, Drama and Theatre Studies, History, Art & Design, Business Studies, Sciences and Psychology. Scientists and Economists will enjoy it for its own sake as a subject to broaden their horizons and to act as a contrast to their other A-levels.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

Course content

The course is full of mythology, legend, war, death, betrayal, crazed women, art, temples and, of course, many insights into the culture that brought us such things as: literature, maths, science, architecture, philosophy, democracy and sculpture. Students must be prepared to read, analyse and write concisely about a wide range and quantity of material, a skill required by any university course.

The course will include the following elements:

The World of the Hero (component 11)

The great epics the Iliad and Odyssey were composed around 800 BC and are the earliest surviving pieces of Western literature. Whilst the Iliad describes the anger of Achilles and his subsequent revenge upon Hector in the 9th year of the Trojan War, the Odyssey takes you to the end of the war and the homeward wanderings of the Greek hero, Odysseus. Having left the battlefield of Troy, Odysseus sails home (dogged by shipwrecks, a mutinous crew, a witch, a Cyclops, cannibals, the Sirens and a hateful goddess) only to find his wife being wooed by other men. Through this epic we gain a fascinating insight into Ancient Greek culture through the contrasting people and monsters, not only of Homer's time but also of the time of Achilles and Odysseus (the so-called Age of Heroes). With Homer as his influence and Augustus as his patron, Virgil created a world with such a small beginning through the travails of a Trojan refugee, Aeneas. His city destroyed, his wife dead, this man has to survive the wrath of the gods and women in order to achieve his destiny in founding the Roman race on the shores of Italy. While studying this epic we examine particularly what it meant to be a hero in the Classical world both in the Age of Heroes and within the context of the new Imperial Age of Rome. The literature of both texts forms a lens through which will examine the culture and society in which these epics were constructed, and exam questions will address this as well as the literary techniques used by the authors.

Greek Theatre (component 21)

In this module we study two of the great Greek tragedians of the 5th century BC (Euripides and Sophocles) as well as the comedian Aristophanes to explore Greek theatre. Within these plays expect to find a king who has unintentionally committed a terrible act, women sent into a mad frenzy by a vengeful god and a comedy with a chorus of frogs giving a satirical take on Greek society. This module also covers the architecture and archaeology of theatres, as well as the scenery, stage effects, costumes and characters typical to Greek theatre. We will look at buildings to examine how their construction helped audiences to enjoy a performance but also vases and pots which were created by Greek artists as a response to what they saw in the theatre, giving us a dynamic pictorial representation of what a performance must have been like. We will also cover celebrations of theatre in the ancient world through looking at the theatrical competition the City Dionysia which will allow us to explore the social, political and religious aspects of the theatre.

Greek Religion (component 31)

This module is part of the 'belief and ideas' side of the course in which students will explore classical thought: the nature of right and wrong, what faith meant to the ancient Greeks and how their beliefs and interpretations of the relationship between the Gods and mankind affected their society. The topics studied include the nature of Olympian Gods and how the Greeks would have a personal experience of the divine through their worship of divine cults and the Olympic games, and through oracles; this enables us to study religion and society as well as places of worship, rituals, priests and religion and philosophy. Study of this is enriched by looking at the temples in Athens, Delphi and Olympia and by examining sculptures and vases which show how the Greeks represented their belief in the gods through art and architecture. As well as looking at these specific sources students will be required to do some extra reading of material connected to the course content. This will be guided to an extent by teachers and will allow students to get a taste of what learning is like at university as they will have to include what they have learnt from their extra reading for their essays. This course teaches students how evaluate concepts as well as sources and how to explore the course beyond the curriculum.

Assessment structure

The Classical Civilisation A-level is assessed by three written exams - one exam per component.

Higher education

Classical Civilisation is well regarded by universities and indeed the new course is set up to teach skills which are integral to many degrees: analysis, evaluation, wider reading and conceptual thought. It is viewed as a multi-disciplinary subject by higher education institutions who recognise the rigour of the content and requirements of the examination. Students will also learn how to read, analyse and evaluate modern academic articles to further their understanding and learn skills applicable to any university course. Many universities run highly respected courses in Classical Studies or Ancient History if students decide to take their studies further.



Computer Science
A-level

It is the aim of the Computer Science department to ensure that all students taking the subject acquire the practical skills that will make them employable in the real world, increasing their choice of opportunities when leaving the College. Although only 20% of the final marks are awarded for coursework, Computer Science is a highly practical course where we teach beyond the limits of the syllabus.

The overall aim of this course is to encourage students to develop an understanding of the principles of problem solving using computers. These studies will help students to understand the range of applications of computers and the effects of their use so that students can apply this understanding to develop computer based solutions to problems. Students will develop an understanding of systems analysis and design and methods of implementation, testing and documentation.

Entry requirements

Students who have studied Computer Science at GCSE should have at least a grade 7. There is a considerable mathematical content to the course and therefore candidates should have achieved a grade 7 or above in Mathematics at GCSE.

Subject choices

A qualification in Computer Science combines well with many subjects including those that would benefit from a logical and systematic approach. It also complements subjects that contain analytical, scientific and technological aspects.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

The Course consists of three components:

Assessment structure

Component 1: Computer systems

2 hours and 30 minutes written paper

40% of total A-level

- The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices
- Software and software development
- Exchanging data
- Data types, data structures and algorithms
- Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues

Component 2: Algorithms and programming

2 hours and 30 minutes written paper

40% of total A-level

- Elements of computational thinking
- Problem solving and programming
- Algorithms to solve problems and standard algorithms

Component 3: Programming project

Non-examination assessment

20% of total A-level

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

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

Higher education and career opportunities

With a qualification in Computer Science students may choose to continue their studies on to higher education. Many universities now offer joint honours courses which contain computing and just about every other subject. There are an increasing number of opportunities for students who leave with an A-level in Computer Science. Many further their studies at universities, taking a single honours degree in Computing or studying joint honours with another subject, ranging from Engineering to Economics or Business Studies.

With the large proportion of project work and with the emphasis on the use of internet technologies, students with an A-level in Computer Science are also in a strong position to find themselves a career in the industry without going to university. There are many companies who would prefer to employ a student at 18 with the appropriate skills rather than waiting until they have completed a university degree.

Dance
A-level

Studying A-level Dance provides students with the opportunity to acquire knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the subject, which is delivered through practical and theoretical studies. Students are encouraged to discover their own original movement vocabulary as well as increase their own performance ability to a high standard. The course encourages students to think creatively and analytically which aptly primes them for higher education in general or more specific performing arts courses.

Entry requirements

Students should have at least grade 6 in GCSE English Language. GCSE Dance at grade 6 or above is desirable but not necessarily essential. Potential students however must be technically proficient and may be required to undergo a practical assessment prior to acceptance on the course. Students considering undertaking dance at A-level need to be aware that success in the subject will require dedication, self-motivation and the ability to work and cooperate within a group.

A-level course structure - AQA examination board

The A-level Dance course is linear with all exams taking place at the end of the course.

Assessment structure

Component 1: Performance and Choreography

What's Assessed?

- Solo performance linked to a specific practitioner within an area of study
- Performance in a quartet
- Group choreography

How is it assessed?

- Practical exam; 80 marks; 50% of A-level

Component 2: Critical Engagement

What's Assessed?

- Knowledge and understanding and critical appreciation of one optional set work and its location within a corresponding area of study

How is it assessed?

- 2 hours and 30 minutes written exam; 100 marks; 50% of A-level

Higher education and career opportunities

A-level Dance is highly respected as an academically and practically demanding course and therefore provides a solid foundation of knowledge and ability for anyone wishing to pursue a career in the performing arts. A-level Dance can lead to further study in Dance, Theatre Studies and Performing Arts in higher education at degree level and potentially may lead to a career in the performing arts industry or within the education and community arts sector.

A-level Dance compliments a range of subjects, such as, theatre studies and the visual arts, due to the concepts that underpin the process of creating dance and the analytical skills used to gain insight and appreciation of the work. The course's ability to foster imagination and creativity, as well as promote personal and social development makes it an invaluable asset in many fields of work that require presentational skills, teamwork and lateral thinking, such as within the media, marketing, advertising and public relations.

Other information

It will be expected that students regularly attend the theatre to see live dance performances to further stimulate their own creativity as well as reinforce and enrich their understanding of dance. Dance students should also become a member of one of the College's in house dance companies to support and develop performance and choreographic skills.

Design & Technology: Product Design

A-level

The Design and Technology A-level builds on the experience of GCSE and allows students to further their studies through Product Design. We will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on Design Technology, whilst enjoying opportunities to put the learning into practice by producing artefacts.

Students will gain a real understanding of what it means to be a designer, alongside the knowledge and skills sought by higher education and employers, especially those in the creative industries. The course is closely linked to the real world of product/system manufacture whilst offering opportunities to acquire and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the world of designing and making. Students will develop an awareness of the responsibilities that designers and technologists have and the potential that exists to change and shape lives.

Entry requirements

Ideally students should have studied Design and Technology at GCSE but this is not necessarily essential; those who have Design and Technology GCSE should have achieved at least a grade 7. GCSE studies give students an basic knowledge of the core elements required for A-level and, although they are taught again in more detail during the Lower Sixth, workloads will be increased. IT skills, an interest in working practically with materials and a creative mind are also deemed essential.

In addition to this, students are expected to have achieved at least a grade 6 in English Language GCSE, as there are many written elements to the course and the exams feature longer response style questions, and at least a grade 6 in Maths GCSE as students are expected to demonstrate their application of knowledge, understanding and skills of Maths (and Science) both theoretically and practically.

Subject choices

There are clear links between aspects of the specification content and other subject areas such as Computer Science ('The use of computer systems' and 'Digital design and manufacture'); Business Studies ('Enterprise and marketing in the development of products'); Art and Design ('Design communication') and History ('Design Theory'). Students must also demonstrate maths and science skills through their written papers and their non-exam assessment. This is not an exhaustive list, and there are other opportunities within the specification for students to integrate and apply their wider learning and understanding from other subject areas studied during Key Stage 4, as well as those subjects that they are studying alongside A-level Design and Technology.

A-level course structure - AQA examination board

The course is made up of three units: two exam papers and a non-exam assessment. The course contains two main practical projects in the Lower Sixth and a major project, the NEA, on a design context of the student's choosing in the Upper Sixth. See the assessment structure over the page for exam content and NEA material costs.

Higher education and career opportunities

This creative and thought-provoking qualification gives students the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in a number of careers, especially those in the creative industries. Whether students continue their study with a degree course in Design or broaden their skills in either the Arts or Sciences, A-level Design and Technology offers a sound base for future learning.

There are many, excellent career opportunities for students leaving with an A-level in Design and Technology, as they will have sound problem-solving skills and practical ability. Career options include:

Creative and Design Careers:

- Product Designer
- Furniture Designer
- Industrial Designer
- Interior Designer
- Graphic Designer
- User experience/interface (UX/UI) Designer
- Sports Equipment Designer
- Exhibition/Set Designer

Technical Careers:

- Architect
- Manufacturing Engineer
- Mechanical Engineer
- Structural Engineer
- Civil Engineer
- Automotive or Aerospace Engineer
- CAD Technician

Education or Research Careers:

- Materials Scientist/Researcher
- Design Innovation
- Sustainable Design Consultant
- Smart Product Developer
- Teacher or Lecturer

Assessment structure

Unit	Name	Duration	Weighting
Paper 1	Written Paper: Technical Principles • Materials, performance characteristics and their applications • Material manufacturing processes • Health and safety, modern and industrial commercial practice • Digital design and manufacture, the use of computer systems • Product design and development, inclusive design • Enterprise and marketing, intellectual property	2.5 hours	30%
Paper 2	Written Paper: Designing and Making Principles • Design history: technological developments, socio-economic influences • Design theory: design styles, movements and work of designers • The design process: product life cycles, prototype development and third party testing – industrial and commercial contexts • Social, cultural, moral and ethical issues affecting designers • Responsible design: sustainability and environmental issues	1.5 hours	20%
NEA	Non-Exam Assessment • Practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles. • The cost of project materials will be covered by the College up to the sum of £300 for A-level. In order to avoid restricting the design process, any further charges on or above this amount will be recharged, with prior parental agreement.	50 hours	50%

Drama & Theatre
A-level

A-level Drama and Theatre is a subject in which all other subjects meet. Students will mix these ideas around, become critical of the world around them and create theatre that provokes and challenges society to do better. Students will extend their ability to create drama and theatre, either in performing or production roles. They will also be required to write about drama and to develop their powers of analysis to become an informed critic. The course will involve taking part in drama productions, as well as studying plays, playwrights and practitioners. To achieve high grades, students need to be rigorous and dedicated in their approach. Sound analytical skills and a questioning nature are essential. Practical experience must be supported with a sound grasp of theatrical theory in both coursework and examinations. Students need to be enthusiastic, involved and committed, using private study sensibly for research, reading and writing essays. Most students find that despite the theoretical challenges of the course, the practical elements of the subject complement other academic areas and allow them to develop a variety of study techniques. Students need to be curious about issues and ideas and have a creative instinct for communicating their views through drama. They may be keen on acting, writing or on the visual and technical side of theatre and wish to develop their skills in some or all of these areas. Equally they will be interested in going to the theatre to see plays performed by different theatre companies.

Entry requirements

It is useful to have taken Drama at GCSE but not always essential. Those who have a GCSE in Drama should have achieved at least grade 7, whilst those who haven't should have a grade 7 or above in English Language or Literature. It is important that students are interested in gaining a greater understanding of how theatre works and a desire to better understand the world through the dramatic form.

A-level course structure – AQA examination board

The A-level course is split into three components, which are studied across the two year programme:

Component 1: Drama & Theatre
(40% of the qualification)

This component is broken down into two sub sections:

Area of Study 1 - Set Plays is the study and practical exploration of two set plays from differing periods from the perspective of director, performer and designer.

Area of Study 2 - Live Theatre Production involves the analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers (and several theatre trips!).

This component is assessed through a 3 hour written examination.

Component 2: Creating Original Devised Drama
(30% of the qualification)

Students will learn how to create and develop original ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre making process. They will study and apply the work and methodology of one influential theatre practitioner to their theatre making and process and will be assessed on their contribution as a performer, designer or director. They will develop their ability to create and communicate meaning and realise specific artistic intentions through the group devising process, therefore a mature and independent approach to collaborative working is essential. This component is assessed via a Working Notebook and final filmed performance.

Component 3: Making Theatre
(30% of the qualification).
The practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts from three different plays. The methodologies of one practitioner are applied to Extract 3, which is performed as a final assessed piece (students may contribute to this collaborative production as a performer, designer or director). This unit is assessed through a final live performance and an individual reflective report and is marked externally by AQA.

Assessment structure

A-level Drama is examined through a mixture of practical assessments and written examinations, across the two year course.

Higher education and career opportunities

At the end of this course, students could go on to study Drama at University or apply to Acting or Technical Theatre courses at recognised Drama & Theatre Schools. The Drama & Theatre A-level complements a wide range of subjects and is useful in building confidence and improving presentation skills. The confidence, tenacity and independence of thought fostered by the course are of value in almost any profession and are qualities certainly valued by universities. The balance of analytical and practical skills which it demands are also relevant to careers in film and television, media, advertising, public relations, personnel management, marketing and law.

Throughout the duration of the A-level course, students will foster skills which are of huge value in other subjects including (but not limited to):

- English - study of set texts, essay writing skills.
- History - researching and understanding the historical contexts in which plays were performed, and practitioners were writing.
- Psychology - exploring the mind-set, motivations and objectives of characters.
- Politics - researching and understanding the political motivations of playwrights.
- Business - presentation, teamwork, creative and inter-personal skills.
- Design & Engineering - exploration of set design, lighting, sound, costumes, props and special effects.
- Law - debate, presentation of arguments, research and confidence in public speaking.

Perhaps most importantly, however, the skills required for success in this course are the skills needed for success in life: time management, team-working, organisation, leadership skills, reflective skills, persuasive techniques, negotiation skills, co-operation, data-sifting, working to deadlines, communication skills... and many more.



Economics
A-level

Economics teaches students to think logically and to use theories to understand how economies operate. The basic economic problem, of how we divide up scarce resources and how decisions about how best to do this affect us all, is at the core of the subject – in other words who gets what and why? The subject, therefore, studies all of society and the activities of various groups and institutions within it, including consumers, firms and the government. This involves studying how markets allocate scarce resources, the effects of competition and government intervention.

The macroeconomic part of the course is what most people associate with economics. This includes the study of economic growth, inflation, unemployment and international trade and the difficulties the government faces when it attempts to steer the economy towards a particular economic objective.

Entry requirements

Students are expected to take an interest in current affairs, to want to learn about why the economy works in the way it does, debate issues, interpret evidence and be prepared to make their own judgements about relevant topics. A-level Economics is not mathematical as such but does require a good level of numeracy. For this reason candidates need to have achieved at least a grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics and English Language or English Literature.

The main skill that a good economist needs is the ability to analyse economic data, to interpret graphs and tables, identify trends and explain these using economic theory. The ability to see how one economic policy objective (e.g. low inflation) may affect other aspects of the economy (e.g. employment) is extremely important. Candidates need to have a clear mind, the ability to think and analyse logically and to be able to express themselves clearly in writing.

Subject choices

Economics will combine well with most other subjects, including sciences, social sciences, humanities or arts subjects. Combined with subjects such as Mathematics and Physics it can lead into engineering, while with languages the subject can provide an excellent base for those looking to work abroad or in a company with overseas links.

A-level course structure - EDEXCEL examination board

The A-level is structured into four coherent themes to support teaching and learning:

Theme 1: Introduction to markets and market failure

This theme focuses on microeconomic concepts. Students will develop an understanding of:

- Nature of economics
- How markets work
- Market failure
- Government intervention

Theme 2: The UK economy

This theme focuses on macroeconomic concepts. Students will develop an understanding of:

- Measures of economic performance
- Aggregate demand
- Aggregate supply
- National income
- Economic growth
- Macroeconomic objectives and policy

Theme 3: Business behaviour and the labour market

This theme develops the microeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 1 and focuses on business economics.

Students will develop an understanding of:

- Business growth
- Business objectives
- Revenues, costs and profits
- Market structures
- Labour market
- Government intervention

Theme 4: A global perspective

This theme develops the macroeconomic concepts introduced in Theme 2 and applies these concepts in a global context.

Students will develop an understanding of:

- International economics
- Poverty and inequality
- Emerging and developing economies
- The financial sector
- Role of the state in the macroeconomy

Assessment structure

There are three externally assessed papers at A-level. Each paper comprises 100 marks and is 2 hours in duration. Questions comprise short answers, data responses and essays.

Paper 1: Markets and business behaviour

Questions drawn from Theme 1 and Theme 3.
100 marks, 2 hours
35% of qualification

Section A: multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

Section B: one data response question.

Section C: one extended open response question
(choice of one from two).

Paper 2: The national and global economy

Questions drawn from Theme 2 and Theme 4.
100 marks, 2 hours
35% of qualification

Section A: multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

Section B: one data response question.

Section C: one extended open response question
(choice of one from two).

Paper 3: Microeconomics and macroeconomics

Questions drawn from all themes
100 marks, 2 hours
30% of qualification

Two data response questions broken down into a number of parts, each including one extended open response question (choice of one from two for extended open response questions).

Higher education and career opportunities

Economics is highly thought of in universities. All the traditional universities offer degree courses in the subject, often combined with Politics, Philosophy, Accounting or Humanities. Although students graduating from university with Economics degrees most commonly enter occupations in banking, accounting, management, business consultancy and government advisory work, the analysis and logical thinking involved in studying the subject means that it provides a good grounding for many alternative career paths.



English Literature
A-level

Those possessed of an enquiring mind and a passion for our linguistic heritage will relish the diversity of English Literature and will thrive on its creative possibilities. The intellectually curious will learn to express opinion with confidence, freedom and skill, to enjoy the effects of discerning use of language and to explore a complex range of ideas from across the ages. Great literature articulates the mystery of the human condition; our ability to explore our existence is dependent upon language and it is perhaps the responsibility of each generation to analyse and even refashion the words we use.

Entry requirements

Students will need to achieve at least grade 7 in GCSE English Language and English Literature.

A-level course structure - EDEXCEL examination board

The Edexcel A-level in English Literature requires students to study a minimum of eight texts at A-level including at least three texts published before 1900 and one play by Shakespeare. The qualifications builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills established at GCSE, introducing students to the discipline of advanced literary studies, and requires reading of all the major literary genres of poetry, prose and drama. The A-level in English Literature will extend these studies in breadth and depth, further developing the students' ability to analyse, evaluate and make connections by drawing on broad literary, historical and critical knowledge.

Assessment in English Literature will require students to show knowledge and understanding of:

- the ways in which writers shape meanings in texts
- the ways in which texts are interpreted by different readers, including over time
- the ways in which texts relate to one another and to literary traditions, movements and genres
- the significance of cultural and contextual influences on readers and writers

During the course, students will prepare for three 'open book' written papers, as follows:

Component 1, Drama:

2 hours 15 minutes
30% of A-level

For this paper, students answer two questions, one on a Shakespeare play (*Hamlet*), the other on a modern drama (Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*). Both answers require students to evaluate literary and stylistic features as well as the influence of contextual factors. For Shakespeare, students will also be introduced to a range of critical interpretations by academic literary critics, learning to engage with their viewpoints in their own writing.

Component 2, Prose:

1 hour 15 minutes
20% of A-level

Students will study two novels: Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. They will be assessed by a comparative essay question exploring connections between the two texts in relation to a shared theme. This paper also requires students to evaluate the significance of literary, social and biographical contexts for interpreting their prepared texts.

Component 3, Poetry:

2 hours 15 minutes
60 marks – 30% of A-level

For this paper, students will study an anthology of 21st-century poetry ('Poems of the Decade'), as well as an anthology of Romantic poetry. They are assessed by an essay question for each. In section one, they will be asked to compare one of their taught poems with an unseen contemporary poem, exploring connections in how the writers use language, form and structure to address a theme. In section 2, they will answer an essay question on Romantic poetry, incorporating literary and contextual analysis.

Non-Examined Assessment

In addition to these written exams, students complete a coursework essay exploring contrasts and comparisons between two literary texts. Their essay will be informed by different interpretations and an understanding of contexts. Quotations from secondary sources, whether different interpretations or contextual material, will be acknowledged by footnotes and a bibliography, making this an excellent preparation for undergraduate assignments.

The course structure, encompassing a mixture of written exams and internally-assessed coursework, ensures that all candidates can benefit from a pluralistic approach to assessment and from a variety of study techniques. Naturally, there will be scope for independent readers to explore literature beyond the specifications and to be supported in their reading of authors of specific personal interest.

Higher education and career opportunities

English Literature is a splendid foundation for every Arts and Humanities degree course in higher education, with many students also going on to study science and social sciences. It is universally regarded as a rigorous academic discipline of special worth for those interested in careers as disparate as journalism, publishing, media, research, teaching, politics, law, social work, personnel management, public relations and accountancy. As a degree course in its own right, English Literature is extremely stimulating and highly popular; always over-subscribed, it is available in a variety of guises at all major seats of learning worldwide.

Hurst

Geography
A-level

Geography is a key subject in a world where globalisation increasingly puts pressure on physical spaces, cultures and scarce resources. As a bridge between the sciences and humanities, the physical and human aspects of the subject allow students to acquire elements of both scientific and socio-economic methodologies to help unpick the complex interaction of processes that shape our world.

Geography also has an applied element: seeing how human intervention affects the environment helps decision-makers in planning and development at a variety of geographical scales. Students research, discuss, analyse and form a range of opinions, using data from an exciting array of media such as maps, Geographical Information Systems, photos, videos, and podcasts.

Entry requirements

At least grade 7 in GCSE Geography and grade 6 in English Language.

A-level course structure - AQA examination board

This specification encourages students to understand their own lives in a global context and to understand the vital, complex and inter-related issues they will face in their lives such as climate change, global shifts in economic power and the challenge of sustainable resource use. It also allows students to develop further their knowledge and understanding of aspects of the subject covered at KS3 and GCSE, including concepts such as location, place, processes and environments, at a range of geographical scales (local, national, regional, global). An integral theme of the course is to appreciate that knowledge and understanding cannot be compartmentalised into a distinct split of physical and human geography; there are complex people-environment interactions at all geographical scales, which may also change over time.

Super-curriculum

To support students in their A-level studies, the department hosts external speakers, as well as taking students to local topical lectures. Previous subjects of these events have included: climate change, the future of Antarctica, energy futures and modern-day slavery. We have strong links with the Brighton and Hove Geographical Association.

The department runs four days of local fieldwork trips to help support the students with the concepts of the A-level course and practise a range of fieldwork techniques in preparation for the coursework component (NEA). This is followed by in-school support for the completion of the NEA. We also run a non-compulsory international trip, usually to Iceland.

Higher education and career opportunities

Geography incorporates a wide range of data handling and decision-making skills, greatly sought after by employers who need people with the ability to problem solve and provide solutions. It is also a subject which complements both Arts and Science subjects at higher and degree level, and as a degree in its own right it is regarded as a valuable basis for further study.

Geography and related courses are extremely popular at universities and almost all the top universities have very strong Geography Departments. Geography opens up a wide range of careers, as outlined in the following table.

Assessment structure

Component	Weighting	Method of assessment
Component 1: Physical Geography **Section A:** Water and Carbon Cycles **Section B:** Coastal Systems and Landscapes **Section C:** Hazards	40%	2 hours 30 minutes written paper 120 marks
Component 2: Human Geography **Section A:** Global Systems and Governance **Section B:** Changing Places **Section C:** Resource Security	40%	2 hours 30 minutes written paper 120 marks
Component 3: Geography fieldwork investigation Fieldwork enquiry Question developed by student 3,000-4,000 words	20%	Fieldwork report internally marked and externally moderated 60 marks

Environment and Sustainability	Physical Systems	Geographical Techniques	The Business World
Civil servant for DEFRA	Coastal engineer	GIS specialist	Financial risk assessor
Conservation worker	Soil conservationist	Census data specialist	Banker
Environmental health officer	Hydrologist	Location analyst	Accountant
Architect or urban planner for sustainable projects	Earth scientist	Cartographer	Insurance
Environmental engineer	Weather forecaster	Surveyor	Transport / logistics manager
Landscape architecture	Hazard prediction and management	Military GIS specialist	Retail management
Pollution analyst	Flood protection manager	Remote sensing analyst	Management consultant
Cycle route planner	Pollution analyst	Geomatics software designer	Commercial sales
Recycling officer	Risk assessor	CAD technician	Lawyer
Forestry manager	Weather presenter	Aerial Surveyor 2.5 hours	Economic adviser and analyst
SSSI warden	Water supply coordinator		Buyer
Environmental consultant			Location analyst
Environmental impact officer			

Society	Development and Global Issues	Settlement	Travel, Tourism, Leisure and Culture
Teacher	Aid worker	Planner	Expedition leader
Social worker	Charity Officer	Housing manager	Travel agent
Youth and community worker	Civil Servant for DFID	Surveyor	Exhibitions coordinator
Emergency services manager	Armed forces	Urban regeneration officer	Leisure centre management
FE or university lecturer	HIV education officer	Local government services	Heritage site manager
Museum explainer	Human rights officer	Estate agent	Eco Tour guide
Exhibition designer and curator	International charity fundraising	Town planner	Tourist information officer
Health education campaigner	Refugee and asylum adviser	Transport officer	Visit (London) guide
Advertising executive	Economic adviser and analyst	Environmental engineer	Civil servant for DCMS (Department for culture, media, sport)
Human resources officer	United Nations terrorism prevention officer	Construction or property lawyer	Travel writer
Campaign organiser	Diplomat	Environmental consultant	TV researcher
Market research analyst	British council cultural exchange manager	Conservation officer	Holiday representative
Public policy research	VSO (Voluntary service overseas)		Cultural arts officer
Marketing			TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) teacher
PR (Public Relations) Officer			

Hurst

History
A-level

History is the study of human experience; it explains the world we live in. History teaches students to think in a combination of ways not found in any other subject. The use of sources as evidence requires critical skills of detective work, sifting bias and prejudice. Students have to understand real people whose motives and ideologies are alien to our own, and make balanced judgements about them.

Entry requirements

At least grade 7 at GCSE but there is no reason why students who have not taken History at GCSE should not take up the subject at A-level, provided they have at least a grade 7 in GCSE English Language.

Subject choices

We find that History is an A-level that complements most other subjects. It provides vital historical context to the study of English literature, philosophical arguments and political debates. Some of our finest historians have been mathematicians, scientists and creatives as they are able to look at historical interpretations and sources from new and exciting perspectives. Each view enriches our discussions.

A-level course structure - AQA examination board

Students will study the making of the USA from 1865 to 1975 and the English Civil War. They will produce a coursework essay that explores the contrasting views of historians over 100 years of history. We will track German history from the year of European revolution in 1848, to the Holocaust and closing shots of WW2 in 1945. Students will have an opportunity to choose from a variety of questions. The coursework comprises 20% of the A-level, and gives them a genuine opportunity to create an undergraduate quality piece of work in a supportive environment. The examinations test the student's knowledge of the Civil War and American history through a combination of essays and shorter questions using primary sources and contrasting historical interpretations.

Assessment structure

The A-level course has two examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth and one coursework piece.

Higher education and career opportunities

History develops skills of research and information handling; how to select relevant information to construct logical, analytical arguments and to express them concisely and clearly. These are skills which are valued in a variety of professions. Every year we send students to the top universities to study history, and history joint honours degrees. History students also go one to study law, politics, languages, international relations and many other courses at university. History is highly regarded by prospective employers in the areas of management, law, politics, the media, academia and the civil service. This subject teaches you to create coherent and persuasive arguments, analyse challenging texts, and confidently express your ideas on paper and in presentations.

Co-Curricular opportunities

History students are able to engage in a number of Co-Curricular opportunities whilst in the Sixth Form:

- Trip to Washington D.C. (biannual)
- Trip to the National Archives
- Trip to Sussex university - for lectures on the Holocaust
- A History dinner
- History Society presentations





Latin
A-level

Not only is Latin a truly fascinating subject, it commands huge respect in all higher education institutions. It is superbly set to create an inquiring, knowledgeable, hard-thinking, open-minded, balanced and reflective student. With its linguistic, cultural, historical and philosophical elements it is a broad and exquisitely enthralling and diverse subject with a huge amount to offer to the many different needs of its students.

Entry requirements

Candidates must have studied GCSE Latin and have at least a grade 7 in the subject. This is to ensure they feel comfortable with the pace of the grammar and literature at A-level.

Subject choices

Other subjects which go well with Latin are English Literature, other languages, sciences, Mathematics, History, REP and Classical Civilisation.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

Course content

This course will help candidates to acquire some understanding of the culture, politics and social life of Rome at significant periods in history, whilst studying elements of the language and literature of the Classical World. Latin is both a challenging language and an immensely rewarding one, and the whole point of learning the language is to be able to read the wealth of literature which has been preserved over the last 2000 and more years. Whilst literature is an element of Latin GCSE, it becomes the basis for the majority of the Latin learning at A-level, making lessons an exploration of stories, history and language. The best way to understand Roman culture is through its literature and those who wrote about their world, and the beauty of this course is the range of authors students get to experience; these include Ovid on love and mythology, Virgil's epic war poem and Juvenal's writings on his life and loves, Cicero providing stories of political and legal complexities at the end of the Republic, and Tacitus and Pliny presenting scandals of the rich and famous as history. It is for this reason that literature forms a major part of any Classicist's education.

Throughout the A-level course, students continue to hone their linguistic abilities through grammar exercises and practice translations as well as appreciating further the culture of the Roman world through the study of two verse and two prose set texts in Latin and other passages by the same authors in translation. In the papers themselves students will be questioned on the stories and historical backdrops alongside the language used. As such, the course is structured so that language and literature are studied throughout the two year course.

Assessment structure

The A-level is made up of four components and is assessed by written examinations taken in each, at the end of the Upper Sixth year. There is no coursework. The course structure is outlined in the table below.

Higher education and career opportunities

Latin at higher education is continued either as a language alongside other subjects or as part of a Classics degree (which can incorporate Greek and topics from the Greco-Roman culture). It is a subject very highly regarded by universities and businesses alike; it is a strong degree to take away, as it demands from students an affinity for intellectual rigour, communication, problem solving and an understanding of other cultures.

Assessment structure

Component	Level name	Duration	Marks	Percentage of total A-level
01	Unseen translation	1 hour 45 mins	100	33%
02	Comprehension of English-Latin	1 hour 45 mins	50	17%
03	Prose Literature (Cicero, Tacitus and/or Pliny)	1 hour 45 mins	75	25%
04	Verse Literature (Virgil, Juvenal and/or Ovid)	1 hour 45 mins	75	25%

Mathematics
A-level

Mathematics is a challenging but fascinating and extremely rewarding course. It will help you develop many skills including organising and presenting a structured and logical argument, thinking in an abstract way, and building confidence in mastering challenging ideas.

Entry requirements

A-level Mathematics

At least grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics.

A-level course structure - Edexcel examination board

There are three areas of Mathematics that are studied as part of the A-level course:

- Pure (two-thirds of the course)
- Mechanics (one-sixth of the course)
- Statistics (one-sixth of the course)

Assessment structure

A-level Mathematics is assessed through three two-hour papers at the end of Sixth Form. Papers 1 and 2 consist of material from Pure, while paper 3 is split evenly between Mechanics and Statistics.

Higher education and career opportunities

Degree courses in Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Finance, Medicine, and the Sciences follow naturally from an A-level qualification in Mathematics and develop many of the concepts and ideas introduced in the Sixth Form. Careers in Architecture and Finance (amongst others) will also benefit from a good qualification in Mathematics, as in addition to an appreciation of mathematical rigour, the course requires the ability to think logically and explain clearly.

Further Mathematics
A-level

Entry requirements

A-level Further Mathematics

Grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics and grade 7 in GCSE Further Mathematics (if offered by your school). Note that students from Hurst who are successful with Further Mathematics tend to have a grade 9 in GCSE Mathematics and a grade 8 or higher in GCSE Further Mathematics.

A-level course structure - Edexcel examination board

Further Mathematics, as its name implies, goes beyond the requirements of the A-level, both in depth and breadth and is only suitable for students who have shown a real aptitude and enthusiasm for Mathematics at both GCSE and Further Mathematics GCSE levels. It is only offered alongside Mathematics and is therefore taken as a fourth A-level. Pupils have three teachers (instead of two) for Mathematics and Further Mathematics, meaning content is covered at a significantly faster rate. The entire A-level Mathematics course is completed - by around Easter in Lower Sixth - before Further Mathematics content begins. Those considering highly mathematical courses at the most academically selective universities (Oxford, Cambridge and other similarly selective institutions) would benefit from studying Further Mathematics.

There are three modules studied as part of the A-level course:

- Core Pure (half of the course)
- Further Statistics 1 (one-quarter of the course)
- Decision 1 (one-quarter of the course)

Assessment structure

A-level Further Mathematics is assessed through four 90-minute papers at the end of Sixth Form. Papers 1 and 2 consist of content from Core Pure, Paper 3 consists of content from Further Statistics 1, and Paper 4 consists of content from Decision 1.

Modern Languages
A-level

Modern Languages at A-level provide the exciting opportunity to study a subject that has relevance stretching far beyond the classroom.

Over the two years students will gain a high level of fluency that will allow them to communicate both in informal and formal situations. From the study of literature and film to an in-depth understanding of the country's politics, values and history; language A-levels are truly multi-disciplinary. For this reason, Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) students have the opportunity to develop a range of highly useful skills. Communication is key, but they will also develop their ability to critically analyse, make intelligent deductions and to think on their feet. Ultimately, A-level students will come away with a qualification that is highly regarded in terms of its academic rigour, but which will also broaden their future work and travel horizons.

A-level French and Spanish - AQA examination board

Entry requirements

Grade 7 or above in the GCSE examination is normally a requirement for the study of a language at A-level. Experience has shown that students with grades lower than a grade 7 find the course very difficult.

Subject choices

Modern Languages can fit with any combination of subjects, including Maths and Sciences. However, the literary component and the focus on writing and speaking about topical issues means that an A-level in a Modern Language complements essay-based subjects such as English Literature, Geography, History, Politics, and Economics very well.

Course structure

Languages are taught in a lively and communicative way with emphasis placed on students understanding the spoken and written target language and expressing themselves confidently both orally and in writing.

A wide variety of resources are used, including audio and video resources from authentic sources on the Internet. The language-based classrooms are equipped with an interactive white board and students make the most of our online MFL subscriptions to develop their language skills. We make full use of programmes in the target language such as the weekly news.

Most teaching is conducted in the target language but English is used for the explanation of grammar points and for clarification. We are fortunate to have French and Spanish native assistants who help students prepare for their oral examinations.

We strongly advise students to spend as much time as possible in the target language country, either on their own or with one of the trips organised by the Modern Foreign Languages Department.

Assessment structure

All 4 linguistic skills are assessed as follows:

Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing

Core topic areas and grammar are assessed in a 2 hours and 30 minutes written exam. This paper makes up 50% of the final A-level mark.

Paper 2: Writing

Assessment is based on written response to questions based on one text and one film or two texts from the set list. This paper makes up a total of 20% of the final A-level.

Paper 3: Speaking

A 5–6 minute discussion based on one of the core course topics based on a stimulus card makes up the first part. This is followed by a two-minute presentation of an individual research project and a 9–10 minute discussion on the topic of the student's research project. This paper makes up a total of 30% of the final A-level.

Higher education and career opportunities

Many language students develop their love of languages even further throughout the Sixth Form, with a good number choosing to read them at university. The most popular modern foreign languages may be one option, but they also form the springboard to an interest in similar languages, or even very different ones.

A love of language can be a hobby, but realistically it leads to a life skill which attracts employers from across the spectrum. As language is key in communication, teaching is a natural career path, but having a language can also open doors to a wealth of exciting ventures, including:

- Translation/Interpretation
- Editing/Proofreading/ Publishing
- Travel/Tourism/Hospitality
- Foreign Service
- International Organisations
- Other International Careers - Languages can be combined with any other strengths and interests for the ideal job abroad.

French
A-level

Core content for French

1. Social issues and trends

Aspects of French-speaking society: current trends

- The changing nature of family (La famille en voie de changement)
- The 'cyber-society' (La « cyber-société »)
- The place of voluntary work (Le rôle du bénévolat)
- Positive features of a diverse society (Les aspects positifs d'une société diverse)
- Life for the marginalised (Quelle vie pour les marginalisés?)
- How criminals are treated (Comment on traite les criminels)

2. Political and artistic culture

Artistic culture in the French-speaking world

- A culture proud of its heritage (Une culture fière de son patrimoine)
- Contemporary francophone music (La musique francophone contemporaine)
- Cinema: the 7th art form (Cinéma: le septième art)
- Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world
- Teenagers, the right to vote and political commitment (Les ados, le droit de vote et l'engagement politique)
- Demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power? (manifestations, grèves – à qui le pouvoir?)
- Politics and immigration (La politique et l'immigration)

3. Grammar

A-level students will be expected to have studied the grammatical system and structures of the language during their course. Knowledge of the grammar and structures specified for GCSE is assumed. In the exam students will be required to use, actively and accurately, grammar and structures appropriate to the tasks set.

4. Literary texts and films

Students will study the text and film below:

Text: No et Moi (Delphine de Vigan)

Film: Au Revoir les Enfants (Louis Malle)

Spanish
A-level

Core content for Spanish

1. Social issues and trends

Aspects of Spanish-speaking society: current trends

- The changing nature of family (Los cambios en la familia)
- Cyberspace (El ciberespacio)
- Equal rights (La igualdad de los sexos)
- Multiculturalism in Hispanic society
- Immigration (La inmigración)
- Racism (El racismo)
- Integration (La conviviencia)

2. Political and artistic culture

Artistic culture in the Spanish-speaking world

- Modern-day idols (La influencia de los ídolos)
- Spanish regional identity (La identidad regional en España)
- Cultural heritage (El patrimonio cultural)
- Aspects of political life in the Hispanic world
- Today's youth, tomorrow's citizens (Jóvenes de hoy, ciudadanos del mañana)
- Monarchies and dictatorships (Monarquías y dictaduras)
- Popular movements (Movimientos populares)

3. Grammar

A-level students will be expected to have studied the grammatical system and structures of the language during their course. Knowledge of the grammar and structures specified for GCSE is assumed. In the exam students will be required to use, actively and accurately, grammar and structures appropriate to the tasks set.

4. Literary texts and films

Students will study the text and film below:

Text: Como agua para chocolate by Laura Esquivel

Film: El laberinto del fauno by Guillermo del Toro

Music
A-level

According to recent studies by the World Economic Forum, Creativity is going to be one of the most important and in-demand skills at work in the future. When business leaders across the world were surveyed, they voted creativity as the most important workplace skill to help their businesses survive and grow. This means that the study of creative subjects, like Music, is becoming even more important and relevant.

Music A-level offers an unparalleled range of skills across the course. You will develop your musical and creative skills in both performance and composition and will develop your critical analytical skills through the academic study of music. This is a course that allows you to explore specific areas in detail, really developing your understanding of several areas of music, and allowing you to explore a range of areas including Jazz, Rock and Pop, and Musical Theatre.

Entry requirements

GCSE Music is not a pre-requisite of the course, although if the course has been taken we suggest that at least a grade 7 is a good starting point. If GCSE Music has not been taken, grade 5 or above in Music Theory is a useful addition, and we would suggest working through this early in the course to support learning.

There are no performance grade requirements for starting the course, but candidates for A-level Music should be on course to be at a grade 7 performance level on an instrument or voice by the time of their recital in March of the examination year. This would normally suggest a level of grade 5 or grade 6 at the start of the course.

None of these requirements are absolutes, and we would strongly recommend a discussion with music staff to look at individual circumstances.

A-level course structure - Eduqas

This course extends the skills learnt at GCSE and includes opportunities to perform, compose and listen to a variety of music in different styles and from different cultures. Students may perform on any instrument and/ or voice and the department's team of visiting music teachers assist students preparing for this area of the examination

Assessment structure

Music allows students to play to their strengths as either a composer or as a performer. Combined, these two areas are worth 60% of the overall grade and the student will choose to submit either a longer recital worth 35% with a portfolio of compositions worth 25% or an extended composition portfolio worth 35% with a shorter recital worth 25%.

Component 1: Performing

Performance is in the form of a recital, and is assessed by a visiting examiner. There are two options:

Option A (35%): 10-12 minute recital. A performance consisting of a minimum of three pieces. At least one of these pieces must be as a soloist. The other pieces may be either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. One piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one area of study (see Component 3). At least one other piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one other, different area of study.

Option B (25%): 6-8 minute recital. A performance consisting of a minimum of two pieces either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. One piece must reflect the musical characteristics of one area of study.

Component 2: Composing

Composition is completed as a Non-Exam Assessment, and is externally assessed. There are two options, corresponding to the choice of performance options:

Option A:
4-6 minutes of composition duration (25%). Two compositions, one of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will have a choice of four set briefs, released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition.

Option B:
8-10 minutes of composition duration (35%). Three compositions, one of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will have a choice of four set briefs, released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition must reflect the musical characteristics of one different area of study (i.e. not the Western Classical Tradition) while the third composition is a free composition

Component 3: Appraising

This is assessed through a written examination of approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes, including a listening examination.

This component has three areas of study:

Area of study A:
The Western Classical Tradition (The Development of the Symphony 1750-1900) which includes two set works. One for in detailed study and the other for general study.

Then choice of one area of study from:

- Area of study B: Rock and Pop
- Area of study C: Musical Theatre
- Area of study D: Jazz

And a choice of one area of study from:

- Area of study E: Into the Twentieth Century
- Area of study F: Into the Twenty-first Century

Types of questions will be:

1. Set work analysis with a score
2. Extended responses on wider context
3. Unprepared extracts of music with and without a score
4. Comparison questions

Higher education and career opportunities

Music is recognised as a challenging and rigorous A-level by all universities. A recent poll by Eduqas found A-level students going on to study not just Music, but a range of courses including Acting, Art, Arts Journalism, Biology, Business, Chemistry, Classics, Computer Science, English and Drama, English Literature, French, Geography, Japanese, Liberal Arts, Marine Biology, Maths, Medicine, Midwifery, Modern Languages, Journalism, Occupational Therapy, Physics, Politics, Primary Education, Psychology, Sports Science, and Veterinary Medicine. University places offered included Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle, Sheffield, Surrey and York, as well as degree apprenticeships and conservatoires.

The music industry in the UK contributes £7.6 billion to the UK economy, and is currently a growth area. Careers include performing, composing, artist management, journalism, concert promotion, and a host of other related areas. However, outside of Music, A-level musicians have gone on to have successful careers in almost every field one can imagine.

Physical Education (PE)
A-level

Physical Education (PE) A-level is an academically challenging and diverse course, requiring students to use a variety of skills not found in any other stand-alone subject. Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Business and History are all applied and studied within the medium of sport, with emotional and social skill development underpinning all lessons for each individual.

A-level students will leave the course as confident leaders and lifelong learners, who have been stretched and challenged on a regular basis; able to organise, manage and communicate under pressure. They will have developed highly cognitive, independent, critical thinking skills and will have been required to use their initiative and resourcefulness on a regular basis.

Entry requirements

If GCSE PE has been studied, students should have achieved at least a grade 7. A strong aptitude for English Language and the sciences at GCSE is advantageous and the ability to critically analyse information and communicate insightful, detailed and balanced opinions in a well-written essay is vital to success. Grade 6 in Maths and English Language are recommended.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

30% Non-Examination Assessment gives students the opportunity to apply the theory to their own sporting performance (as either a coach or a practitioner) and also to analyse performance in their chosen sport.

Topics covered:

- Anatomy & Physiology
- Diet & Nutrition
- Ergogenic Aids
- Rehabilitation of Injuries
- Biomechanical Principles
- Periodisation
- Modern Technology
- Cardiovascular System
- Types of Practice
- Stages of Learning
- Group Dynamics
- Team Dynamics
- Attribution
- Transfer of Skills
- Respiratory System
- Leadership
- Stress Management
- Confidence
- Self-Efficacy
- Ethics and Deviance
- Commercialisation

Assessment structure

Examination

Component 1: 30%

Physiological Factors Affecting Performance

Component 2: 20%

Psychological Factors Affecting Performance

Component 3: 20%

Socio-cultural and Contemporary Issues

Non Examination Assessment

One practical performance, as a performer in an activity (team or individual) from the NEA OCR specified list: 15%

One Evaluation and Analysis of Performance for Improvement (EAPI) task: 15%

One Performance Analysis task: 15%

Higher education and career opportunities

A-level Physical Education can lead on to a large variety of university courses such as:

- Sport and Exercise Science
- Sports Coaching, Fitness and Rehabilitation
- Sport Management and Coaching

It can also lead on to careers in Physiotherapy, Teaching, Coaching, Diet and Fitness instructing and many more.

Physics
A-level

Physics is the science that seeks to explain everything from the smallest subatomic particles to the largest structures in the Universe. How can physicists use radioactive particles to diagnose disease? Why do satellites stay in orbit around Earth? What are the fundamental building blocks of matter? Physics provides the tools to answer these questions and many more.

A-level Physics is a challenging and rewarding course that combines theory, experimentation and mathematical reasoning. Students develop a deep understanding of the laws that govern matter, energy, forces and motion, while building the analytical and problem-solving skills needed to tackle complex real-world challenges. Physics lies at the heart of technological innovation, helping to drive advances in medicine, communications, computing, energy production and space exploration.

Entry requirements

To be successful, students will need at least GCSE grade 7 in Physics, grade 7 in another Science subject and grade 7 in Mathematics.

Those candidates who have studied Double Award Science will have some preparatory work to do but should be successful if they obtain two grade 7s.

A-level course structure - OCR examination board

This is an exciting course, offering great scope for innovative ideas in Physics and provides continuity from GCSE Physics and Double Award Science.

The course offers all the traditional elements of mainstream Physics and is supported by newly published textbooks and online resources designed and written specifically for the specification.

The course is split into six areas:

Module 1
Development of practical skills in Physics

Module 2
Foundations of Physics

- Physical quantities and units
- Making measurements and analysing data
- Nature of quantities

Module 3
Forces and Motion

- Motion
- Forces in action
- Work, energy and power
- Materials
- Newton's laws of motion and momentum

Module 4
Electrons, waves and photons

- Charge and current
- Energy, power and resistance
- Electrical circuits
- Waves
- Quantum physics

Module 5
Newtonian world and astrophysics

- Thermal physics
- Circular motion
- Oscillations
- Gravitational fields
- Astrophysics and cosmology

Module 6
Particles and medical physics

- Capacitors
- Electric fields
- Electromagnetism
- Nuclear and particle physics
- Medical imaging

Assessment structure

This will consist of three exams.

Practical Assessment: All students will take a minimum of 12 practicals across the A-level course covering a common core list of apparatus and technique usage. There will also be questions in the exam papers that will test students' knowledge and understanding of their practical work.

Alongside their A-level grade based on their exams a 'pass' or 'fail' grade will be given for practical work in lessons.

Higher education and career opportunities

Physics is highly regarded by universities and employers because of the logical, mathematical and analytical skills it develops. Students often progress to degrees in Physics, Engineering, Mathematics, Computer Science, Natural Sciences and related disciplines, although it also complements a wide range of other pathways.

The ability to analyse data, solve unfamiliar problems and think quantitatively makes Physics a valuable qualification for careers in areas such as engineering, technology, finance, research, healthcare, education and many other professional fields. Physicists can do anything!

Politics
A-level

A-level Politics explores the political systems, behaviours and ideas in the UK and the USA. This course will help candidates develop a critical awareness of the nature of politics and the relationships between the different individuals and institutions.

Politics is constantly changing. As a result it is challenging, but rewards an interest in current affairs, on a local, national and global scale.

Entry requirements

You should have an interest in Politics and a willingness to work hard. The fundamental skills of this rigorous humanities subject are close reading, complex argumentative writing and deep thought. The essay-based nature of the subject means we recommend a grade 7 in English Language GCSE, plus at least a grade 7 from History, Geography or Religious Studies (or equivalent).

Subject choices

Politics is studied in a variety of A-level combinations. The essay writing, information analysis and discursive nature of the course means it is often studied alongside History, English Literature, Religious Studies (Philosophy), Classical Civilisation, Economics, and Geography.

A-level course structure - EDEXCEL examination board

Three themes are studied throughout the A-level, with three 2-hour examinations at the end of the course.

1. UK Politics

This paper the fundamentals of Politics in the UK. Students will study participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour, and the role of the media. Students will also study key ideologies in UK Politics – Conservativism, Liberalism and Socialism.

2. UK Government

This topic concerns how the UK is run. Students study the UK constitution, the PM and Cabinet, and the Houses of Parliament. In addition, students will study an additional ideology, nationalism.

3. US Politics

Students will study politics in the USA as a comparison. This will include the institutions of Congress, the President and the Supreme Court, whilst also addressing pressing issues in US Politics such as civil rights and participation.

Assessment structure

There will be three 2-hour examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth year which will test your knowledge and understanding, ability to analyse political information and evaluative skills. There is no coursework.

Higher education and career opportunities

Politics A-level develops a wide range of skills, from the interpretation of political information, to the ability to critically discuss political ideas. Politics is seen by universities as a rigorous, academic subject, and lends itself to a variety of courses in higher education. At university, Politics can be studied on its own or as part of a joint honours degree with other subjects (for example, Politics, Philosophy and Economics).

Being a student of Politics does not mean you have to become a politician (though many have done). Examples of potential career paths include journalism, business, banking, marketing, law, and even teaching!

Psychology
A-level

Through the scientific study of a variety of fascinating psychological theories and research, students will develop an understanding of human behaviour. These are then applied to cultural, social and contemporary issues including mental illness, offending, and childhood attachment. The topics covered also involve learning about a broad range of research methods used in the investigation of psychological issues and equip students with extensive research skills including the ability to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data.

Entry requirements

The minimum GCSE requirements for Psychology are: Grade 7s in English Language and Science (Double Award Science or Biology) and a grade 6 in Mathematics. There is an emphasis on essay writing and so this is a skill essential to success in the examinations. In addition, there is a strong biological component and so enjoyment of this subject is beneficial. A minimum of 10% of the material assessed is mathematical in nature.

A-level course structure - AQA examination board

The course is assessed at the end of the Upper Sixth year. The main subject content for the course is shown below and completed, more or less, in this order:

1. Social influence
2. Memory
3. Attachment
4. Clinical Psychology
5. Biopsychology
6. Research methods
7. Approaches in Psychology
8. Issues and Debates in Psychology
9. Cognition and development
10. Schizophrenia
11. Forensic Psychology

Assessment structure

Paper 1 - Introductory Topics in Psychology

Covering: Social, Memory, Attachment, Clinical Psychology, and some Research Methods.

Exam: 2 hours
worth 96 marks in total
33.3% of A-level

The questions on this paper are a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and extended writing (24 marks)

Paper 2 - Psychology in Context

Covering: Approaches, Biopsychology and Research Methods.

Exam: 2 hours
worth 96 marks in total
33.3% of A-level

The questions on this paper are a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and extended writing, with a greater emphasis on research methods.

Paper 3 - Issues and Options in Psychology

Covering: Issues and Debates, Cognition and Development, Schizophrenia, and Forensic Psychology.

Exam: 2 hours
worth 96 marks in total
33.3% of A-level

The questions on this paper are a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and extended writing, as well as research methods. As this is the third paper, and a synoptic paper, it is expected students will have developed their analytical skills to a higher level.

Higher education and career opportunities

Psychology is highly regarded by universities and is an excellent preparation for a wide range of undergraduate and graduate degree courses.

The A-level provides a valuable grounding for a Psychology degree. The human skills developed have a myriad of practical applications, including clinical psychology, sports or health psychology, working in HR, the police, prison services, or education. It is also a useful basis for a law conversion course.

For further, more detailed information, visit the British Psychology website at www.bps.org.uk

To gain a genuine insight into what psychology is about, read 'Opening Skinners Box' by Lauren Slater. This is a highly readable compilation of some of psychology's most intriguing research.

Religious Studies
A-level

Religious Studies is a course for those with a curious, enquiring mind. It covers many big questions which have challenged humankind over thousands of years: Is there a God? What's the right thing to do? How should we relate to people with different beliefs to ours? What should we do about poverty? Do we have free will? What is goodness? How can we make sense of suffering? Why is there something rather than nothing?

Students should quickly realise that these question don't have easy answers. Therefore, through the course, they will use philosophical and theological methods to assess various responses to these questions. The idea of God, and whether He exists or not, has been very important for forming cultures and moral codes. How He has been conceived is therefore important in understanding cultures of the past and present. More in depth questions, such as 'How can we know anything about God?', 'Is what is right or wrong dependent on culture and history?' and 'What kind of language can we use to make sense of religion and ethics?' are explored with reference to a wide range of philosophers and theologians.

Through the course:

- Students will gain a deep understanding of a variety of different approaches to fundamental questions and study a number of different philosophers and traditions.
- Develop the ability to construct their own arguments based on evidence and reasoning.
- Evaluate diverse arguments and theories in relation to their own understanding and development in religious and ethical thought.
- Apply ethical theories to a range of important contemporary problems.
- Interpret and evaluate religious concepts, ideas and arguments.

Entry requirements

Students do not need to have a GCSE in Religious Studies (although they should be prepared to catch-up on a few key ideas if they do not). They should have at least a grade 7 in English Language or History if they are new to the subject. Those with a GCSE in Religious Studies should have a grade 7 or above. A willingness to work hard, develop strong note taking skills and persevere with tough reading, is important.

A-level course structure - EDUQAS examination board

Students will study three components; Christianity, Philosophy of Religion and Religion and Ethics, which each carry equal weight. Together these provide an excellent grounding and a diverse range of approaches to the questions raised by analytical philosophy and secular ethical theories, to historical, cultural and textual studies.

Component 1: A Study of Religion

Option A: Christianity

Students will explore the nature of religious texts, examining the origins of the Bible and how it is used and interpreted in different ways. Jesus will be examined as a historical and religious figure, and the authenticity of key events like his resurrection will be explored. Key Christian concepts will be explored including the nature of God (e.g. 'Is God male?') and the origin of moral values. The development of Christian thought will be examined particularly in relation to the development of scientific knowledge, multiculturalism and the secularisation of British society. Key practices will also be explored, notably Christian approaches to poverty, injustice and worship.

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Students will explore arguments for the existence of God, challenges to the idea of God from evil, psychology, and atheism, the phenomena of religious experiences, their plausibility and their impact on religious life, and the nature and problems with language used to talk about God.

Component 3: Religion

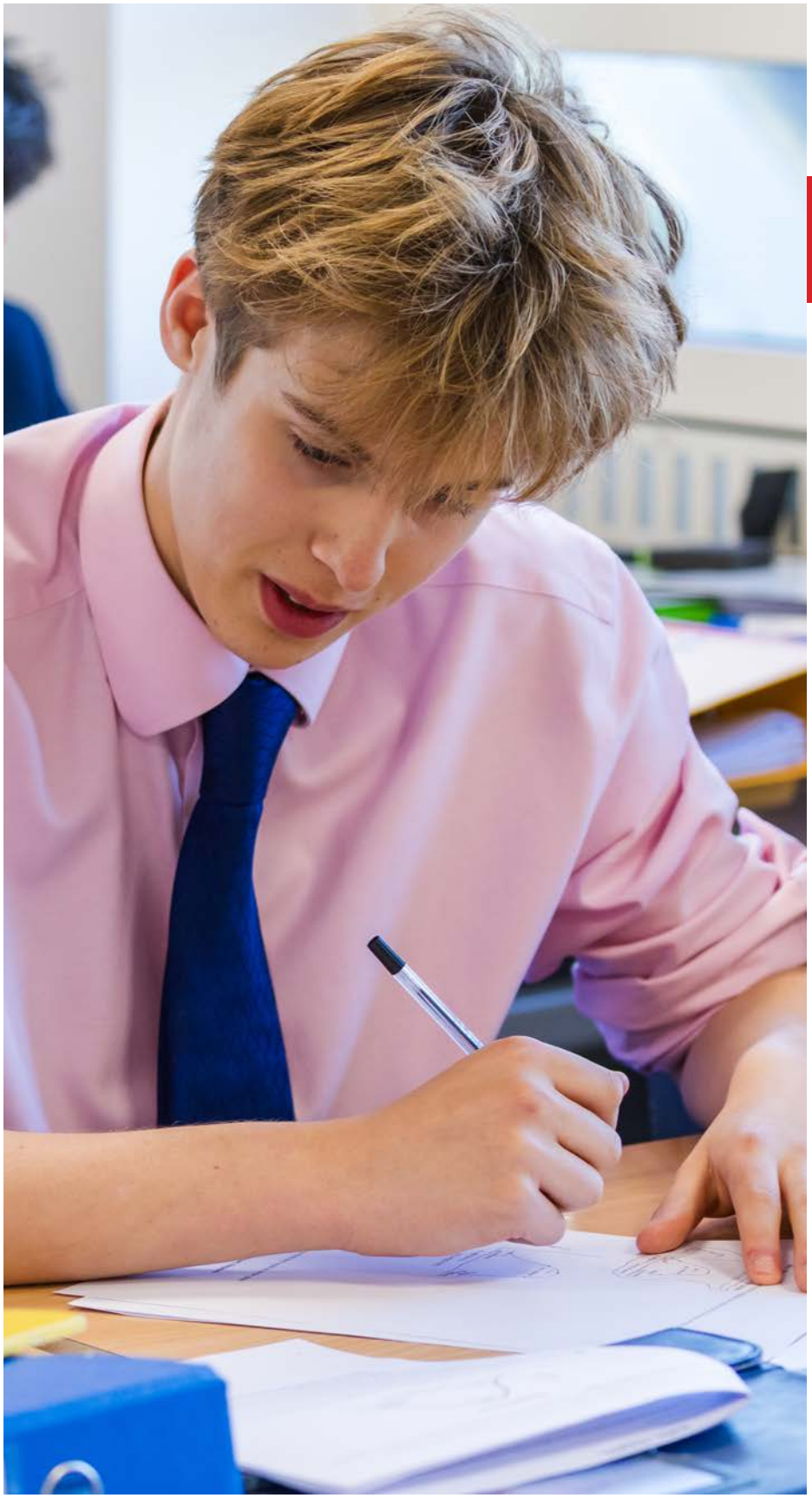
Students will study a variety of ethical theories from consequentialist theories such as Utilitarianism to duty based approaches such as Natural Law. These will be applied to a variety of issues including nuclear weapons, euthanasia, immigration and sexual relationships. They will examine the nature of morality and whether it is relative to society or has any meaning beyond the individual. The question of freedom and its implications for moral responsibility will also be examined.

Assessment structure

Each component is assessed by a 2 hour examination in which students answer two questions. There is no coursework component.

Higher education and career opportunities

An A-level in Religious Studies provides university applicants with several desirable skills, in particular the ability to think critically and to synthesise and analyse arguments. The subject would provide an obvious grounding for those wishing to study Philosophy or Theology at degree level as well as providing essential transferable skills to other subjects such as Law, Archaeology and Anthropology. One does not have to harbour a desire to enter the priesthood, a monastery or a convent in order to take up Religious Studies at A-level. Rather, the subject may lead to a variety of vocations and careers. For instance, graduates in Theology or Philosophy have pursued careers in areas as diverse as law, business, journalism, archaeology, the military and education.



Sociology
A-level

A-level Sociology offers students the opportunity to develop the essential knowledge and understanding of central aspects of sociological thought and methods. It is designed to encourage students to demonstrate the application of a range of skills and consider the integration of sociological themes and how and why societies have changed over time through the lenses of:

- Socialisation, culture and identity
- Social differentiation, power and stratification

Sociology helps students develop a range of skills, an academic study of social behaviour and societal constructs. It is a social science that uses various methods of empirical investigation and critical analysis based on key theories and thinkers to develop a body of knowledge about social order, social disorder and social change.

Students are encouraged to analyse, debate and challenge ideas and theories presented to them through a range of critical thinking methods. Engagement with the news and current affairs is essential.

Entry requirements

The essay based nature of the subject requires you to have at least a grade 6 in English Language GCSE and ideally a grade 7 in a humanities subject. You should have an interest in people, culture and current affairs. You should also be willing to read around the subject to improve your wider knowledge of the key concepts and aspects of the course.

Assessment structure

Exams	Title of exam	Time	Questions	Component of A-level
Paper 1	Education with Theory and Methods 4.1	2 hour written exam 80 marks	Education: Short answer questions (4 marks, 6 marks) and extended writing (10 marks and 30 marks), 50 marks in total Methods in Context: extended writing, 20 marks Theory and Methods: extended writing, 10 marks	33.3% of A-level
Paper 2	Topics in Sociology 4.2 Families and Households and Globalisation	2 hour written exam 80 marks	Section A: extended writing (10, 10 and 20 mark essays), 40 marks in total Section B: extended writing (10, 10 and 20 mark essays). 40 marks in total	33.3% of A-level
Paper 2	Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods 4.3	2 hour written exam 80 marks	Crime and Deviance: short answer (4 marks, 6 marks) and extended writing (10 and 30 marks), 50 marks in total Theory and Methods: extended writing, (10 marks and 20 marks), 30 marks in total	33.3% of A-level

A-level course structure - AQA examination board

The course consists of three sections which are examined by three written exams of 2 hours in length. There is no coursework.

The sections studied by students are:

- Sociological Methods
- Theories
- Education
- Crime and Deviance
- Families and Households
- Global Development

Higher education and career opportunities

There are a range of options to study Sociology at university, and many universities also offer it as a combined course e.g. Sociology and Criminology, Sociology and Law, Sociology and Business Management etc. We always have a high percentage of the cohort go on to further Sociology studies at university.

Sociology provides students with a wide variety of skills and topic areas to study, so careers based primarily on Sociology as a degree choice include careers and jobs within:

- Civil Service
- Politics
- Law
- Police
- Criminal Justice System
- Advice Worker
- Community development worker
- Family support worker
- Teacher
- International aid/development worker
- Social Researcher
- Social Worker
- Youth Worker

There are also a number of other career options where Sociology is seen as promoting and valuing a range of useful skills, such as journalism, marketing, and public and private services.

Speakers and lectures

The department hosts a range of external speakers to support the students in their A-level studies as well as attending local external lectures. Recently, these have included:

- Sheldon Thomas - Seminar on Gangs and County Lines
- Stuart Lawrence (brother of Stephen Lawrence) - Lecture on Black Lives Matter and institutional racism
- Dr. Hannah Mason-Bish (Senior lecturer at Sussex University) - Criminology Lecture (women and violent crimes)
- Trip to the Royal Courts of Justice
- Trip to the annual Sociology in Action seminar and keynote speaker series

BTEC Sport

Level 3 National Diploma (equivalent to 2 A-levels)

The BTEC Sport course is for students wishing to study sport related degrees at university and/or wishing to pursue a career in the sports industry.

The main aspects of the course include physiology, training and fitness, anatomy and practical sport.

Students are expected to be committed to improving their coaching skills, fitness and practical performance and sports science knowledge.

The qualification has been designed as part of a two-year programme, and is normally taken in conjunction with a single A-level.

The course is equivalent to two A-levels.

Entry requirements

The College's entry requirements will be sufficient for this course. This will mean that students are equipped with reasonable written communication skills before joining. Ideally you would also have at least a grade 6 at GCSE PE and/or sciences.

Course structure - Pearson examination board

Students will learn a range of topics across nine units of work, studying six mandatory units:

- Unit 1: Anatomy and Physiology
- Unit 2: Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Sport and Well-being
- Unit 3: Professional Development in the Sports Industry
- Unit 4: Sports Leadership
- Unit 22: Investigating Business in the Sport and Active Leisure Industry
- Unit 23: Skill Acquisition in Sport.

Qualification

BTEC Sport Level 3 National Diploma

Assessment structure

Learners are assessed through externally assessed units in the form of examination and set tasks. Internally assessed units include case studies, the student's own research, project work and the demonstration of practical and technical skills.

Higher education and career opportunities

Learners who have completed this qualification may progress to further learning at university level with an A-level alongside.

The qualification carries UCAS points and is recognised by higher education providers as meeting, or contributing to, admission requirements for many relevant courses.

Learners can progress to higher education on full degree single or combined courses, for example:

- BA (Hons) in Sports Development and Management
- BSc (Hons) in Sports Management
- BSc (Hons) Sports Business Management
- BSc (Hons) Sport and Leisure Management
- BSc (Hons) Sports Science (Outdoor Activities)
- BSc (Hons) in Exercise, Health and Fitness
- BSc (Hons) in Sport and Exercise Psychology

BTEC Sport

Level 3 National Extended Certificate (equivalent to 1 A-level)

The BTEC Sport course is for students wishing to study sport related degrees at university and/or wishing to pursue a career in the sports industry.

The main aspects of the course include physiology, training and fitness, anatomy and practical sport.

Students are expected to be committed to improving their coaching skills, fitness and practical performance and sports science knowledge.

The qualification has been designed as part of a two-year programme, and is normally taken in conjunction with a single A-level.

The course is equivalent to one A-level.

Entry requirements

The College's entry requirements will be sufficient for this course. This will mean that students are equipped with reasonable written communication skills before joining. Ideally you would also have at least a grade 6 at GCSE PE and/or sciences.

Course structure - Pearson examination board

Students will learn a range of topics across nine units of work, studying six mandatory units:

- Unit 1: Anatomy and Physiology
- Unit 2: Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Sport and Well-being
- Unit 3: Professional Development in the Sports Industry
- Unit 7: Practical Sport Performance

Qualification

BTEC Sport Level 3 Extended Certificate

Assessment structure

Learners are assessed through externally assessed units in the form of examination and set tasks. Internally assessed units include case studies, the student's own research, project work and the demonstration of practical and technical skills.

Mandatory content (50%)
External assessment (50%)

Higher education and career opportunities

Learners who have completed this qualification may progress to further learning at university level with an A-level alongside.

The qualification carries UCAS points and is recognised by higher education providers as meeting, or contributing to, admission requirements for many relevant courses.

Learners can progress to higher education on full degree single or combined courses, for example:

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- BSc (Hons) in Exercise, Health and Fitness
- BSc (Hons) in Sport and Exercise Psychology

Hurst

BTEC Business

Level 3 National Diploma (equivalent to 2 A-levels)

The BTEC Business is for students wishing to study business-related degrees at university and/or pursue a career in business, management or enterprise.

The main aspects of the course include marketing, finance, international business, management, recruitment and entrepreneurship, alongside the study of how real businesses operate and make decisions.

Students are expected to be committed to developing their business knowledge, research, analytical, communication and problem-solving skills, and to applying their learning to real organisations and business situations.

The qualification has been designed as part of a two-year programme and combines internally assessed assignments with externally assessed units.

The National Diploma is equivalent in size to two A-levels and would normally be taken alongside one A-level. Students can also choose the National Extended Certificate, which is equivalent in size to one A-level and can be studied alongside other A-level subjects.

Entry requirements

The College's entry requirements will be sufficient for this course. This will mean that students are equipped with reasonable written communication and numerical skills before joining. Ideally, you would also have at least a GCSE grade 6 in English Language and/or grade 6 in Maths.

Course structure - Pearson examination board

Students complete 8 units. These units provide opportunities to investigate real businesses, devise marketing campaigns, analyse financial performance, manage projects and events, explore international markets and develop and pitch an original business idea.

At Hurst, students will study:

- Unit 1: Exploring Business
- Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign
- Unit 3: Personal and Business Finance
- Unit 4: Managing an Event
- Unit 5: International Business
- Unit 6: Principles of Management
- Unit 8: Recruitment and Selection Process
- Unit 19: Pitching for a New Business

Qualification

BTEC Level 3 National Diploma in Business – equivalent to two A-levels

Assessment structure

BTEC Business combines coursework-style assignments with externally assessed work rather than relying solely on final examinations.

Internally assessed units allow students to undertake research, analyse real organisations, produce professional reports and presentations and apply their learning to realistic business scenarios. Externally assessed units are set and marked by Pearson. This combination rewards students who can apply their knowledge as well as demonstrate strong examination and independent study skills.

Mandatory content accounts for (83%)

External assessment (45%)

Higher education and career opportunities

BTEC Business provides an established route into university, higher and degree apprenticeships, employment or entrepreneurship. Pearson specifically designed the Diploma to support progression to higher education courses in business, while the Extended Certificate is intended to be combined with A-levels or other Level 3 qualifications and can support progression to a wide range of university courses.

Possible degree pathways include Business Management, International Business, Marketing, Accounting and Finance, Human Resource Management, Entrepreneurship, Events Management and related business disciplines.

Both qualifications attract UCAS Tariff points. For context, an Extended Certificate ranges from 16 points at Pass to 56 at D*, while the two A-level-sized Diploma ranges from 32 points at PP to 112 at D*D*.

- BA (Hons) Business Administration
- BA (Hons) Business Management
- BSc (Hons) International Business
- BA (Hons) Marketing
- BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance
- BA (Hons) Human Resource Management
- BA (Hons) Entrepreneurship
- BA (Hons) Events Management
- BSc (Hons) Business and Management

BTEC Business

Level 3 National Extended Certificate (equivalent to 1 A-level)

The BTEC Business is for students wishing to study business-related degrees at university and/or pursue a career in business, management or enterprise.

The main aspects of the course include marketing, finance, international business, management, recruitment and entrepreneurship, alongside the study of how real businesses operate and make decisions.

Students are expected to be committed to developing their business knowledge, research, analytical, communication and problem-solving skills, and to applying their learning to real organisations and business situations.

The qualification has been designed as part of a two-year programme and combines internally assessed assignments with externally assessed units.

The National Extended Certificate is equivalent to one A-level and can be studied alongside other A-level subjects.

Entry requirements

Students should have an interest in the world of business and be prepared to work independently and consistently throughout the course.

Strong written communication, numeracy, organisation and time-management skills are important, as students will undertake financial calculations, extended written assignments, research and externally assessed work. Ideally, you would have at least a GCSE grade 6 in English Language and/or grade 6 in Maths.

Course structure - Pearson examination board

Students complete 4 units. These units provide opportunities to investigate real businesses, devise marketing campaigns, and analyse financial performance.

At Hurst, students will study:

- Unit 1: Exploring Business
- Unit 2: Developing a Marketing Campaign
- Unit 3: Personal and Business Finance
- Unit 8: Recruitment and Selection Process

Mandatory content makes up (83%)

External assessment is (58%)

Qualification

BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Business – equivalent to one A-level

Higher education and career opportunities

BTEC Business provides an established route into university, higher and degree apprenticeships, employment or entrepreneurship. Pearson specifically designed the Diploma to support progression to higher education courses in business, while the Extended Certificate is intended to be combined with A-levels or other Level 3 qualifications and can support progression to a wide range of university courses.

Possible degree pathways include Business Management, International Business, Marketing, Accounting and Finance, Human Resource Management, Entrepreneurship, Events Management and related business disciplines.

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- BA (Hons) Business Administration
- BA (Hons) Business Management
- BSc (Hons) International Business
- BA (Hons) Marketing
- BSc (Hons) Accounting and Finance
- BA (Hons) Human Resource Management
- BA (Hons) Entrepreneurship
- BA (Hons) Events Management
- BSc (Hons) Business and Management

Staff contacts
for Sixth Formers

For general academic enquiries, please contact Deputy Head (Academic) Dr Graham Moir by email at graham.moir@hppc.co.uk. For subject specific enquiries, please contact the relevant person from the list below.

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