

**Clifton
High
School**



SIXTH FORM

A LEVEL OPTIONS BOOKLET 2024



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A LEVEL OPTIONS

OUR A LEVEL OFFERING

At Clifton High School, we offer a broad curriculum including twenty-seven A level subjects alongside ancillary courses such as Core Mathematics and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). Most students will select three subjects to study at A level, as well as one or more ancillary course, although some may also wish to study a fourth A level subject. In addition, every student will have a timetabled 'Above and Beyond' lesson each fortnight, in which they are encouraged to complete independent work beyond their A level courses, to extend their knowledge, understanding and skill set. More information about our bespoke 'Above and Beyond' programme and our ancillary courses is included in this booklet.

The Clifton High School curriculum offers our students a level of flexibility and choice that is unrivalled by other schools, and we pride ourselves on the quality of careers and futures guidance provided to students as they prepare for the move into Sixth Form. Career pathways and individuals' goals and aspirations are explored both in Health and Well-being lessons in Years 10 and 11, as well as through tailored careers events organised by Mr Richard Parry, our Head of Higher Education and Careers. Tutors and Heads of Department provide advice to pupils following their mock GCSE examinations, and the Sixth Form Team offers face-to-face meetings with pupils and their parents to discuss their choices and provide further information about Sixth Form life. We are more than happy to advise prospective students too, and a discussion of intended A level options forms part of our interview process.

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR SUBJECTS

In selecting their A level options, students should think about what they may wish to study when they leave School, to ensure that they choose any subjects deemed relevant to certain undergraduate courses. Some university courses often require applicants to have studied a specific subject prior to entry. Therefore, if students have a clear idea of a degree they would like to study, it is good practice to research any entry requirements before selecting A level courses. However, we appreciate that many students may not yet have made firm decisions about their futures, so we also advise students to maintain academic breadth wherever possible, to play to their strengths and to consider their enjoyment of A level study.

To provide a solid foundation for A level study, we recommend that students achieve at least a Grade 6 at GCSE in any subject with which they wish to continue. In some subjects, a Grade 7 may be more suitable to facilitate positive outcomes at A level, and the Sixth Form team will be happy to provide tailored advice on this matter.

Whatever their preferred path, our staff are always on hand to provide advice to both current and prospective students. We like our students to be fully prepared for Sixth Form study, confident that they will enjoy their A level courses and equipped with a sense of purpose and direction.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Above and Beyond is a programme for all Year 12 students, designed to harness their intellectual curiosity and expand their academic horizons. They are expected to dedicate 1-2 hours a week to exploring their A level subjects beyond what is taught in the classroom and they are given freedom in how they choose to do this. To help inspire them, each department in the School has provided suggestions for how Year 12 students can discover more about their A level subjects, going above what is required on the syllabus. These include recommendations for further reading, academic articles, lectures they can attend, fascinating podcasts, local exhibitions and more.

Every fortnight students record what they have been doing for their 'Above and Beyond' work and they are given time to write their reflections: How has it impacted them? What have they taken away from the experience? What did they like or dislike about that piece of research? Not only will these self-reflections help them decide what to study in the future, the notes they take provide an excellent resource when they come to write compelling

applications and personal statements in Year 13. The freedom the programme affords our students encourages them to develop their independent study skills, whilst the rich experiences they accumulate over the course of the year stand them in the best possible stead for securing a place on their chosen pathway for the future, whatever that might be.

SUBMITTING CHOICES

Once pupils have read through this booklet, we hope a strong initial idea has been formed for which subjects would like to be studied at A level. We encourage pupils to discuss their plans with Subject Teachers, Personal Tutors, our Head of Higher Education and Careers and their parents to ensure comprehensive and well-rounded guidance has been received, allowing for the most informed decision to be made.

Internal Applications

The options form for internal pupils will become live on Operoo straight after the Year 11 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 24th January and needs to be completed by Wednesday 31st January 2024.

External Applicants

Our Admissions Team will send external applicants an electronic options form which needs to be completed as early as possible to maximise the opportunity for preferred subject choices to be granted. The School can only guarantee to accommodate choices if the deadline of Monday 5th February 2024 is met.

After the above dates have passed, it is possible for pupils to change their mind about their choices, as long as the combinations fit into the option blocks that will have since been determined.

If any families have any further questions about our Sixth Form offering, or choosing which subject to study, please do not hesitate to contact our Admissions Department, or a member of the Sixth Form Leadership Team.

admissions@cliftonhigh.co.uk | 0117 933 9087 | www.cliftonhigh.co.uk

THE SIXTH FORM LEADERSHIP TEAM



Miss Katherine Rich,
Head of Sixth Form



Ms Lucy Horton,
Deputy Head of
Sixth Form



Mr Richard Parry,
Head of Higher
Education & Careers

ART & DESIGN: FINE ART

Head of Department: Mr Paul Ayers

Introduction

A level Fine Art is ideal for individuals who want to develop their intellectual and imaginative skills and those who wish to express themselves in a varying ways. The course will help students to extend their thinking by studying the work of artists and designers, both contemporary and traditional.

Course Content

This course will enable students to develop their artistic skills by using a wide range of media such as drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, printmaking, animation, digital media and art history. Opportunities include visiting artist workshops led by experts in their field and study trips to the London galleries. Students will have an opportunity to exhibit their work in public exhibitions such as the Royal Academy's Young Artist Summer Show and The West Bristol Arts Trail. There is a designated Sixth Form Art Studio and an independent study space where students can continue working on their projects during study periods.

Assessment for this course is broken into two components, as detailed.

Component 1: Personal Investigation (60% of A level)



A personally devised practical project with a related written study of at least 1,000 words about artists that relate to the chosen practical theme. This is a non-examination assessment, internally assessed and externally moderated.

Component 2: Externally Set Task (40% of A level)

An early release paper issued on 1st February providing students with a number of themes. A response must be based on one of these options and a final outcome produced in a 15-hour practical examination (over 3 days).

Why Choose Fine Art A level?

The department has close links with local institutions that offer post-A level art and design courses, such as Weston College and Bristol School of Art. Students who take this course may go on to a one year foundation diploma in Art and Design and/or may choose to take a BA (Hons) degree in subjects such as Fine Art, Graphic Design, Fashion Design, Illustration, Animation, Stage Design and Product Design to name but a few. Students who have taken this course may go on to pursue careers in art education, museums, galleries or arts administration, among other options.

[See the OCR Art and Design: Fine Art \(H601\) Specification here](#)

BIOLOGY

Head of Department: Ms Samantha Strickland

Introduction

In this captivating field of study, students will cover topics that explore the very essence of life itself. From the intricacies of cellular biology to the mysteries of genetics, studying A level Biology will introduce you to the mechanisms that govern all living organisms, as well as some key differences that lead to the impressive diversity of life on Earth. Students will also have the chance to investigate biological phenomena first hand, analyse data and draw meaningful conclusions from our diverse range of practical experiments – a crucial aspect of scientific exploration.

Course Content

The AQA A level Biology course is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of biology, encompassing a wide range of topics. These topics are assessed across 3 papers:

Paper 1 assesses the following topics, covered in Year 12:

- Biological molecules
- Cells
- How organisms exchange substances with their environment
- Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms

Paper 2 assesses the following topics, covered in Year 13:

- Energy transfers in and between organisms
- Responding to changes in the internal and external environment
- Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
- The control of gene expression

Paper 3 assesses content from across all topics and includes a synoptic essay question

that requires students to draw upon their understanding of biology as a whole.

In addition to these three main components, the course includes a practical element throughout. Practical skills are developed and assessed, both in written examinations and through a separate endorsement. This practical endorsement, awarded separately from the A level grade, recognises students' competency in a range of practical techniques and your ability to plan and execute experiments accurately.

Why Choose Biology A level?

To thrive in A level Biology, students should possess a strong foundation in chemistry, mathematics and a keen interest in the natural world.

The course serves as a springboard to various academic and career pathways. For those aspiring to pursue higher education, it provides an excellent foundation for degrees in Biology, Medicine, Biochemistry, Genetics, and Environmental Science, among others. Moreover, it opens doors to careers in healthcare, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, research, and conservation. With the global demand for biologists and life scientists ever-increasing, A level Biology not only fosters intellectual growth but also equips students with the knowledge and skills to make meaningful contributions to our understanding of life and the environment, making it a rewarding choice for those with a passion for the biological sciences.



[See the AQA A level Biology \(7402\) Specification here](#)

BUSINESS

Head of Department: Mrs Gemma Denning

Introduction

In an ever changing world and with a desire to become a proactive, curious and informed individual in our global community Business offers the skills and understanding required to do so. Business is a dynamic and current subject that will allow students to synthesise information gathered from their daily lives, organising it to gain a holistic understanding of the world in which they live and will one day work. This course provides both theoretical and practical exposure to the world of Business and is a qualification that provides a broad range of future opportunities for students who study it.

Course Content

Module 1: Activities Involved in Starting a Business

This module will look at entrepreneurs, thinking of a business idea, market research, raising finance, locating the business, employing workers and looking at revenues and costs to hopefully make a profit.

Module 2: Managing a Business

This module will cover marketing, finance, operations and human resources. The theory taken from the specification is supported by real life business examples, many of which the students will have knowledge of before they start the course. The course analyses how these firms adapt to the changing business world. To help classroom knowledge trips and visiting speakers are organised to bring to life the opportunities that Business can afford. This could be a small start-up pottery company

from Wales or a trip to the Harry Potter studios to see their marketing campaigns in action. It is important that students taking this course have an interest in business issues, keeping abreast of current affairs will form the basis for many in-class discussions. It is through these that students develop their crucial analysis and evaluation skills.

Module 3: Strategies for Success

In this module, students will develop their knowledge and understanding around strategies that can be used within the functional areas studied in Module 2 and how these will enable businesses to compete effectively and gain advantages over their rivals.

Module 4: The Business

This module will cover technological change, the UK and world economy and its influence on businesses and the changing social environment that businesses work in. In addition, the module will cover the new emerging markets, such as China, India and Russia. Basic mathematical skills are required for students enrolling onto this course as there is an element of financial calculation throughout both the years of study and they should be confident essay writers as the examination questions will require clearly structured, well thought out, justified responses.

Why Choose Business A level?

Business will complement a range of other subjects and forms a good basis for entry into higher education for almost all areas of study.



[See the AQA A level Business \(7132\) Specification here](#)

CHEMISTRY

Head of Department: Mr Harry De Cothi

Introduction

Chemistry is the study of the nature, composition and properties of matter. Chemists are responsible for the development and production of so many of the materials we take for granted in our everyday lives. Society is facing many challenges: energy consumption, food and water supply, global warming and antibiotic resistance. Chemists will play an essential role in solving these through research and collaboration.

Course Content

Chemistry A level aims to offer students a variety of concepts, covering a diverse array of subjects. These subjects are evaluated through three written examination papers sat at the end of Year 13. These papers are outlined as follows.

Paper 1: Inorganic and Physical Chemistry

This includes, but is not limited to; Atomic structure, Bonding, Oxidation, reduction and redox equations, Thermodynamics, Rate equations, Periodicity, Transition Metals.

Paper 2: Organic and Physical Chemistry

This includes, but is not limited to; Alkanes, Halogenoalkanes, Aromatic chemistry, Polymers

These are followed by Paper 3, which covers the entirety of the course, containing structured and extended response questions. All papers will cover theory and practical skills.

Why Choose Chemistry A level?

Chemistry, with its uniquely wide span within the scientific spectrum, is an excellent subject to develop intellect. Students acquire not only a powerful battery of analytical skills for problem solving, but also the ability to analyse critically and to ask the pertinent questions.

In recent years, Chemistry has been a popular A level choice and our course has delivered admirable results. Looking ahead to higher education, A level Chemistry is essential if students are considering medicine, dentistry or veterinary science and recommended for courses such as engineering or environmental sciences.



[See the AQA A level Chemistry \(7405\) Specification here](#)

CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

Head of Department: Mrs Elizabeth Marriott

Introduction

The Classical Civilisation course offers an exciting exploration into many areas of the classical world, including literature, history, archaeology, art, architecture, politics and philosophy. The influence of the classical world is all around us and A level Classical Civilisation will provide students the opportunity to explore some of these influences in their original, classical contexts.

Course Content

Students sit papers in three topics and are assessed by a written examination combining structured, source-based questions and essays.

Topic 1: The World of the Hero (one paper worth 40%):

- Homer's Iliad or Odyssey: studied in translation alongside the history of the texts and an understanding of oral composition.
- Virgil's Aeneid: studied in translation alongside the politics of the Roman Republic.

Topic 2: Culture and the Arts (one paper worth 30%) - one option out of:

- Greek Theatre: The drama produced in the ancient Greek theatre forms some of

the most powerful literature of the ancient world and has had a profound influence on modern culture.

- Imperial Image: A study of the propaganda campaign of the Emperor Augustus, copied by politicians through the ages.

Topic 3: Belief and Ideas (one paper worth 30%) - one option out of:

- Love and relationships: comparing Greek and Roman ideas about love, desire, marriage, sex and gender roles.
- Democracy and the Athenians: studying the birth of Western Democracy within the Athenian city state.

Why Choose Classical Civilisation A level?

Today's A level Classical Civilisation course is exciting, challenging and varied. Universities and employers alike respect the skills which Classical Civilisation A level develops; analysis and evaluation, interpretation of sources, effective communication, essay-writing, an appreciation of different cultures and societies and an understanding of the origins and foundations of the Western world. This A level choice can lead onto a career in the civil service, journalism, writing, teaching, archaeology, law, advertising and the arts.



[See the OCR Classical Civilisation \(H408\) Specification here](#)

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Head of Department: Miss Maria Fisher

Introduction

Computer Science is a dynamic and ever-evolving field that lies at the heart of our digital age. It is the study of algorithms, data structures, programming languages, and the fundamental principles that govern the design and operation of computers and software systems. Computer scientists explore how to solve complex problems, automate tasks, and harness the power of computation to drive innovation across various industries.

Course Content

Component 1: 40% weighting

- Systems Architecture
- Data Representation
- Ethics
- Data Structures
- Input, Output and Storage Devices

(2 hour 30 minute examination)

Component 2: 40% weighting

- Introduction to Programming
- Object Orientated Programming

- Computational Thinking
- Algorithms to solve problems and standard Algorithms

(2 hour 30 minute examination)

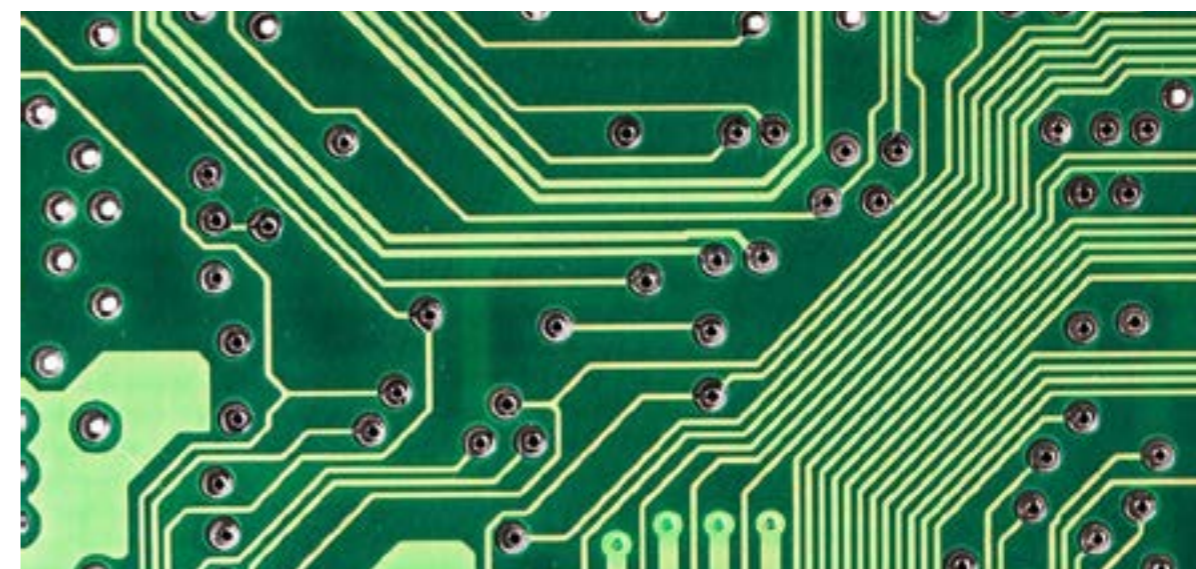
Component 3: 20% Programming Project

- Creating a program for a solution to problem

The project is assessed from the coursework created.

Why Choose Computer Science A level?

Computer science is in high demand across industries, offering diverse career paths like software engineering, data science, and more. It drives innovation and global impact, addressing critical issues. It also brings financial rewards and requires constant learning. Many roles offer remote work, and it intersects with various fields. Computer science equips students for entrepreneurship and connects them to a global community. In summary, it promises a fulfilling future with diverse careers, innovation and impact, but it should align with your interests and goals.



[See the Computer Science A Level OCR \(H446\) Specification here](#)

CORE MATHEMATICS

Head of Department: Mr Andrew Hillman

Introduction

The intention of this qualification is to prepare students who have a variety of goals in terms of their educational and employment progression, to tackle mathematical problems. This course can strengthen progression routes for students who do not wish to study A Level Maths, as well as support progress in complimentary A levels for which the development of quantitative reasons and use of statistical problem-solving skills are required.

Course Content

The course will be delivered in a linear format over Years 12 and 13 alongside a three subject study programme and is equivalent to an AS Level in UCAS points.

The examinations consist of two 90 minute papers taken at the end of Year 13.

Paper 1

Students are expected to build upon their numerical, algebraic and shape skills they developed in GCSE Mathematics and apply them to the following topics:

- Analysis of data
- Maths for personal finance
- Estimation



Paper 2

Students will be expected to draw on the mathematical content of Paper 1. They will also be expected to develop and demonstrate confidence and competence in the understanding and application of mathematical modelling in the solution of problems related to the use of statistical techniques. The topics covered in Paper 2 are:

- Critical analysis of given data and models
- The normal distribution
- Probabilities and estimation
- Correlation and regression

Why Choose Core Mathematics A level?

Mathematical Studies is an excellent complement to other courses that include statistical analysis such as, but not limited to Biology, Geography, Psychology or Economics. This qualification gives students the mathematical skills to tackle problems in a variety of authentic situations, applying them to the problems with which they will encounter in further study, life and employment.

[See the AQA Level 3 Mathematical Studies \(1350\) Specification here](#)

DRAMA & THEATRE

Head of Department: Mr Craig Pullen

Introduction

A level Drama and Theatre is for students who enjoy reading, watching and taking part in plays, whether performing or directing. The group work at the heart of this course provides students the opportunity to work in-depth on varying texts and interpret them from the perspective of an actor or director. During the course all students will develop the skills to analyse and appreciate any drama or theatre, as well as skills to assist them in a variety of careers. Students will also devise their own original work and have the opportunity to consider work by influential playwrights, directors and theatre companies.

Course Content

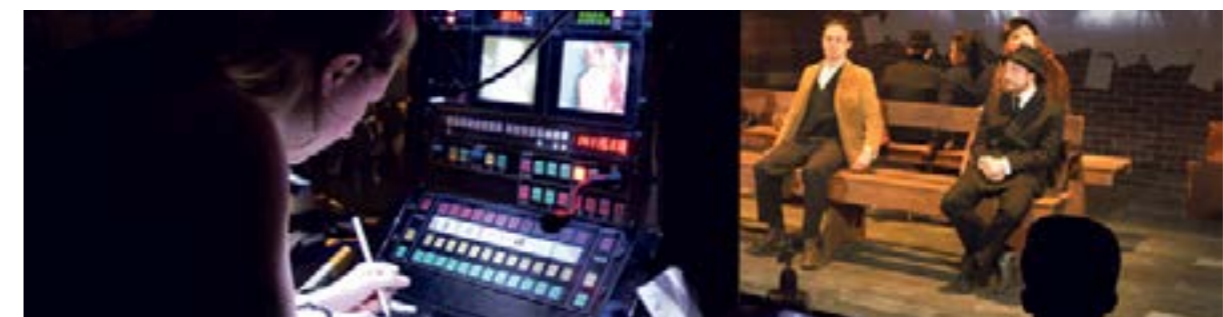
Component 1

- Knowledge and understanding of drama and theatre.
- Study of two set plays from a given list.
- Analysis and evaluation of the work of live theatre makers.

Assessment will be through a three hour, open book written examination which will make up 40% of the A level.

Component 2

- Process of creating devised drama.
- Performance of devised drama (students contribute as performer, designer or director).



[See the AQA A-level Drama and Theatre \(7262\) Specification here](#)

- Piece must be influenced by work and methodologies of one practitioner.

This is assessed through a working notebook (20%) and devised performance (10%), to make up 30% of the A level.

Component 3

- Practical exploration and interpretation of three extracts (extract 1, 2 and 3) each taken from a different play.
- Methodology of a prescribed practitioner must be applied to extract 3.
- Extract 3 is to be performed as a final assessed piece (students contribute as performer, designer or director).
- Reflective report analysing and evaluating theatrical interpretation of all three extracts.

Assessment will be through a performance of extract 3 (20%), and a reflective report (10%), to constitute 30% of the A level.

Why Choose Drama & Theatre A level?

This course allows students to progress to Higher Education qualifications in Drama and Theatre Studies, Film, English and more. Careers include acting, theatre production and management and journalism, as well as many within the Film and TV industry. Past students have gained places at elite drama schools and universities, including Bristol Old Vic and Arts Ed, London.

ECONOMICS

Head of Department: Mr Julian O'Sullivan

Introduction

If you seek to understand the reasoning behind the elements that influence your life, be it inflation, global warming or the influence of TikTok, consider Economics as an A level choice.

Faced with much information, it is useful to have a subject which can provide insights and support your own decisions, whilst understanding the impact they may have on yourself and those around you.

Course Content

Across the two year programme, we cover a wide variety of topics which are split two-ways:

Microeconomics: - 'micro' refers to the study of those things which effect us as individuals, a single business or industry. Do you consider yourself to be rational? To always act in your best interests? In micro, students will come to appreciate how people may think this to be true, however obvious but often we do not or cannot believe. Words such as 'monopoly' will mean more than a board game to argue over, and the reasons why Economists may be described as natural feminists when considering the labour market will be explored. There are models, diagrams and calculations to explain why we continue to pay more for what we like and how businesses use this information.

'Macroeconomics' deals with the 'big picture'; those things seen or heard on the news such as the effect of inflation, the rising prices in the UK, the energy problems and the differing plans by the governments and the Bank of England with promises to make it better. Rising interest rates and the Liz Truss / Kwazi Kwarteng mini-budget fiasco have already given us much to discuss. Beyond the domestic issues which impact

our lives, this course also allows students to consider the issues of developed and emerging economies and the issues of globalisation and fairness in the world.

The examination questions range from multiple choice to short essays. Students need to be critical, think independently and explain decisions. Students of Economics will require a good level of both numerical and written skills. An interest in the wider world will support students development whilst at the same time being able to draw upon independent interests, however niche!

Why Choose Economics A level?

Economics is one of the most useful subjects and can be paired up with any other of interest. Universities offer many courses that combine Economics with a range of other subjects including Geography, Philosophy, Mathematics, Medicine, Engineering and, of course, business related degrees.

Economics is fundamentally the study of people and how we make our choices with the resources we have available to us. It is, therefore, no surprise that economists can be found in a remarkable range of employment environments such as Project Managers, Charity Fundraisers, Business Analysts, Accountants. It may also extend to advising Governments to create new guidelines for the way in which we live and to manage not only the economy which supports us, but also the environment in which we live. Women have seen great successes in this field with institutions such as the US Federal Reserve, the I.M.F. and the European Central Bank all having female leaders such as Christine Lagarde and Janet Yellen as well as Esther Duflo who won the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2019.

[See the AQA A level Economics \(7136\) Specification here](#)

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Head of Department: Mrs Pippa Lyons-White

Introduction

A level English Literature offers an exploration of people and their behaviours through the literature that has been set down through the ages. Students study and analyse poetry, prose and drama so they become a gateway to wider worlds. Through this journey, students will encounter a wide range of heroes and villains, lovers and mourners, individual protagonists and tyrannical states. Students will see and evaluate how voice matters and how the words of language have infinite power.

Course Content

Paper 1 (40%): 'Love Through the Ages':

- *Othello*, by William Shakespeare.
- Response to 2 unseen poems.
- An anthology of pre-1900 love poetry compared to *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Paper 2 (40%): 'Modern Times':

- *A Streetcar Named Desire*, by Tennessee Williams.
- Response to an unseen extract of modern prose.
- Carol Ann Duffy's collection of poetry entitled *Feminine Gospels* compared with Margaret Atwood's acclaimed and popular novel *The Handmaid's Tale*.

Coursework (20%)

2500 word independent critical study on two additional texts of the student's individual choice.

Why Choose English A level?

Having already studied English Literature at GCSE, every student new to the Sixth Form at Clifton High School is well placed to pursue it at A level. Together, critical thinking skills and the ability to analyse form the mainstay of English Literature at A level with both of these being universally crucial skills for any workplace or undergraduate course. More than this, however, a study of English Literature at A level affords students an unrivalled insight into people, art and history. In this regard, A level English Literature is a perfect partner for a diverse range of subjects.

A level English Literature students enjoy reading, forming opinions and justifying them, debating, analysing and making connections between texts and time periods. A love of reading is essential. Beyond A level, English Literature prepares students for a degree (or career) in law, journalism, publishing, editing, teaching, public relations, marketing and creative. The critical thinking, research, and communication skills students acquire are highly transferable which makes an A level in English Literature an asset in any professional domain.



[See the AQA A level English Literature specification A, option B Specification here](#)

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Head of Department: Mrs Catharine Quirk-Marku

Introduction

An Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a standalone qualification that involves students choosing a topic, carrying out research, writing a report (or creating a 'product' and report), and delivering a presentation to a non-specialist audience. There are two types of EPQ; students can write a research-based report, or create an artefact. Although the choice of project is wide and varied, students should show that it is academically useful, either relating to their current course of study or future career. A research-based project involves writing a 5,000-word report or the artefact involves a report of between 1,000 and 5,000 words.

Course Content

Students are assessed holistically in the EPQ rather than specific components having a specific weighting. The work that is assessed is a production log (that details the students' decision-making and progression throughout the EPQ); a presentation; and a 5000-word report (or an artefact and a report of between 1000 and 5000 words).

Students are expected to spend around 120 hours on their EPQ. This time includes 30 hours of Taught Skills, which is a timetabled weekly lesson that is delivered by the Centre Coordinator. Students also have supervision meetings on their individual EPQ.

EPQs are graded A* to E and they are worth 50% of an A level (in UCAS points). The EPQ is highly regarded by universities because many of the academic skills required at university are developed during the EPQ. Students who choose to study the EPQ should have good literacy skills and a commitment to work independently. Students have free choice over their topic of EPQ, as long as it is not studied during their A level courses. Therefore the pathway and careers that the EPQ can lead to depend on the topic and research conducted by each student.

Why Choose EPQ?

Choosing the EPQ is relevant to students who study all A level courses. The EPQ requires good literacy skills and independent work. Universities highly value the EPQ as it cultivates essential academic skills. Students can tailor the EPQ to align with degree or career goals, or simply personal interests, significantly boosting future applications. The freedom to choose a topic opens doors to various pathways and careers, no matter the destination. Furthermore, the broader skills learnt from taking this course; self-management, report writing, presentation skills, will stand anyone in good stead for university and beyond. Consider EPQ for a brighter academic journey, broader academic insights and well-rounded future success.



[See the AQA Level 3 Extended Project Qualification \(7993\) Specification here](#)

FRENCH

Head of Department: Mrs Eulalia Ribot-Bruno

Introduction

"Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things but learning another way to think about things." - Flora Lewis

(Flora Lewis was an American journalist who specialised in international affairs. She lived many years in Europe and died in France)

Embark upon an exhilarating linguistic journey with French A Level studies and embrace the beauty and intrigue of the French language and culture to unlock a world of prospects. Whether as a language enthusiast, a global thinker, or an aspiring international professional this course promises to open doors to exciting opportunities and broaden horizons.

Course Content

Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing (50% of A level)

- Aspects of French-speaking society: current trends and current issues
- Artistic culture in the French-speaking world and Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world
- Grammar

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes

Paper 2: Writing (20% of A level)

Two essay style questions, of approximately 300 word answers, giving a critical response to the film, *La Haine* by *M. Kasowitz*, and the book, *No et Moi* by *Delphine de Vigan*

on aspects such as plot, characterisation, imagery or technique and style of the film / book. The essays will be assessed on accuracy, critical and analytical response and will be undertaken in a 2 hour written examination.

Paper 3: Speaking (30% of A level)

- A 5-6 minute discussion on one of twelve given topics
- A 2 minute presentation of an Individual Research Project
- A 9-10 minute discussion on the Individual Research Project
- 21-23 minutes Oral exam, including 5 minutes prep time

Why Choose French A level?

Choosing French at A level offers a gateway to diverse opportunities. It develops linguistic and cultural awareness, ideal for those with a passion for communication and curiosity about the world. Prior proficiency in basic French is advantageous as A level French is a step up the ladder from GCSE, with the level of both language and content being much more sophisticated.

This path can lead to degrees in languages, international relations, or even careers in translation, diplomacy, tourism and within multinational corporations, where bilingual skills are prized. Students may wish to study languages at university or combine French with subjects ranging from Medicine or Law to Geography or Engineering. Students may have the option of studying or working abroad at some stage. A level French could be the first step on the road to a very exciting future!



[See the AQA A-level French \(7652\) Specification here](#)

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Head of Department: Mr Andrew Hillman

Introduction

Further Mathematics will be taught concurrently with A level Mathematics. If students are considering a degree in Mathematics or related subjects, for example Physics or Engineering, they will find that an increasing number of universities welcome knowledge beyond A level Mathematics.

Course Content

All learners will study Pure Core content as part of the course which consists of the following subjects:

Pure Core (50% of course content):

- Complex numbers
- Matrices
- Further vectors
- Proof
- Further algebra
- Further calculus
- Series
- Polar coordinates
- Hyperbolic functions
- Differential equations

Learners will select at least two of the following modules. These ensure mathematicians get a breadth of study in this A level subject:

Further Statistics:

- Probability
- Discrete and continuous random variables
- Correlation and regression
- Chi-squared tests
- Linear combinations of random variables
- Non-parametric tests
- Hypothesis tests and confidence intervals
- Further Mechanics: Dimensional analysis
- Work, energy and power
- Impulse and momentum
- Centre of mass
- Circular motion
- Further dynamics and kinematics

Discrete Mathematics:

- Algorithms
- Graphs and networks
- Decision making in project management
- Graphical linear programming
- The simplex algorithm
- Game theory
- Additional Pure
- Further sequences and series
- Number theory
- Game theory
- Further calculus
- Further vectors
- Surfaces and partial differentiation

Contrary to other subjects, the course requirement is at least a Grade 8 in GCSE Mathematics to achieve the best results at A level. There is no coursework in Further Mathematics but this A level is assessed by four written papers, each equally weighted and lasting 90 minutes.

Why Choose Further Maths A level?

For those intending to study Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Computing, Actuarial Sciences or Engineering at any one of Britain's top universities, Further Mathematics offers a distinct advantage both at the time of application and in the early stages of the degree course. Students applying for Biological Sciences (including Medicine and Psychology) will benefit from the higher level statistics modules that would not be covered in A level Mathematics alone.

It is important to see Further Mathematics as a broadening rather than a narrowing choice. Although very few higher education courses formally demand Further Mathematics as an entry requirement, the evidence is that those holding the qualification have a significant advantage on many courses, especially Mathematics, Physics and Engineering.

[See the OCR Further Mathematics A \(H245\) Specification here](#)

GEOGRAPHY

Head of Department: Mrs Laura Giles

Introduction

Geography is a dynamic, highly relevant and adaptive subject that will have students gripped from day one. A level students learn to debate about Natural Hazards and Disease Dilemmas, whilst also studying the fundamentals of both Human and Physical Geographies, allowing them to acquire a broad subject knowledge that is relevant to any citizen of the world in the 21st century. Through the study of dynamic and contemporary case studies, learners can understand and interact with issues which affect people and places at a range of scales from local to global and all that is in-between.

Course Content

Landscape Systems (22%)

Students will explore landscapes as systems; how landforms developed and the influences of both climate and human activity on them.

Changing Spaces: Making Places and Human Interactions (22%)

Students will explore the relationships and connections between people, the economy and society and how these contribute to creating places. Placemaking projects are also explored, considering the meanings and representations created and attached to places.

Geographical Debates (36%) Optionality

Students will study two of the five geographical

debates listed below. Geographical skills will be taught and examined through each topic.

Climate Change, Future of Food, Disease Dilemmas, Hazardous Earth, Exploring Oceans

One non-examined assessment (N.E.A) (20%).

Students will participate in a three-day residential fieldwork during Year 12, typically to Devon or South Wales, which will aid learning in both human and physical geography whilst also developing fieldwork skills. In Year 13, students will complete a study into a geographical area of their choice. This may focus on a topic that the learner finds particularly interesting or a topic with geographical links that they would like to pursue at degree level.

Why Choose Geography A level?

Pupils choosing Geography at A level should have an interest in the natural and human world around them. Geography is an excellent subject for anyone that would like to 'bridge the gap' between the Arts and Sciences, providing analytical and essay writing skills, as well as abilities in numeracy and data handling. Geography develops a wide range of skills that are essential for higher education and transferable skills such as: observation, mapping, data manipulation, analysis and geospatial awareness.

The list is endless in how Geography can open many potential avenues for you in the future.



[See the A level Geography \(H481\) Specification here](#)

GERMAN

Head of Department: Mrs Tara Harris

Introduction

Would you like to be able to communicate confidently and clearly in German? Would you like to know more about German culture and how the language works? Would you like to stand out from the crowd? All of these are achieved within the German A level course.

Course Content

Topics covered in Year 12 are:

- 'Aspects of a German speaking society' (The changing state of the family, The digital world, Youth culture: fashion and trends, music, television)
- 'Artistic culture in the German-speaking world' (Festivals and traditions, Art and architecture, Cultural life in Berlin, past and present).

In Year 13, the topics are:

- 'Multiculturalism in German-speaking society' (Immigration, Integration and Racism)
- 'Aspects of political life in the German-speaking world' (Germany and the European Union, Politics and youth, German re-unification and its consequences).

Students will study a film (*Die fetten Jahre sind vorbei*, Hans Weingartner, 2005) and a piece of German literature (*Der Vorleser*, Bernhard Schlink, 1995) in depth. Students will also complete an Individual Research Project in German on a topic of interest to them, forming the basis for a discussion in the speaking exam.

Assessment Methods

Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Writing, 50% of A level (2 hours 30 minutes)

- Listening comprehension
- Reading comprehension
- Translation into English (a passage of

minimum 100 words)

- Translation into German (a passage of minimum 100 words)

Paper 2: Writing, 20% of A level (2 hours)

- Essay on set film (approximately 300 words)
- Essay on set text (approximately 300 words)

Paper 3: Speaking, 30% of A level (21-24 minutes, including 5 minutes preparation time)

- Discussion of a sub-theme with the discussion based on a stimulus card (5-6 minutes).
- Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9-10 minutes) of Individual Research Project.

Why Choose German A level?

If students enjoyed GCSE German and are interested in the culture, society, art and history of German-speaking countries, German A level is the perfect next step to take. The course is designed to build directly on skills learned at GCSE as well as to develop analytical and creativity, communication, presentation, interpersonal and cultural awareness. A level German is an excellent preparation for university courses, both in languages and as a supporting subject for the study of others.

Successful A level German students are; effective communicators, able to take the initiative, organised and confident, resourceful, imaginative and creative.

German is a fantastic language to learn in preparation for a career in international business, law, engineering, government and international affairs, economics and finance, education, fashion, journalism, the media, tourism and hospitality plus many more areas. Studying German will broaden job prospects as it is the most in-demand foreign language in the UK job market with German 'powerhouses' such as BMW, Aldi, e.on, Volkswagen, Adidas, Audi and Siemens being well established around the world.

[See the AQA A level German \(7662\) Specification here](#)

HISTORY

Head of Department: Mr Tom Appleby

Introduction

The complex world we live in, from the relationship between nations to the cultural beliefs that shape modern society, is a product of the past. Studying History A level will provide students not just with a greater awareness of this complex story, but, perhaps more importantly, with the skills to truly understand how the world has evolved and what the future may hold on a local, national and global scale.

Course Content

Students study all aspects of the UK's fascinating royal dynasty from the founding members of the House of Tudor at Bosworth to the turmoil of the Reformation under Henry VIII and Edward VI; the Counter-Reformation of "Bloody Mary" and the achievements and insecurities of Elizabeth I. A key requirement of the new specification is for students to assess how aspects of the past have been interpreted in varying ways.

In this contrasting study, which is taught concurrently, students will learn about the reasons for the abdication of the last Russian Tsar, Nicholas II, and the Bolshevik Revolution in October 1917. Students then learn about the creation of a communist regime under Lenin and Stalin and the emergence of the USSR as a

superpower after World War II. The emphasis of the depth of study is for students to critically assess sources when learning about these momentous world events. These two units each comprise 40% of the course.

Finally, students design their own question which must span 100 years of US history, then complete an extended piece of academic writing with tutorial support and lessons from their teacher in Year 13. The format of this unit will be very similar to that of a first-year undergraduate course. In Year 12, students will frame their question, develop their research through wider reading and examine and evaluate a variety of sources. This coursework makes up the final 20% of the A level.

Why Choose History A level?

History is one of the most widely regarded subjects by universities and employers in the UK. Due to History's 'ability to promote understanding between cultures and between national traditions', it is a subject that can lead to an incredibly variety of professions. A History student will finish the A level with the ability to analyse complex information, construct an argument and write with clarity, all of which are essential employment skills. The most important pre-requisite for an A level History student is a genuine interest in our remarkable history.



[See the AQA A level History \(7042\) Specification here](#)

LATIN

Head of Department: Mrs Elizabeth Marriott

Introduction

Modern society owes a huge cultural debt to the civilisations of Greece and Rome. A knowledge of the intellectual achievements of these societies can help us make sense of the world today. In fact, there is hardly any area of study on which Latin and the ancient world have not left their mark. The course gives students the opportunity to study Latin language and literature in greater depth. It enables students to acquire an understanding of linguistics, to read and give a personal response to great literature as well as considering the social, moral and cultural values emerging from this reading.

Course Content

There are four examinations at the end of the two-year course, each testing a different skill: unseen translation, comprehension, prose literature and verse literature.

Candidates could study the following pieces of literature:

- A selection of Juvenal's Satires, giving evidence of Roman beliefs about women, gender, sexuality and parenting.
- Book II of Virgil's Aeneid, in which our hero Aeneas tells of the Trojan Horse, destruction of Troy, and loss of his wife Creusa while fleeing.

- Extracts from Cicero's pro Caelio, the defence speech of one of the most intriguing and lurid ancient murder trials.
- A section of Tacitus' Annals, which reveal the plots, betrayals and murders during the reigns of Claudius and Nero.

Why Choose Latin A level?

Universities and employers appreciate that Latin A level provides mental training in a whole range of varying disciplines and promotes exceptional intellectual flexibility. Students of Latin develop rigorous logic, a keen eye for detail and the skills of profound analysis and evaluation.

In addition to traditional Classics degrees, Latin can be combined with a variety of subjects at university level. A level Latin can open doors into disciplines such as Classics and English, Latin with a Modern Foreign Language, Ancient and Modern History, Philosophy, Archaeology, Anthropology and Classical Studies.

Former Latin students can be found in all walks of life including banking, computing, industry, the civil service, journalism, teaching, administration, law, advertising, the arts. The truth is that a Classics student gets the best of both worlds - studying for a fascinating degree and emerging exceptionally well-qualified at the end of it.



[See the OCR A level Latin \(H443\) Specification here](#)

MATHEMATICS

Head of Department: Mr Andrew Hillman

Introduction

We believe that students should learn an approach to Mathematics that will equip them to use it in the adult world and be able to communicate what they are doing to those around them. This course encourages students to develop their understanding of Mathematics in a way that promotes confidence and fosters enjoyment, extends their range of skills and techniques and uses them in difficult unstructured situations, to develop an understanding of coherence, progression and connections.

Course Content

The content is fixed and includes Pure, Statistics and Mechanics.

Pure Mathematics (2/3 of course content):

- Proof
- Surds and indices
- Algebra and functions
- Coordinate geometry
- Transformation of graphs
- Sequences and series
- Binomial expansion
- Trigonometry
- Exponentials and logarithms
- Differentiation
- Integration
- Numerical methods
- Vectors
- Differential equations

Statistics (1/6 of course content)

- Statistical sampling
- Probability
- Data presentation and interpretation
- Statistical hypothesis testing
- Statistical distributions

Mechanics (1/6 of course content)

- Quantities and units in mechanics
- Kinematics
- Projectile motion
- Application of vectors
- Forces and Newton's laws of motion
- Friction
- Static moments

This qualification is assessed by three written papers, each equally weighted and lasting 2 hours. There is no coursework in A Level Mathematics.

Why Choose Mathematics A level?

Mathematics is one of the main facilitating subjects for study at university and is highly regarded for entry into Medicine, Dentistry, Engineering, Law and Economics. In today's digital world, Mathematics is attracting interest as a valuable qualification in its own right. It is probably true to say that almost anybody taking A level Mathematics will reap significant benefit at some time during their working life.



[See the OCR Mathematics A \(H240\) Specification here](#)

MUSIC

Head of Department: Mrs Donia Pieters

Introduction

Music opens up a wealth of opportunities for students. It is a subject that allows creativity to blossom whilst also being academically rigorous. Students are allowed to explore their own interests in the coursework element whilst analyse the work of Musicians who have gone before them.

Course Content

- Performance (coursework, 30% of course)
- Composition (coursework, 30% of course)
- Listening and appraising (examination, 40% of course)

Students complete performances either as a soloist and/or in an ensemble of an instrument of their choice, including singing. The performances must last between twelve and fifteen minutes, a mini recital. Both performance and composition are coursework elements which are completed in School by the end of the Spring Term.

Students also work on two composition tasks during the course. The first task is either a free composition or chosen from four different briefs which are set by the board, using the music technology program *Logic* or *Sibelius* as an aid to the creative process. In addition to this, students are expected to complete a technical study, usually in the form of a Bach Chorale, in

the second year of the course. Harmonic skills are continually extended and students utilise these both in their compositions and analysis of further works. Sophisticated outcomes are expected at this level and students should have a good understanding of instrumental and vocal techniques in order to excel. Students study a selection of set works from the A level music anthology which is examined in a written paper in the summer. In addition to this, students widen their knowledge of a broad range of musical styles and answer questions about unfamiliar pieces which they listen to in the examination. Students will also continue to develop their essay writing skills throughout the course to gain maximum marks in the final examination paper.

Why Choose Music A level?

It is advantageous, though not essential, for students to have Grade 5 theory and be at a similar level or above on their primary instrument. It is strongly recommended that students are receiving instrumental or vocal tuition for the duration of this course in order to be able to tackle the performance element. The skills acquired in Music, i.e. analysis, performance, composing open up all manner of higher education courses. Many students continue with Music on either an academic course or more practical performance-based ones. Others choose to utilise these skills in Medicine, Law or Languages.



[See the Edexcel Level 3 Music \(9MU01\) Specification here](#)

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Head of Department: Mrs Donia Pieters

Introduction

Music Technology offers a variety of opportunities for students. It is a subject that is constantly evolving with the advent of new technology and students are constantly challenged to utilise this in a creative way, whilst appreciating its position in the wider context of Music History. Students are allowed to explore their own interests in the coursework element whilst analysing the work of Musicians who have gone before them.

Course Content

- Component 1: Recording (coursework, 20% of course)
- Component 2: Technology-based composition (coursework, 20% of course)
- Component 3: Listening and analysing (examination, 25% of course)
- Component 4: Producing and analysing (examination, 35% of course)

The course has two elements of coursework and two examination papers. The coursework consists of a) creating a technology-based composition, written to a brief set by the examination board b) recording a song chosen from a list, also produced by the examination board. For the composition task students will demonstrate skills in creating, editing and structuring sounds to develop a technology-based composition. Students should develop in-depth knowledge and understanding of musical elements and musical language, and

apply these, where appropriate, to their own technology-based compositions.

For the recording element students will demonstrate skills in capturing, editing and mixing sounds to produce an audio recording. Students will develop the skills to capture and manipulate sounds in corrective and creative ways in order to communicate effectively with listeners.

Component 3 gives students the opportunity to identify, analyse and evaluate a range of creative music production techniques, as applied to an unfamiliar commercial recording supplied in the examination. As well as identifying effects and their basic settings, students will explain the principles behind the choice of the effects heard on each recording.

For Component 4 students will work with unedited audio and MIDI materials that have been captured using microphone, DI and sequencing techniques. The examination will assess the ability to process and correct these materials using a range of production skills.

Why Choose Music Technology A level?

The course is designed to develop a broad range of skills including project management, appraising and analysis, creativity and imagination. Students will be able to progress to undergraduate study in Music Technology, Sound Production, Sound Engineering and many other courses requiring a similar skill set.



[See the Edexcel Level 3 Music Technology \(9MT0\) Specification here](#)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Head of Department: Mr Tom Morison

Introduction

A level Physical Education provides candidates with the opportunity to link their passion for sports performance with a deep and wide ranging understanding of theoretical concepts. Study of anatomy and physiology, skill acquisition, sport and society, biomechanics, psychology, and technology in sport gives students a wide ranging experience of the world of sport and high level performance. Students are expected to be performing one sport to a high level either for a first team or at club level out of School.

Course Content

Assessment of the A Level is split into two examinations papers taken at the end of the second year. These each make up 35% of the final grade with the theoretical content totalling 70%.

Paper one includes the following topic areas:

- Applied anatomy and physiology
- Skill acquisition
- Sport and society

Paper two assesses the following content:

- Exercise physiology
- Biomechanical movement
- Sport psychology
- Sport and society and the role of technology in physical activity and sport

Each examination is two hours in length.

Non-Examined Assessments (NEA) include the performance of the candidate in the fully competitive context of a sport listed by the examination board. This includes all of the activities covered by the competitive fixture programme offered at the School.

Added to this, students are expected to complete a verbal or written Analysis of Performance to include the identification of their weaknesses in their chosen sport and an action plan to improve their overall performance.

The combination of both aspects of the NEA makes up the remaining 30% of the A Level and is centrally marked and externally moderated.

Prospective students of A level PE should be competent scientists, and enjoy studying how the human body and mind is affected by, and affects participation in PE and sport, the place of PE and sport in our society, how the subject has developed historically to fulfil its social role and finally enjoy developing and acquiring skills and techniques in a variety of physical activities. It is also expected that students are participating regularly in sport and need to be technically competent performers in at least one sport.

A variety of teaching and learning styles are utilised in PE. Wherever possible theoretical concepts are taught through practical application. Homework is set on a regular basis and often requires students to be pro-active in researching topics that are changing on a daily basis. Approximately five hours of private study per week is required in addition to class time. A portion of this is often spent in keeping abreast of the changing face of Sport and PE in this country and internationally.

Why Choose Physical Education A level?

Physical Education A level enhances fitness, grows knowledge of the human body and opens career prospects in the sporting field and beyond. Typical progressions from this subject area to Higher Education are: Sports Science, Sports Studies, PE Teacher Training, Physiotherapy and Sports Injury, and Sports Coaching & Development.

[See the AQA A Level Physical Education \(7582\) Specification here](#)

PHILOSOPHY

Head of Department: Ms Rebecca Harris

Introduction

Can God make square circles? Does omniscience imply limited free will? Does God exist within time or without?

Can 'good' be defined? Is the greatest happiness for the majority always the ultimate good? If you habituate good acts, do you become a good person?

Are you truly perceiving the world as it is? Do things only exist when perceived? Can you trust your senses?

Is there a 'you' that exists as a separate substance? Do other minds exist? Are you merely your behaviour?

Course Content

Paper 1: Epistemology and moral philosophy
3 Hours, 100 marks, 50% of the A level

Section A: Five questions on epistemology

Section B: Five questions on moral philosophy

Paper 2: The metaphysics of God and the metaphysics of mind

3 hours, 100 marks, 50% of the A level

Section A: Five questions on the metaphysics of God

Section B: Five questions on the metaphysics of mind

Why Choose Philosophy A level?

Philosophy can lead on to university courses in Theology, Religious Studies, Philosophy and P.P.E. With its focus on critical thinking and coherent argument, it offers many transferable skills and is well-regarded by academic institutions. It can be a regarded support subject for other disciplines, both in the Sciences (e.g. Medicine) and the Arts and Humanities (e.g. Law). The course will also teach students to write essays using undergraduate standard English. Careers for which this subject would be relevant might include Medicine, Law, Teaching, Academia, any city professions requiring critical thinking skills, journalism, politics and many more. Ethical and Philosophical issues are in the public arena on a daily basis, with a constant stream of news articles on war, medical ethics and the place of religion in society and featuring in the broadsheets. The relevance of this subject to daily life is uncontested as we are surrounded by ethics and philosophy.



[See the AQA A Level Philosophy \(7172\) Specification here](#)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Head of Department: Mr Paul Ayers

Introduction

Photography can be provocative, heart-warming, challenging and eye-opening. This course is for students who want to understand how to use a camera to capture a shot or a scene perfectly in differing conditions. The course suits a creative person, who enjoys experimenting with new techniques and styles.

Course Content

The course is experimental and practical in its approach and will introduce students to a variety of experiences, exploring a range of photographic media, techniques and processes. Researching the work of other photographers and artists is an integral part of the investigating and making process. Students will produce a sketchbook documenting their research and recording the development of their own work. They will be working with DSLR cameras and the most up-to-date software packages such as Photoshop CC and Lightroom to enhance and develop their photographs.

Topics include:

- General photographic theory (exposure, aperture, lighting)
- History of Photography
- Darkroom skills for black and white photography
- Alternative photographic processes (e.g. cyanotype)
- Digital Photography
- Using Photoshop

- Photographic Contextual Studies
- A Level Assessment

The Course is assessed via two components

Component 1: Personal Investigation (60% of A level)

A personally devised practical project with a related written study of at least 1,000 words about artists that relate to the chosen practical theme. Non-examination assessment (internally assessed and externally moderated).

Component 2: Externally Set Task (40% of A level)

Early release paper issued on 1st February, providing students with a number of themes. A response must be based on one of these options and a final outcome produced in a 15-hour practical examination (over 3 days).

Why Choose Photography A level?

We live in an image-based culture and economy. The ability to analyse and create high quality image content is a vital skill in the majority of business environments, whether or not you choose to forge a career in photography. The department has close links with local institutions that offer post A level Photography courses, such as Weston College and Bristol School of Art. Students may also go on to study a BA (Hons) Photography-related courses. This course can lead to career opportunities in the following areas: photographer, gallery curatorial work, arts management, teacher, animator, and photojournalist.



[See the OCR Art and Design: Fine Art \(H601\) Specification here](#)

PHYSICS

Head of Department: Mr Paul Griffin

Introduction

Would you like to understand everything in the Universe? This ambitious goal has become the driving force behind the incredible development of Physics. It is a demanding subject which requires students to question and seek understanding of all observations, from the rotational speeds of distant galaxies down to the interactions between sub-atomic particles. Now is a fantastic time to study Physics as following an incredible two centuries of progress, we are currently in a golden era of discovery in fields such as Astronomy and Quantum Mechanics.

Course Content

The course includes the following core content:

- Particles and radiation: The standard model of fundamental particles, Feynman diagrams and photoelectricity.
- Waves: Using advanced practical techniques to measure the wavelength of light.
- Mechanics and materials: Newton's laws and beyond.
- Electricity: Students will measure resistivity and study potential dividers used in control circuits.
- Further mechanics and thermal physics: Internal energy and kinetic theory of gases.
- Fields: Satellites in gravitational fields and electrons in magnetic fields.
- Nuclear physics: Radioactivity, fission and fusion, including nuclear power stations.

In addition, students will choose one of the following optional topics:

- Engineering physics: Useful for future engineers as it includes heat engines.

- Astrophysics: Includes astronomy and cosmology; how the universe evolves.
- Medical physics: A must for potential medics but fascinating for everyone.
- Turning points in physics: Includes special relativity and quantum behaviour.
- Electronics: The study of modern electronic technologies.

There is no coursework element. Twelve practical activities are required to be completed satisfactorily. Through this, students build up a portfolio of practical and analytical skills to achieve their practical endorsement. The skills are then assessed in the examinations.

At least 15% of the overall assessment of A level Physics will assess knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to practical work. 40% of the overall assessment of A level Physics will contain mathematical skills equivalent to Level 2 or above. A common question is "Do I need to also study Mathematics A level to study Physics?". Whilst it certainly helps, this is not a requirement. A 'Maths Skills for Physics' textbook is provided to help in this regard and we can also provide booster work in our weekly Physics Help Sessions. The mathematics required for Physics A level can certainly be mastered, with some focus and extra work.

Why Choose Physics A level?

Students with A level Physics can go on to study a huge variety of further education courses including anything finance related, any medical field, communications, as well as all forms of engineering. A good understanding of Physics will improve a person's problem-solving capability in any field of work and, therefore, continues to be an extremely highly valued qualification. There has never been a better time to become a Physicist!

[See the AQA Physics A level \(7408\) Specification here](#)

POLITICS

Head of Department: Mr Tom Appleby

Introduction

The modern world is an increasingly complex environment and studying Politics will enable students to understand who holds power in society and to consider the ideological debates on the issue of how our society should be governed. How has America become so polarised? Why did Britain end up with three Prime Ministers in a matter of months? Can citizens exert any meaningful influence on their rulers?

Course Content

The course is assessed in three papers of equal weighting. The first two papers assess students' knowledge and understanding of UK Politics, and political ideologies. UK Politics topics include an analysis of the electoral systems used in the UK, and the powers of the Prime Minister and case studies of differing Prime Ministers and their ability to govern effectively. Students study three core ideologies: liberalism; conservatism; and socialism, as well as a fourth ideology, which will either be feminism or anarchism. As part of this section of the course, students will develop an awareness of the key thinkers that have shaped these ideologies, as well as the tension that exists between these pioneering thinkers.

In Year 13, students focus on US Politics and the ways that it compares with British Politics. Topics on this paper include the nature of the US Constitution, the role of the highly politicised US Supreme Court in contrast to its UK counterpart, and the impact that electoral systems have on the political process.

In each of the three exams, students will be expected to show an impressive knowledge of current political issues, alongside an awareness of the recent history of political events, such as the tenure of Margaret Thatcher or the impeachment of Richard Nixon.

Why Choose Politics A level?

A level Politics is an ideal choice for students considering a career in the profession, or those who simply want to understand how the world works. Studying Politics encourages and develops analysis and evaluation skills, and so is a particularly good subject to choose for a career in Law. The most important requirement for a student considering the subject is a genuine interest in current affairs. The students who get the most from this A level are the ones who have an open-minded curiosity for the world of politics, and trends show these students are often the ones who perform the best in the examinations at the end of the course.



[See the Edexcel A level Politics \(9PLO\) Specification here](#)

PRODUCT DESIGN

Head of Department: Mr Simon Francis

Introduction

Product Design A level offers a creative journey into the world of design. This dynamic course challenges students to blend form and function, nurturing their problem-solving skills and innovation. From sketching concepts to crafting prototypes, students embark on an exciting exploration of aesthetics and usability. Product Design not only unlocks pathways to careers in industrial design but also equips students with a versatile skill set applicable across various disciplines.

Course Content

Pupils will be required to undertake a small-scale design and make task and produce a final prototype based on a context and design brief developed by the student.

This can be in any area of Product Design and can be a modelled or fully working prototype. This constitutes 50% of the A level. Further to this, there are two written examinations.

Paper 1: Technical Principles

2 hour and 30 minute examination, 30% of the A level (externally assessed).

Paper 2: Designing and making

1 hour and 30 minute examination, 20% of the A level (externally assessed).

Why Choose Product Design A level?

This is a creative and thought-provoking qualification supplying the practical skills, theoretical knowledge and confidence to succeed in any number of careers including those in the creative industries. Students will investigate historical, social, cultural, environmental and economic influences on design, whilst enjoying opportunities to put their learning into practice by producing prototypes of their choice in our well-equipped workshop. 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.

Students who take this course may choose to take a BA (Hons) degree in subjects such as Architecture, Engineering, Graphic Design or Product Design. A level Product Design is the first step into any career where problem solving and original thinking are valued from Engineering and Architecture to Games design and Industrial design.



[See the AQA Design and Technology: Product Design \(7552\) Specification here](#)

PSYCHOLOGY

Head of Department: Miss Israel Gayton

Introduction

Psychology, the study of the mind and human behaviour continues to be one of the most popular A level subjects. The course requires students to think critically and evaluatively about a range of theories and studies, in order to better understand what motivates human behaviour. Students can expect topics which are fascinating and challenging, whilst being applicable in the real world. They will gain invaluable transferable skills, developing their extended writing abilities, as well as their understanding of how scientific research is conducted, all within a stimulating and encouraging environment.

Course Content

The course is entirely assessed through examination, containing a mixture of short answer and multiple choice questions, as well as extended-writing responses. The three examination papers are of equal weighting.

Paper 1: Introductory Topics in Psychology

- Memory
- Social influence
- Attachment
- Psychopathology

Paper 2: Psychology in Context

- Biopsychology

- Research Methods
- Approaches

Paper 3: Issues and Debates

- Issues and Debates
- Gender
- Forensic Psychology
- Schizophrenia

Why Choose Psychology A level?

Students looking to study A level should have a natural sense of curiosity and a desire to understand human behaviour on a deeper level. They must be able to engage critically with psychological research and be prepared to evaluate its effectiveness. A GCSE in Biology is helpful, due to the emphasis on Biopsychology, but not vital. Students should expect to develop their ability to clearly and coherently organise their ideas in extended written responses, as well as the scientific skills needed to conduct and understand scientific research. An A level in Psychology is an excellent starting point for a career in a range of disciplines, from the Sciences to the Arts. Knowledge of research methods and scientific investigations will craft students into excellent candidates for careers such as Forensics and Medicine; an understanding of human behaviour and communication will allow them to thrive in a variety of settings, from Education, to Social Work, Health Services and Mediation.



[See the AQA A level Psychology \(7182\) Specification here](#)

SOCIOLOGY

Head of Department: Mrs Catharine Quirk-Marku

Introduction

Sociology is a fascinating subject which enables students to gain a deeper understanding of contemporary society by studying a range of topics such as Crime and Deviance, Education, Families and Households and Mass Media. These areas are explored through the key sociological theories of Functionalism, Marxism, Feminism, Interactionism and Postmodernism. Students are encouraged to debate sociological issues verbally and in writing. For instance, to what extent is modern childhood toxic and whether new media is having an overall positive or negative impact on society.

Course Content

Sociology A level follows the AQA syllabus which does not involve coursework. There are three examination papers with equal weighting:

- Education with Theory and Methods
- Families and Households; Mass Media
- Crime and Deviance with Theory and Methods

Sociology involves reading about sociologists, sociological theories and sociological studies. Sociology is examined through writing extended answers and essays. Students therefore require good literacy skills and an enjoyment of essay writing. Students who have an interest in politics, history, the media and changes in society flourish in studying Sociology A level because they are able to draw on this societal knowledge.

Why Choose Sociology A level?

Students who study Sociology develop skills in understanding the world from varying perspectives and evaluating them. They learn how to debate topics in class debates and in written essays.

Sociology A level leads directly into degree courses in Sociology, Criminology and Anthropology. Some students choose to complete joint honours degrees combined with subjects like Psychology and Geography. A level Sociology leads students into a diverse range of careers. Some students venture into careers in marketing, advertising, the media and publishing with others accessing careers in the police, teaching, nursing and social care.



[See the AQA A Level Sociology \(7192\) Specification here](#)

SPANISH

Head of Department: Ms Rebecca Bartlett

Introduction

Embarking upon the journey of studying Spanish at A level is like opening a door to a vibrant world of language, culture and connection. It is not limited to conjugating verbs and mastering grammar, it is immersing yourself in the rich tapestry of Spanish-speaking societies, from the bustling streets of Madrid to the serene beaches of Latin America. With Spanish A level, you will gain a valuable skill and also unlock the door to a deeper understanding of a diverse and dynamic global community.

Course Content

The AQA Spanish A Level course is exciting and comprehensively designed to immerse students in the Spanish language and culture whilst developing advanced language skills. This two-year course, typically undertaken after completing the GCSE level, offers a deeper exploration of the Spanish-speaking world and carries a total of 300 marks.

Paper 1: Listening, Reading, and Writing (50%)

Listening: This section assesses a student's ability to understand spoken Spanish through a range of audio materials, including interviews, discussions and recordings. Students will answer questions in Spanish based on what you hear.

Reading: In this component, students will read authentic Spanish texts such as articles, literature extracts and advertisements and will be required to analyse and respond to questions in both English and Spanish.

Writing: The writing component challenges students to translate two passages; the first from Spanish into English and the second from English into Spanish. Students will have the opportunity to showcase grammatical and linguistic precision.

Paper 2: Writing (20%)

This is a separate writing examination that allows students to explore Spanish literature, films or other cultural topics in-depth. Students will produce two essays, each 250-270 words, showcasing your analytical and linguistic skills.

Paper 3: Speaking (30%)

This is the oral examination, which consists of two parts. Firstly, students will engage in a discussion of a sub-theme from the Spanish-speaking world, allowing them to demonstrate their ability to converse naturally in Spanish. Then, students will present and discuss an Individual Research Project on a chosen cultural topic that piques individual interest within the Spanish-speaking world. These projects will involve research, analysis and presentation, enabling students to delve deeper into a subject they are passionate about.

Throughout the course, students will not only refine their language skills but also gain a profound understanding of the Spanish-speaking world's culture, history, and society. Topics include Aspects of Hispanic society, Artistic culture in the Hispanic world, Multiculturalism in Hispanic society and Aspects of political life in Hispanic society.

Why Choose Spanish A level?

Choosing Spanish A Level opens up a world of opportunities. It hones language proficiency, fosters cultural awareness and enhances critical thinking. A strong foundation from GCSE level is beneficial. This qualification paves the way for diverse career paths, from Translation and International Business to Diplomacy and Tourism. It is a gateway to degrees in Modern Languages, International Relations or Global Studies, preparing students for an interconnected world where bilingualism is an asset. Spanish A Level equips students with essential skills and knowledge, empowering you to thrive in an increasingly globalized job market. It is a rewarding journey for those who aspire to become proficient Spanish speakers and global citizens.

[See the AQA A level Spanish \(7692\) Specification here](#)





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