



**WYCHWOOD**

SCHOOL • OXFORD

# **A Level Courses Booklet**

**2024 - 2026**

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## Wychwood Sixth

Wychwood Sixth offers a broad range of courses preparing pupils for life after school. Its robust academic program allows pupils to study at a much deeper level than they did at GCSE and prepares them well for many higher and further education courses including those at the most prestigious universities and colleges. Its extension program provides many opportunities to develop skills and knowledge beyond the curriculum.

Pupils who are at Wychwood in the Shell year (Year 11) receive individualised help with choosing their KS5 options and this is also available by appointment for pupils who are going to be joining the school for Year 12 from elsewhere. This document describes briefly the courses on offer at KS5 and should be used alongside discussions with the school to help pupils decide on a suitable KS5 program of study.

### Entry Qualification

We recommend that before embarking on Key Stage 5, pupils should have achieved at least five GCSEs at grade 4 or above with a minimum of a grade 6 in the subjects they wish to study.

### Choosing Subjects

In Study I (Year 12) most pupils study three subjects over two years. They may start four in exceptional circumstances or if they are unsure about the nature, content and demand of a subject, particularly when it is an *ab initio* subject. In the latter case they then decide which subject to drop by the end of the first half term. At Wychwood we follow linear specifications to allow the pupils consistently to focus on building their depth of knowledge, understanding, skills and examination technique and to gain as much maturity of expression, analysis and evaluation as possible before taking the A Level examinations.

### Research Methods

In addition, in Study I all pupils have access to a Research Methods course, which aims to help them adjust to the additional demands of A Level study and also prepares them for their future transition to undergraduate study. This course provides the basis for approaching A Level coursework, as well as fulfilling the taught element of the Extended Project Qualification.

### A Level subjects regularly offered:

Biology	French	Photography
Chemistry	Further Mathematics	Physical Education
Computer Science	Geography	Physics
Drama and Theatre Studies	Psychology	Economics
History	Religious Studies	English Literature
Business	Film Studies	Mathematics
Spanish	Fine Art	Music
Textiles		

Occasionally a course is unable to run if there are insufficient pupils.

### **GCSE Retakes**

We hope these will not be necessary, but provision can sometimes be made if there is a need for resits in English and Mathematics. This is discussed on an individual basis.

### **Wychwood Sixth Curriculum**

In addition to lessons assigned to their Key Stage 5 subjects, pupils in Study I (Year 12) are expected to attend other lessons and activities within the school week.

### **Sport**

All Wychwood Sixth pupils are expected to take part in physical education on a regular basis. This is a timetabled lesson and allows pupils important time away from their academic studies to stay fit and healthy.

### **Wychwood Sixth Extension Programme**

Wychwood's proximity to Oxford city centre means that pupils are able to take part in and enjoy many of the activities of a University town. We encourage them to attend public lectures and events. Wychwood Sixth pupils are expected to attend both the Wingfield-Digby lectures, that are held in school on a biannual basis, and the Oxford Pearl lectures, in which academics from the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University give short talks in which they introduce our pupils to the excitement of undertaking research in their discipline. Pupils are also encouraged to attend plays and concerts and to visit galleries and museums, both independently, and as part of a group. There are further opportunities for visits to London, Stratford, Birmingham and beyond when appropriate.

### **General Studies Week**

As part of the Wychwood Sixth Extension Programme, Study I pupils participate in a General Studies week towards the end of the Trinity term. The content varies from year to year. Pupils undertake cultural and educational activities and recent examples have included trips to the theatre in London, the Churchill War Rooms, cookery at Daylesford Organic Farm, a walking tour of Oxford, and courses in First Aid, self-defense and banking. We also have a variety of lectures with a mixture of in-house and outside speakers and we begin looking at the UCAS process as well as financial management.

### **Wychwood Enterprise Scheme**

Wychwood Enterprise allows young people to form and run their own company for one year and so gain a real understanding of how business works. The company deals with real money and real problems requiring real solutions. As in real life the company risks failure but may be rewarded with success. In either event it is a valuable learning experience.

### **Life Skills and PSHE**

A life skills programme operates within the extension programme across both years of Wychwood Sixth, offering PHSE issues at a sixth form level. Careers education and UCAS preparation also feature here.

## **Biology**

## **AQA A Level 7402**

The AQA A Level biology course is an excellent steppingstone to future studies and an exciting career. You will gain a host of practical and technical skills that will be attractive to employers.

We encourage pupils to learn independently, develop research skills, think analytically and improve their confidence in communicating through presentation and written reporting.

The practical endorsement allows pupils to develop competence in five key skill areas of experimental work with on-going advice, guidance and practice. This ensures the gaining of real competence in laboratory procedures.

The course is linear and examinable at the end of the two years.

### **The core content:**

1. Biological molecules
2. Cells
3. Organisms exchange substances with their environment
4. Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms
5. Energy transfers in and between organisms
6. Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments
7. Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems
8. The control of gene expression

Assessment will be by three 2-hour written examination papers that test modules 1-4, then 5-8 and a synoptic paper. The questions consist of recall, critical analysis of experimental data, comprehension and essay components.

The course material is delivered in a variety of ways, allowing for creativity and collaboration. We are fortunate to be in Oxford, where visits to University lectures, the Botanical Gardens and museums can all help to keep the content relevant, current and topical.

Mrs R Humphreys BSc (Hons) PGCE

## **Business Studies**

## **Edexcel 9BS0**

Business Studies A Level is an excellent introduction to the world of business processes and management. It can provide a clear pathway to higher education and study within business fields or in conjunction with other subjects.

The aims and objectives of A Level business are to enable pupils to:

- develop an enthusiasm for studying business
- gain a holistic understanding of business in a range of contexts
- develop a critical understanding of organisations and their ability to meet society's needs and wants
- understand that business behaviour can be studied from a range of perspectives
- generate enterprising and creative approaches to business opportunities, problems and issues
- be aware of the ethical dilemmas and responsibilities faced by organisations and individuals
- acquire a range of relevant business and generic skills, including decision making, problem solving, the challenging of assumptions and critical analysis
- apply numerical skills in a range of business contexts.

### **Assessment**

A Level business is structured into four themes and consists of three externally examined papers.

Theme 1 - Marketing and People, this is assessed in paper 1

Theme 2 - Managing Business Activities, this is assessed in paper 2

Theme 3 - Business Decisions and Strategy, this is assessed in paper 2

Theme 4 - Global Business, this is assessed in paper 1.

Paper 3 is a synoptic assessment that pulls from all themes. A pre released research context is released in November of Study I that offers pupils an opportunity for individual research and understanding.

This A Level should equip pupils with critical thinking skills, the ability to approach problems from several perspectives and an appreciation for the variety and diversity of businesses and their operations.

Mrs G Troth BSc (Hons) PGCE

A Level chemistry is a stimulating and rigorous course which provides a sound basis for further academic study of any STEM subject as well as improving the employability credentials of pupils in the wider world of work and apprenticeships. It builds competence in analysis, enquiry, problem solving, communication, mathematical manipulation as well as practical laboratory skills. It also allows opportunities for pupils to develop their creativity and provides a framework for discovering the importance and power of chemistry in the world.

AQA A Level chemistry is a linear specification examinable at the end of the course. The three main areas of chemistry: organic, inorganic and physical chemistry are all covered through a range of topics.

Material is examinable through three examination papers:

- Paper 1 - assesses material from the physical and inorganic topics. This is a two hour exam consisting of both long and short answers and contributes 35% of the marks available for the A Level award.
- Paper 2 - assesses some of the physical chemistry topics and material from the organic topics. This is also a two hour exam consisting of long and short answers and contributes 35% of the marks available for the A Level award.
- Paper 3 - assesses any content from the specification as well as extensive testing of the knowledge and understanding of practical techniques.
- Practical skills are also assessed through all exam papers as well as through the separate award of the practical endorsement.

The practical endorsement allows pupils to develop competence in five key skill areas of experimental work through on-going advice, guidance and practice. This ensures the gaining of real competence in laboratory procedures.

As well as the core curriculum, A Level chemists have the opportunity to attend extra-curricular lectures and workshops, and participate in competitions and outreach events.

Mr A Chim MSci PGCE

## **Computer Science**

### **Why study computer science?**

Computers are essential in today's world. If they were all turned off, the power grid would shut down, cars would crash, planes would fall from the sky, water treatment plants would stop, trucks would not know where to deliver food and employees wouldn't get paid! Even items such as the chair you are sitting on and the T-shirt you are wearing, are made in factories where computers play a vital role. Computing really has transformed every aspect of our lives and is used extensively in a wide range of professions. Studying computer science at A Level allows you to contribute to a rapidly advancing world.

### **What will I learn?**

The board used is OCR and you will learn about a wide range of topics, some of which are similar to those typically studied at GCSE level. You will study these in more depth and cover completely new areas as well.

You will be assessed at the end of the course using two written papers, one looking at computer systems and the other covering programming and algorithms. These will make up 80% of the final grade.

The remaining 20% is assessed through a significant programming project where you will apply your skills to design, create, test and document a software solution to a problem that you have chosen. This could be creating a game, making a mobile phone app, or doing an investigation into machine learning. You will be guided through your project and with your choices but essentially it is your idea!

### **Do I need computer science at GCSE?**

No! But if you have completed the GCSE course then many of the terms and concepts will be familiar to you. The A Level course requires you to take many aspects of what you have learned and study them in more detail. Having some experience of programming will help and to prepare yourself you should learn a programming language before starting the course.

### **Where can it lead?**

A Level computer science is a naturally strong subject to take if you wish to go into computer science at degree level, although some computer science degree courses do not require it. Having studied the A Level course you will find it easier at degree level and may do a different first year compared to those that have not studied computer science.

However, there are several software engineering courses that do require computer science. There are also numerous courses that have a computing component, including mathematics, business, art and sciences.

After university there are many interesting fields of study and professions that you can go into. It may lead to working in robotics, medical science, data analytics, software development, travel, AI, cloud computing, networking, ethical hacking, game development, home automation or teaching. Having a good understanding of how computers work and how to program them will set you up for success in many different areas of life. The skills learned are portable and versatile. You may have concentrated on one language for A Level but the fundamentals are the same in most languages and learning a different one will be relatively easy.

OCR <https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/170844-specification-accredited-a-level-gce-computer-science-h446.pdf>

Mr P Burnett BSc (Hons) PGCE

**Component 1: Devising**

Coursework, 40% of the qualification.

Content overview:

- Devise an original performance piece.
- Use one key extract from a performance text and a theatre practitioner as stimuli.
- Performer or designer routes available.

**Assessment overview**

Internally assessed and externally moderated.

A portfolio which can be handwritten/typed evidence between 2500-3000 words or recorded/verbal evidence between 12-14 minutes.

**Component 2: Text in Performance**

Coursework, 20% of the qualification

Content overview:

- A group performance/design realisation of one key extract from a performance text.
- A monologue or duologue performance/design realisation from one key extract from a different performance text.
- Externally assessed by a visiting examiner.

**Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice**

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes. 40% of the qualification

Content overview:

- Live theatre evaluation - choice of performance.
- Practical exploration and study of a complete performance text - focusing on how this can be realised for performance.
- Practical exploration and interpretation of another complete performance text, in light of a chosen theatre practitioner - focusing on how this text could be reimagined for a contemporary audience.

**Assessment overview****Section A: Live Theatre Evaluation**

Pupils answer one extended response question from a choice of two requiring them to analyse and evaluate a live theatre performance they have seen.

**Section B: Page to Stage: Realising a Performance Text**

Pupils answer two extended response questions based on an unseen extract from the performance text they have studied. Pupils will demonstrate how they, as theatre makers, intend to realise the extract in performance. Pupils answer from the perspective of a performer and a designer.

**Section C: Interpreting a Performance Text**

Pupils answer one extended response question from a choice of two based on an unseen named section from their chosen performance text. They will demonstrate how their re-imagined production concept will communicate ideas to a contemporary audience. Pupils will also need to outline how the work of their chosen theatre practitioner has influenced their overall production concept and demonstrate an awareness of the performance text in its original performance conditions.

## Economics

## Edexcel A Level 9EBO

In the first year of the course pupils are introduced to economics through building knowledge of core microeconomic, macroeconomic and business concepts, and applying that knowledge to business contexts and evidence relating to the macroeconomic environment.

The second year of study builds upon the first two themes explored and provides a wider breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding with applications of the more complex concepts and models. The qualification is assessed through three 2 hour external examinations.

This course would be a good choice for anyone who:

- is prepared to take an interest in current economic issues, national and international business news, wants to develop a wider view of how the world works.
- wants to learn how to analyse information effectively and be able to suggest solutions to real problems affecting businesses, the economy and individuals.

The course is taught in 4 interrelated themes with themes 3 and 4 developing knowledge from the first year.

### **Theme 1 - Markets, consumers and firms**

In this theme, pupils explore the way in which consumers make choices and entrepreneurs create desirable products. Content from Theme 1 will be assessed in Paper 1.

### **Theme 2 - The wider economic environment**

This theme helps pupils to explore how firms can become more competitive. It introduces them to the wider international and economic environment in which firms operate. Content from Theme 2 will be assessed in Paper 2.

### **Theme 3 - The global economy**

This theme builds on the content of Theme 2: The wider economic environment and continues its focus on the international economic environment. Pupils will need to build upon the knowledge, skills and understanding developed from Theme 2. Content from Theme 3 will be assessed in Paper 2.

### **Theme 4 - Making markets work**

This theme starts by considering degrees of competition within markets and then encourages pupils to apply their understanding to how governments may improve the functioning of markets and the economy. Content from Theme 4 will be assessed in Paper 1.

## **Course Outline**

<b>Unit</b>	<b>Unit Titles</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
1	Markets and how they work	Exam: 2 hours
2	Competing in a global economy	Exam: 2 hours
3	The economic environment and business	Exam: 2 hours

Mrs G Troth BSc (Hons) PGCE

We hope that, after the two year course with us, pupils will have acquired the ability to pass the A Level examination with a very high grade. They will also have developed an awareness of the English literary tradition, skills in critical analysis and an enjoyment of great literature which will serve them for the rest of their lives. Much of the work done during the UT and Shell years (Years 10 and 11) is a foundation for A Level.

The syllabus requires the study of 8 texts, with an emphasis on pre-1900 texts and post-2000 texts, as well as a comparative response to unseen poetry. External assessment accounts for 80% of the final mark with three terminal examinations in each of drama, prose and poetry. The further 20% of marks is drawn from a coursework task which is a 2500 - 3000 word extended comparative essay comparing two of the eight texts.

The text is at the heart of the syllabus with a clear focus across the three main genres and a distinctive approach to literary criticism.

**Drama**

Pupils will study a Shakespearean play, 'Twelfth Night', as well as the genre of Comedy through critical essays and commentary related to this Shakespeare play. A further pre-1900 drama text, 'The Importance of Being Earnest' by Oscar Wilde, will also be studied. Each play is examined separately.

**Prose**

Two prose texts are studied with a focus on Women and Society. The pre-1900 Hardy text 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles' will compare conditions and expectations of women in rural Victorian England with those of women across the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century in Afghanistan through Khaled Hosseini's text 'A Thousand Splendid Suns'. These texts are examined comparatively.

**Poetry**

Pupils will study two anthologies of poetry, 'The Less Deceived', a selection of poetry by Philip Larkin and a post-2000 selection of poetry from poets such as UA Fanthorpe, Carol Ann Duffy, Andrew Motion, Seamus Heaney and Simon Armitage. A response to unseen modern poetry in response to the post-2000 anthology is a compulsory synoptic requirement of this paper. As such, practical criticism will be taught across both years.

We take every opportunity to see productions of set and related texts in Oxford, London or Stratford and, where possible, attend conferences held in London which enable the pupils to hear lectures from leading academics. However, the main focus of the course is written work and we also expect independent reading and research. Weekly essays and other written pieces are set and during the course the pupils are helped to develop a fluent and mature written style and an ability to construct relevant, detailed and cogent arguments. These are skills which are invaluable at University level for many subjects.

We hope to teach by a constant but almost imperceptible refining of pupils' responses through written work and discussion. Pupils are encouraged to understand and challenge their own responses and gradually lessons become an opportunity for exchanging different attitudes and ideas. We think that, with growing confidence and experience, our pupils are able to approach the examinations prepared in both factual content and attitude, with confident critical skills and secure written expression. We have been delighted with the level of passes and high grades achieved in the past, but we are pleased most of all by those pupils who have appreciated and enjoyed their studies here.

Ms B Sherlock BA (Hons) MEd (Oxon) PGCE  
Mrs H Kirby BA (Hons) PGCE  
Mrs I Mayow-Lipscombe BEd (Hons)

## Film Studies

## WJEC Eduqas A670QS

A Level film studies focuses on the analysis and deconstruction of film over a wide historical time frame. It allows pupils to engage with films from early silent cinema, 1930s Hollywood films to contemporary and experimental cinema and documentary.

Film studies A Level involves studying at least 11 different films in detail. These are separated into set categories, such as; American, British, Independent, Global, Documentary, Experimental and Silent Film. Films are analysed via a number of different study area frameworks, including: film form, meaning and response, context, spectatorship, narrative, ideology, authorship, critical debates and theoretical debates. Pupils work with their classmates to debate and investigate the set film texts and to develop a sophisticated contextual understanding of the world at the time these films were made. Film studies requires the pupils to develop an inquisitive mind and consider the deeper social, political and economic contexts of those films.

Pupils will also explore the work of a wide range of influential film directors, such as Alfred Hitchcock, Spike Lee, Quentin Tarantino and the Coen Brothers. Film studies A Level also includes the work of many of the forefathers of cinema by evaluating the impact of key pioneers on the film industry including The Lumière Brothers, DW Griffiths, Charlie Chaplin, and Sergei Eisenstein.

Film studies A Level will introduce learners to a wide range of film-making processes so that they develop, through discussion, analysis and debate, a wide range of technical skills for both constructing and deconstructing film. This will give them the ability to develop their own creative skills as they explore these film-making techniques from different times and places. The NEA element allows the pupils to experiment with a variety of film-making technology and film-editing software to develop their creative skills.

### Core Study Areas

Key Elements of Film Form  
Meaning and Response  
Context

### Specialist Study Areas

Spectatorship (US Film since 2005)  
Narrative (British Film since 1995, Experimental film)  
Ideology (British Film since 1995, US Film since 2005)  
Auteurship (Hollywood 1930-1990, Experimental Film)  
Critical debate (Silent cinema, Documentary)  
Film makers Theories (Documentary)

## Summary of Assessment

### Component 1. Varieties of film and film making

Written examination 150 mins  
35% of qualification  
Section A Hollywood Classical & New (2 film study)  
Section B US film since 2005 (2 film study)  
Section C British film since 1995 (2 film study)

## **Component 2. Global film making perspectives**

Written examination 150 mins

35% of qualification

This component assesses knowledge and understanding of 5 feature length films

Section A Global film (2 film study)

Section B Documentary film (1 film study)

Section C Film movements Silent Cinema (1 film study)

Section D Film movements Experimental film (1 film study)

## **Component 3. Production**

Non-examination assessment

30% of qualification

This component assesses one production and its evaluative analysis. Learners produce

- **either** a short (4-5 min) film **or** screenplay for a short film (**1600-1800 words**) plus a digitally photographed storyboard of a key section from the screenplay
- an evaluative analysis (**1600-1800 words**)

Mr M Pennington BA (Hons) MA (RCA) Fine Art

## **Fine Art**

## **Edexcel A Level 9FA0**

Fine art is the area of art and design primarily concerned with personal expression, with producing something individual and creative. Work may be objective and analytical, or emotive and expressive, but fundamentally it is the response of the individual using the language of the visual arts, reflecting a critical and historical understanding of the subject.

Art at A Level incorporates and builds on the aims and patterns of work established in GCSE art, allowing a natural progression in art education both for those who intend to undertake further studies (a Foundation year and then a Degree course) and those who have an interest in and aptitude for the subject, but do not intend to take it further. A GCSE qualification is essential. The course consists of a mixture of internally and externally set work. Work presented for assessment must show that all the objectives demanded by the Board have been met.

Pupils keep sketchbooks throughout the course, showing evidence of the development of their ideas with reference to the work of other artists, and showing their understanding of meanings and their ability to make skilled judgements in visual and verbal form.

Those pupils who have done GCSE art at Wychwood will have developed strong sketchbook skills which reflect their own individual approaches and these will stand them in good stead for A Level and beyond.

### **Study I (Year 12)**

**Component 1:** (60% of total A Level qualification)

#### Project 1

A programme exploring the formal art elements and then a more personal response, working sequentially through initial ideas to a conclusion. Supporting studies and practical work to be submitted. Exhibition/museum visits are essential. Life drawing externally required throughout Study.

### **Study II (Year 13)**

#### Project 2

The Personal Study

Practical work with supporting studies and a final outcome linked to a personal written study/dissertation of 1000 - 3000 words, which is worth 12% of component 1.

**Component 2:** Externally Set Assignment

(40% of total A Level qualification, title given out by examination board at the start of February) Thorough investigation and preparation based on given theme culminating in a 15-hour period of sustained focus under examination conditions creating a final outcome, with all preparatory studies submitted.

The Wychwood Sixth have their own art studios, with each pupil having their own personal work space. These are always open. The development of a strong and confident individual style in a wide variety of materials is very important. The standard required is high, and pupils need to be self-motivated and able to work independently. Pupils with above average ability and a real desire to work at the subject are encouraged to embark on these courses.

Ms A Wardell BA (Hons) MA

## French

## AQA A Level 7652

French is a course worth studying in its own right. It is challenging but interesting. It builds on work that you will have met at GCSE and introduces new ideas and concepts. It serves as a very useful support for many other qualifications, as well as being a very sought-after qualification for the workplace and courses in Higher Education.

This qualification is linear which means that pupils will sit all their exams at the end of the course. The course will offer areas of study which are contemporary and age-appropriate to the pupils.

Learners will increase their knowledge of countries where French is spoken through the study of the language in its cultural, literary and social context. The assessment of speaking, reading, listening and translation will be based on the areas of study. For the assessment of the writing, pupils will produce essays related to the films and literary texts which have been chosen.

### A Level

Paper 1: **Comprehension** (50% of A Level)

(listening, reading and translation into English and translation into French)

Written paper: 2 hours 30 minutes

Total marks: 100

Paper 2: **Writing** (20% of A Level)

Written paper: 2 hours

Total marks: 80

Critical essay on a prescribed film and a literary text or 2 literary texts

Paper 3: **Speaking** (30% of A Level)

Speaking test: 16-18 minutes + 5 minute preparation

Total marks: 60

Discussion of a sub-topic and presentation and discussion of individual research project

The following areas of study form the basis of listening and reading, comprehension, translation and the stimulus cards for the speaking test:

**Social issues and trends\***: The changing nature of the family, the effects of communication technology on society, voluntary work.

**Aspects of French-speaking society, current issues**: diversity, marginalisation, crimes and punishment.

**Aspects of artistic culture in the French-speaking world\***: heritage, contemporary francophone music, and cinema.

**Aspects of the political life in the French-speaking world**: youth and political commitments, social unrest, politics and immigration.

Areas of study in the list above marked \* are common to both AS and A Level in order to offer the flexibility to teach both courses alongside each other.

**For their individual research project**, pupils must identify a subject or a key question which is of interest to them and which relates to a country or countries where French is spoken. They

must select relevant information in French from a range of sources including the internet. The aim of the research project is to develop research skills.

Pupils will demonstrate their ability to initiate and conduct individual research by analysing and summarising their findings, in order to present and discuss them in the speaking assessment.

### **How can I develop my skills by doing this course?**

As well as covering an advanced level study of French, this course will enable you to develop some key skills, for example, research skills which will be essential to you whatever you go on to do in the future.

Pupils for examination are required to demonstrate their knowledge of contemporary society. Consequently, we believe it is necessary for all pupils to spend **as much holiday time as possible abroad**, preferably with a francophone family. A number of organisations specialise in linguistic stays and we can advise you on the various possibilities. These visits should take place during **the summer before the beginning of the course** and, **for those taking an A Level, preferably again during the following summer. All pupils should appreciate this requirement before embarking on the course.**

### **What facilities and equipment will I use?**

We are fortunate in that the Maison Française, our local French cultural centre, is literally just around the corner, with its excellent library, reading room, exhibition hall and lecture rooms.

Pupils will need to provide themselves with:

Collins-Robert Dictionary	(bilingual)
Robert French Dictionary	(monolingual)
Headphones	

### **What could I go on to do at the end of my course?**

A French language qualification is acceptable for virtually all University subjects, not only the obvious Language, Literature and Applied Language courses. It will often be a requirement or an option in the following courses: management and business studies, administration courses, travel and tourism studies. In science-based subjects (especially medicine, pharmacology and other biological sciences, not to mention recent developments in computing), many relevant papers are published in French. Knowledge of a European language, such as French, will weigh heavily in your favour when applying for a student exchange programme for a year of study abroad.

French can enhance your chances for a career in industry, commerce, management, fashion, diplomacy and bilingual secretariats or PA posts. If you would like to work abroad, do not forget that French is spoken not only in the core area (France and neighbouring Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland) but also in parts of North America and the Caribbean, many African countries, and even in southeast Asia and the Indian and Pacific Ocean islands.

Mr L Jimenez LLB MA Spanish

Described as 'The must have A Level' by the Guardian Newspaper, geography in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is central to understanding the world around us. It allows us to understand the causes of many of the problems in the world, and their consequences to different places. This also includes the problems posed for the sustainable futures of societies, resources and landscapes. The world will need geographers to make a difference and to understand the solutions that are needed to save the world. Geography at A Level allows an in-depth study of subject matter which is topical and wide-ranging, thus providing a useful basis for a variety of career choices. Geography brings together many A Level subjects, acting as a bridge between them.

Among the many benefits, the specification is designed to encourage pupils to:

- Develop fieldwork skills and study geographical issues and impacts.
- Develop a specialist interest within the field of geography and progress to higher education and employment.

This qualification is linear meaning that pupils will sit their examinations and the school will submit their non-examination assessment at the end of the course.

### **Subject content details**

#### **Component 1: Physical geography**

Section A: Water and carbon cycles

Section B: Coastal systems and landscapes

Section C: Hazards

#### **Component 2: Human geography**

Section A: Global systems and global governance

Section B: Changing places

Section C: Population and the environment

#### **Component 3: Geography fieldwork investigation**

Pupils will complete an individual investigation of between 3000 and 4000 words, which must include data collected in the field. The individual investigation must be based on a question or issue defined and developed by the pupil, and it must relate to some part of the specification content. A large proportion of this will be completed during the summer break between the first and second year of the course.

#### **Component 4: Geographical skills**

The specification will be taught linearly, with Hazards, Coastal Systems and Landscapes, and Changing Places occupying the first year and the remaining units of study being covered in the second year.

Pupils will also undertake four days of fieldwork during their A Level course organised by the school, which can be completed in a number of ways: locally or further afield; on full days or on part days.

The first two components of the course will each be assessed by way of a written examination, lasting 2 hours and 30 minutes, with each paper contributing 40% towards the A Level. The third component will account for the final 20% of the A Level and will be marked internally in school before being sent to the examination board for moderation.

"All sorts of reasons can be given for reading history, but the best of them has always seemed to me sheer pleasure."

Lord Robert Blake in CSL Davies' *Peace Print & Protestantism 1450-1558*

### 1C The Tudors: England, 1485-1603

A breadth study that encompasses the Tudor dynasty. The paper explores power, politics, intellectual and religious ideas, and how England was governed during this period. To understand this paper, we'll draw on the work of historians, artists, and playwrights.

### 2N Revolution and dictatorship: Russia, 1917-1953

A depth study of the coming and practice of communism in Russia. The paper explores concepts such as Marxism, communism, Leninism, and Stalinism, ideological control and dictatorship. It also enables you to consider issues of political authority, the power of individuals and the inter-relationship of governmental and economic and social change. To understand this paper, we'll pay particular attention to primary sources, ranging from propaganda to ration cards.

### 3. There is also an NEA (non examination assessment)

One of the joys of studying history is the opportunity to engage with lives and worlds very different, or at times frighteningly similar, to your own. Our purpose as historians is not merely to record what we believed happened in essays and books, but to understand why. History is a subject full of controversy, arguments, and conflicting interpretations. To gain the most from the course we will encourage you to engage with all sorts of material beyond the classroom. Whilst the textbooks are excellent, they are simply a starting point. With that in mind, we hope you enjoy the history course.

Dr D.B. Haycock BA (Hons, Oxon) MA PhD

## Mathematics

## Edexcel A Level 9MA0

### Requirements

A Level mathematics is accepted toward the entrance qualifications of a wide range of university courses and is a requirement for a few. It is also well thought of by many employers. The most important reason for studying mathematics is the fascination of the subject, which is neither a science nor an art, and it is important that you find some enjoyment in learning more about the concepts and methods.

Most aspects of the GCSE and International GCSE courses will be met at a higher level in the A Level course, though it is particularly important to have a good grasp of the algebra and trigonometry studied at GCSE.

### Aims

A successful pupil will develop their ability to reason logically and to analyse problems and apply mathematical methods to solve them. Some of the problems will be set in the context of the 'real world', and the technique of mathematical modelling will be explored and used to allow their solution. As the course continues, the relations between the many different techniques first met at GCSE will become clearer, and the unity of the subject will become more apparent.

### Structure

This subject is linear and the new specification was first taught in September 2017. There are no longer individual units for the course. There is a common course that has to be studied which includes Pure Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics. At the end of the course there are three 2 hour papers; Papers 1 and 2 are both on Pure Mathematics and Paper 3 is on the Statistics and Mechanics topics. The total marks for all 3 papers are 100 and each paper is worth  $33\frac{1}{3}$  % of the qualification.

The Pure Mathematics topics extend the algebra, co-ordinate geometry and trigonometry studied up to GCSE and introduce new topics such as series and logarithms. Statistics is used by pupils of biology, economics, geography, and psychology. The topics studied will build on ideas already met at GCSE as well as new topics such as statistical distributions and hypothesis testing. Mechanics is the application of mathematical methods to specific problems in physics. This builds on topics such as kinematics which have already been met at IGCSE as well as introducing forces and Newton's Laws of Motion.

Mrs. V. Mackay BSc (Hons) PGCE MSc (Oxon)

## Further Mathematics

## Edexcel A Level 9FM0

Further mathematics is taken **in addition** to A Level mathematics, not as a separate subject. There is still some flexibility in the choice of units to make up the course, so the information below gives what options pupils might take. It is expected that those who join the course will have a grade 9 at GCSE.

The course has four 1½ hour papers; the total marks for each paper are 75 and each paper is worth 25% of the qualification. Paper 1 and 2 are both compulsory and are called Core Pure Mathematics 1 and 2. There is a first option, which can be chosen from Further Pure Mathematics 1, Further Statistics 1, Further Mechanics 1 and Decision Mathematics 1. The second option can be chosen from Further Pure Mathematics 2, Further Statistics 1, Further Statistics 2, Further Mechanics 1, Further Mechanics 2, Decision Mathematics 1 and Decision Mathematics 2, but there are restrictions on which papers can be taken together. The choice of options is made by the pupils in the class as a whole, advised by their mathematics teacher based on their combined interests and ambitions.

Mrs V Mackay BSc (Hons) PGCE MSc (Oxon)

## **Music**

### **Edexcel A Level 9MU0**

Before starting this course, pupils must:

- Play an instrument or sing at grade 6 ABRSM standard

It is strongly recommended that pupils pass the ABRSM grade 5 theory of music examination before commencing A Level music.

#### **What does the course involve?**

The course will consist of three elements: Performing, composing and appraising.

- Performing is worth 30%. Pupils will have to perform for eight minutes. The performance can be either solo and/or ensemble based.
- Composing is worth 30%. Pupils must compose two pieces. One piece must be in response to a brief set by the examination board, whilst the other is free choice.
- Appraising is worth 40%. It is assessed through a 130 minute examination at the end of the course. Pupils study six areas of study, with two or three set works in each area. The areas of study are:
  - Vocal music
  - Instrumental music
  - Music for film
  - Popular music and jazz
  - Fusions
  - New directions

This is a course that will stretch pupils in all areas of music and give them a wide understanding of many different musical genres.

Mrs B A Walster BMus (Hons) PGCE

## Photography

## Edexcel A Level 9PY0

Pupils who opt to take photography develop a means of personal enquiry and expression involving the selection and manipulation of images including digital imagery. Pupils employ creative approaches in their work, which go beyond mere observation and recording and are encouraged to work with both the still and the moving image. Pupils develop skills in all aspects of photographic practice including technical, theoretical and application of elements within creative photography.

It is essential that all pupils have a camera from the beginning of the course. Pupils are expected to own, and work on, their own laptops in conjunction with the iMacs in the photography room. The photography teacher can advise on make and model. There is no additional materials charge for this course.

### Year 12

**Component 1:** Coursework ('Environment' project and 'Photographers' project)

The aim of this unit is to ensure that pupils develop an understanding of the expressive nature of the formal elements within photography and film. The possible range of practices might include: comparing, criticising, describing, collecting, investigating, analysing, evaluating, assimilating, exploring etc.

Pupils will develop a personal response to a theme. They work sequentially through a series of ideas towards diverse personal outcomes and a well-considered conclusion or conclusions.

### Year 13

**Component 1:** Coursework (Personal Investigation Practical and Written)

This unit incorporates two linked elements: practical work in the form of studies and end pieces and personal study in the form of a written and illustrated dissertation. Pupils will build on their prior knowledge and experience developed during the previous year and develop a focus of study most suited to them and their own interests in photography and film.

The supporting studies will involve pupils:

- identifying and selecting a focus for personal creative ideas
- undertaking investigation and research work appropriate to their focus
- selecting and explaining appropriate media and processes
- developing, reviewing and refining ideas
- realising a personal response

**Component 2:** Externally Set Assignment

For assessment, pupils must submit unaided work produced under examination conditions in a period of 15 hours. The journal, preparatory work and unaided work in this final unit will show the extent to which they can use the skills and the language of the subject that they have developed throughout the course and is essential to success. Pupils will be given a preparatory period of about a term of exploration and experimentation prior to sitting the Controlled Test. They are given a theme with possible starting points and are required to develop ideas, research, make connections and develop a personal, coherent response.

Mr M Pennington MA (RCA) Fine Art

## Physical Education

## AQA A Level 7582

A Level PE is offered for those which have a keen interest in sport and who wish to extend their understanding and skills in all forms of physical activity. Pupils receive a well-rounded and full introduction to the world of PE, sport and sports science. This complete grounding in the subject provides an excellent base from which to build when moving on to higher education, employment or further training. Pupils can develop a range of practical skills, including communication using appropriate language, dealing with pressure, split second decision-making, analysing and evaluating performance, and more.

Related career paths that could be followed are sports science, sports psychology, working in the fitness industry, coaching or teaching sport and PE, performance analysis, physiotherapy, nutrition and sports development.

### **Paper 1: Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport**

#### **What is assessed:**

Section A: Applied anatomy and physiology

Section B: Skill acquisition

Section C: Sport and society

#### **How it is assessed:**

Written exam: 2 hours

105 marks

35% of A Level

### **Paper 2: Factors affecting optimal performance in physical activity and sport**

#### **What is assessed:**

Section A: Exercise physiology and biomechanics

Section B: Sport psychology

Section C: Sport and society and technology in sport

#### **How it is assessed:**

Written exam: 2 hours

105 marks

35% of A-level

### **Non-exam assessment: Practical performance in physical activity and sport**

#### **What is assessed:**

Pupils are assessed as a performer or coach in the full sided version of one activity.

Plus written/verbal analysis of performance.

#### **How it is assessed:**

Internal assessment, external moderation

90 marks

30% of A Level

At this level pupils **must be competing in their chosen practical** activity at a good standard, which should take place **outside of school at a club** or recreational activity.

The main aim of A Level physics is to encourage pupils to develop an interest in and enthusiasm for physics. Along the way they will develop an appreciation of how society makes decisions about scientific issues and how science contributes to the success of both the economy and of society.

In Study I pupils study mechanics, electrons, waves and photons and practical skills in physics.

In mechanics, pupils will develop knowledge and understanding of the key ideas used to describe the motion of objects, understand the implications of several forces acting on a body and the applications to engineering and design, develop awareness of how the principle of conservation of energy can be applied to many situations, from rollercoasters to construction, as well as developing analytical and experimental skills.

In electrons, waves and photons, pupils will understand how models and theories have changed and developed with the understanding of the electron, be able to build electric circuits and understand their uses and applications, deepen their understanding of waves and become aware of the concept of wave particle duality, develop an understanding of quantum physics and an appreciation of the role of symmetry in nature.

The practical skills module will be assessed in the external exams, but pupils are also required to satisfy an endorsement by an external moderator of a series of practicals undertaken throughout the year. This endorsement does not contribute to their final grade. Pupils will be examined on their ability to design and carry out safe experiments, to analyse and interpret data, recognising correlations and causal relationships and on their ability to evaluate methodology and resolve conflicting evidence.

In Study II pupils study the Newtonian world, fields, particles, cosmology, medical physics and practical skills in physics.

In the Newtonian world pupils will discuss the use of models in explaining the world around us and understand why Newtonian physics does not apply to situations involving speeds close to the speed of light. They will understand how theories are proposed and developed and apply Newtonian mechanics to the behaviour of gases.

In fields, particles and medical physics pupils will extend their knowledge of electric and magnetic fields, investigate atomic theory, its applications to radioactivity and explore the possible viability of nuclear fission and fusion as ways of meeting the demand for electricity in the future. They will explore the application of physics to medical imaging and explore models of the universe, its possible origin and future.

In the second practical skills module pupils will be expected to extend their ability to carry out experimentation and analyse data. A practical endorsement of experimental work is again required as well as practical skills assessment within the written exams.

Studying A Level physics will provide pupils with a rich experience, allowing them the exciting opportunity to understand the physical world and the secrets it holds.

## **Psychology AQA A Level 7182**

Psychology is the scientific study of the brain and behaviour, and the topics covered at A Level are diverse and fascinating. Beyond developing your knowledge of the subject itself, you will learn a variety of skills including analytical thinking, improved communication, problem solving and evaluation. These skills will be invaluable to you across other subjects and in preparation for studying at university level regardless of your chosen degree.

1. The study of classic and contemporary theories and research studies drawn from different topic areas and theoretical perspectives within psychology.
2. Developing an understanding of the methods used in psychological research and using this knowledge to design, carry out and analyse the results of small scale research investigations in regular class practical activities.
3. Developing critical thinking skills through the consideration of psychological issues and debates, for example, the interaction between nature and nurture in shaping behaviour, and gender bias in theories and studies.

This qualification is linear and is examined as follows:

Introductory Topics in Psychology: 1 Social influence 2 Memory 3 Attachment 4 Psychopathology 33.3% 96 Marks in Total Summer of Study II (Year 13)

Psychology in Context: 5 Approaches in Psychology 6 Biopsychology 7 Research methods 33.3% 96 Marks in Total Summer of Study II (Year 13)

Issues and Options in Psychology Compulsory section on Issues and Debates in Psychology plus one option chosen from 9 Relationships 10 Gender 11 Cognition and development plus one option chosen from 12 Schizophrenia 13 Eating behaviour 14 Stress plus one option chosen from 15 Aggression 16 Forensic Psychology 17 Addiction 33.3% 96 Marks in Total Summer of Study II (Year 13)

Mr A Mohammed BSc (Hons) QTS PGCE MSc (Oxon)

## **Religious Studies**

## **OCR A Level H573**

Philosophy of Religion, Religious Ethics and Developments in Christian Thought.

Religious studies is a course which is challenging, open-ended and discursive. It is for pupils who value the opportunity to explore in some depth real issues concerning human life and existence and it is not reliant upon any specific faith or belief system.

The aim of the OCR course is to:

- Develop an interest in and an enthusiasm for a rigorous study of religion and philosophy.
- Treat the subject as an academic discipline by developing knowledge and understanding appropriate to a specialist study of religion.
- Use an enquiring, critical and empathetic approach to the study of religion.

We will be studying the following areas:

- Unit H573/01 Philosophy of Religion - Plato and Aristotle; Soul, mind and body; Life after death; Religious Experience; Arguments for and against the existence of God; the nature of God; Religious language; Twentieth century perspectives.
- Unit H573/02 Religion and Ethics - Normative ethical theories - natural law, situation ethics, virtue ethics; Applied ethics - Sexual ethics, euthanasia; ethical language - egoism, duty, preference; metaethics; Freewill and conscience; Developments in ethical thought.
- Unit H573/03 Developments in Christian thought - Human nature and purpose of life; the self and immortality; Knowledge and revelation of God; The Bible; Jesus Christ; the challenge of secularism; responses to secularism.

These units are assessed through essay-style questions in the examinations and each paper is 2 hours long.

Mrs C Crossley BA Theology (Hons) PGCE

## Spanish

## AQA A Level 7692

Spanish is now spoken by nearly 450 million people all over the world. It is the most spoken mother tongue after Mandarin Chinese. It is also the second most studied language after English.

A Level Spanish is a course worth studying. It is challenging but interesting. It builds on work that you will have met at GCSE and introduces innovative ideas and concepts. It serves as a useful support for many other qualifications and a sought-after qualification for the workplace and courses in Higher Education.

### What facilities and equipment will I use?

Pupils will need to provide themselves with a bilingual Oxford Spanish dictionary or online equivalent. The 2-year course is supported by online Kerboodle resources, textbooks, as well as literary texts and booklets.

### What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

A Spanish language qualification is acceptable for all University subjects, not only the obvious language, literature and applied language courses. It will often be a requirement or an option in the following courses: management and business studies, administration courses and travel and tourism studies. In science-based subjects (especially medicine, pharmacology, and other biological sciences, not to mention recent developments in computing), many relevant papers are published in Spanish. Your knowledge of this European language will weigh heavily in your favour when applying for either an *Erasmus* or *Comet* grant for a year of study abroad.

Spanish can enhance your chances for a career in industry, commerce, management, fashion, diplomacy, and bilingual secretariats or PA posts. If you would like to work abroad, do not forget that Spanish is spoken not only in the core area (Spain and the neighboring Balearic and Canary Islands) but also in most of Latin America and the United States.

### Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing

#### What is assessed:

- Aspects of Hispanic society
- Artistic culture in the Hispanic world
- Multiculturalism in Hispanic society
- Aspects of political life in Hispanic society
- Grammar

#### How it is assessed: (50% of A Level)

Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes

Total marks: 100

#### Questions

- Listening and responding to spoken passages from a range of contexts and sources covering different registers and adapted as necessary. Material will include complex factual and abstract content and questions will target main points, gist, and detail. Studio recordings will be used, and pupils will have individual control of the recording. All questions are in Spanish, to be answered with non-verbal responses or in Spanish (30 marks).
- Reading and responding to a variety of texts written for different purposes, drawn from a range of authentic sources, and adapted, as necessary. Material will include complex factual and abstract content and questions will target main points, gist and detail.

All questions are in Spanish, to be answered with non-verbal responses or in Spanish (50 marks).

- Translation into English; a passage of minimum 100 words (10 marks).
- Translation into Spanish; a passage of minimum 100 words (10 marks).

## **Paper 2: Writing**

### **What is assessed:**

- One text and one film or two texts from the list set in the specification
- Grammar

### **How it is assessed:** (20% of A Level)

- Written exam: 2 hours
- Total marks: 80 marks

### **Questions**

- Either one question in Spanish on a set text from a choice of two questions and one question in Spanish on a set film from a choice of two questions or two questions in Spanish on set texts from a choice of two questions on each text.
- All questions will require a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered in the work and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation, as appropriate to the work studied (e.g., the effect of narrative voice in a prose text or camera work in a film).

Pupils are advised to write approximately 300 words per essay.

## **Paper 3: Speaking**

### **What is assessed:**

- Individual research project
- One of four sub-themes i.e., Aspects of Hispanic society or Artistic culture in the Hispanic world or Multiculturalism in Hispanic society or Aspects of political life in Hispanic society

### **How it is assessed:** (30% of A Level)

- Oral exam: 21-23 minutes (including 5 minutes preparation time)
- 60 marks in total

### **Questions**

- Discussion of a sub-theme with the discussion based on a stimulus card (5-6 minutes). The pupil studies the card for 5 minutes at the start of the test (25 marks).
- Presentation (2 minutes) and discussion (9-10 minutes) of individual research project (35 marks).

Pupils may take the assessment only once before certification. Assessments will be conducted by the school or a visiting examiner and marked by an AQA examiner.

The A Level specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. It constitutes an integrated study with a focus on language, culture, and society. It fosters a range of transferable skills including communication, critical thinking, research skills and creativity, which are valuable to the individual and society. The content is suitable for pupils who wish to progress to employment or to further study, including a modern languages degree.

The specification has been designed to be studied over two years. The approach is a focus on how Spanish-speaking society has been shaped socially and culturally and how it continues to change. In Year 12 (Study I), aspects of the social context are studied, together with aspects of

the artistic life of Spanish-speaking countries. In Year 13 (Study II) further aspects of the social background are covered, this time focusing on matters associated with multiculturalism. Pupils also study aspects of the political landscape including the future of political life in the Hispanic world by focusing on young people and their political engagement.

Pupils will develop their knowledge and understanding of themes relating to the culture and society of countries where Spanish is spoken, and their language skills. They will do this by using authentic spoken and written sources in Spanish.

The choice of works (literary texts and films) offers opportunities to link with the themes so that, for example, the play *La casa de Bernarda Alba* could be linked to the sub-theme Modern and traditional values while the film *Volver* could be connected to the sub-theme Equal rights.

Pupils following this specification will develop their language knowledge, understanding and skills through:

- using language spontaneously to initiate communication; ask and answer questions; express thoughts and feelings; present viewpoints; develop arguments; persuade; and analyse and evaluate in speech and writing, including interaction with speakers of Spanish
- applying knowledge of pronunciation, morphology and syntax, vocabulary, and idiom to communicate accurately and coherently, using a range of expression – including the list of grammar in this specification
- using language-learning skills and strategies, including communication strategies such as adjusting the message, circumlocution, self-correction, and repair strategies
- listening and responding to spoken passages including some extended passages from a range of different contexts and sources, adapted as necessary, covering different registers and types, including authentic communication involving one or more speakers
- reading and responding to a variety of texts including some extended texts written for different purposes and audiences drawn from a range of authentic sources, including contemporary, historical, and literary, fiction and non-fiction texts, adapted as necessary
- understanding the main points, gist and detail from spoken and written material
- inferring meaning from complex spoken and written material, including factual and abstract content
- assimilating and using information from spoken and written sources, including material from online media
- summarising information from spoken and written sources, reporting key points and subject matter in speech and writing
- translating an unseen passage from Spanish into English
- translating an unseen passage from English into Spanish.

Pupils must also study either one book and one film or two books from the lists in this specification. They must appreciate, analyse and be able to respond critically in writing in Spanish to the work they have studied. Their understanding of the work must include a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation as appropriate to the work studied (e.g., the effect of narrative voice in a prose text or camerawork in a film). In addition, pupils following this specification will:

- develop research skills in Spanish, demonstrating the ability to initiate and conduct individual research on a subject of personal interest, relating to the country or countries where Spanish is spoken
- identify a key question or subject of interest and select relevant information in Spanish from a range of authentic sources, including the internet
- use information to illustrate knowledge and understanding of the research subject

- analyse and summarise research findings, elaborating on key points of interest, as appropriate, through oral presentation and discussion.

Mr L Jimenez LLB MA Spanish

## **Textiles**

## **Edexcel A Level 9TE01**

Textiles is part of the GCE Art and Design qualification and is delivered over two years. It is practical in content, involving no formal written examination. However, the work is annotated, and Component 1 includes a 3000-word essay.

In the textile design course pupils produce work that involves creation, selection and manipulation across a variety of practices. Disciplines included within the specification are textiles for interiors, fine art textiles and fashion textiles, pupils work in one or more of these disciplines.

The A Level course develops further from a GCSE course with pupils building on their repertoire of skills, techniques and interests they have already acquired.

Central to the course is a commitment to build and develop a core of resource ideas in a wide variety of techniques and samples. This central foundation of ideas enables pupils to develop their final resolved textiles pieces for assessment.

### **Course content**

#### **Component 1** - Coursework (60% of the overall mark)

This unit incorporates two linked elements:

- a) Practical work in the form of studies, sketchbooks and final pieces.  
There are 4 assessment objectives, and you will build your studies and investigations around them.
  - Research ideas, making connections with the work of other artists and designers.
  - Experiment with materials, techniques and processes, developing and refining ideas.
  - Record your ideas and developments using a range of mark making, drawing and observational skills, reflecting on your progress.
  - Personal response, realising their intentions in one or more final outcome/s.
- b) Personal study in the form of a written dissertation (1-3000 words). Pupils will build on their prior knowledge and experience investigating a focused element of their research.

#### **Component 2** - Externally Set Assignment (40% of the overall mark)

Pupils must submit for assessment unaided work produced under examination conditions in a period of 15 hours. The sketchbook, preparatory work and unaided work in this final unit will show the extent to which they can use the skills and the language of the subject that they have developed throughout the course.

Throughout the two-year course pupils gain contextual understanding by visiting a variety of exhibitions, historical collections and galleries relevant to their research.

Mrs S McCullagh

**What is the EPQ?**

We regard the Extended Project Qualification as an important bridge between sixth-form study and undergraduate work. The EPQ is a level 3 course, worth half an A Level, and provides an opportunity for pupils to extend their abilities beyond the A Level syllabus and prepare for university or their future career. In recent years the majority of pupils have begun an EPQ during Study I, and while not all choose to complete them, all those who start them derive significant benefit. For those that do go on to complete an EPQ, there is the additional benefit that many universities are willing to take the EPQ into account when making offers, reducing their offers by at least one A Level grade, hence, reducing stress for pupils during the A Level examination period. There are two elements to the EPQ, the first is the taught component, provided by the compulsory Research Methods Course (see above); the second is the pupil's independent work.

**1 The Taught Component**

Pupils will choose a topic of personal interest for in-depth, independent study. They will be matched with a supervisor who will approve the title and oversee the project. At the outset pupils will be taught transferable study skills which are excellent preparation for study at university level. These will include: learning how to frame a research question, to identify, obtain, critically select and use information from a range of sources, as well as referencing skills. Tuition in statistical analysis will be available to those pupils whose project involves quantitative data.

**2 The Project Itself**

This comprises three compulsory elements:

- **The product.** A variety of formats are acceptable, for example, an academic report of approximately 5,000 words, an artefact, or writing and producing a play.
- **The production log.** You will keep a step by step record of the research process and provide an analytical commentary on decisions taken in the style of a reflective practitioner.
- **The presentation.** On completion, a presentation explaining the project must be given. This might be a powerpoint presentation in school to an invited audience of friends and family, or form part of an assembly or Celebration Day activity.

**Assessment**

The EPQ will be marked internally in school before being moderated by AQA.

**Who should consider taking the EPQ?**

The EPQ is useful for everyone, but it may be particularly useful for pupils who:

- are extremely able (in addition to their other subjects)
- do not always perform to their potential in exams
- have a passionate interest in a topic that does not form part of the taught curriculum

Further information is available from Mrs Troth in school and on the AQA website at

**<http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/subjects/AQA-W-7993-SP.PDF>**

Mrs G Troth BSc (Hons) PGCE

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