

# Bridging the Gap from GCSE to A-Level

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## St Mary's Catholic School

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## Sixth Form Entry: September 2019

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# Bridging the Gap from GCSE to A-Level

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## Introduction

The move from GCSE to A Level can be quite a daunting one. Students will be given the tools with which they will become more independent in their studies which will in turn mean that they will gain the most from their courses. Preparation, additional reading and research can all support this new level of independence and challenge. The following short document is intended to give students an insight of where they can start to look for additional materials to support their studies. This should start as post GCSE Summer Reading and continue throughout Sixth Form.

## Art A-Level

The aims of the syllabi in Art and Design are to stimulate, encourage and develop:

- The ability to perceive, understand and express concepts and feelings;
- The ability to record from direct observation and personal experience;
- The ability to communicate by using appropriate materials and techniques in a disciplined way;
- Experimentation, innovation and the use of intuition and imagination;
- Critical and analytical faculties; the ability to identify, research and evaluate the problems in a systematic way;
- Confidence, initiative and sense of adventure and achievement;
- The acquisition of a relevant working vocabulary;
- An awareness and appreciation of the interdependence of Art and the individual within cultural contexts.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Art***

Useful Books and Reading to prepare yourself for Art A Level. Students should choose a selection from the following texts.

- The Thames & Hudson Introduction to Art Debra J. DeWitte, Ralph M. Larmann and M. Kathryn Shields
- Design: The Whole Story Elizabeth Wilhide

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- A History of Pictures From the Cave to the Computer Screen David Hockney and Martin Gayford
- Art in Detail: 100 Masterpieces Susie Hodge
- The Shock of the New Art and the Century of Change | (Updated and enlarged edition) Robert Hughes
- The Self-Portrait A Cultural History James Hall
- Art Since 1989 Kelly Grovier
- Drawing and Painting Materials and Techniques for Contemporary Artists Kate Wilson
- How to Write About Contemporary Art Gilda Williams
- Styles, Schools and Movements The Essential Encyclopaedic Guide to Modern Art | Revised and expanded edition Amy Dempsey
- The Complete Typographer A Foundation Course for Graphic Designers Working with Type Will Hill
- Drawing People The Human Figure in Contemporary Art Roger Malbert

## Biology A-Level

Biology involves the study of a wide range of exciting topics, ranging from molecular biology to the study of ecosystems and from microorganisms to mammoths. Biology is a dynamic subject never far from the headlines.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A level Biology***

1. Have a look through the following book and complete the exercises. It will help you revisit some of the concepts from GCSE on which A-level Biology will build.

New Head Start to A-level Biology

ISBN: 978 1 78294 279 5 [https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/book\\_BBR71](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/book_BBR71)

2. Visit the AQA site below and download a copy of the specification for A level biology

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/as-and-a-level/biology-7401-7402>

Take a look through it so you have an idea about the main areas of the AS and A2 content

3. Take a look at the Biological Science Review periodical via the website:  
<https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/Product-Landing-Pages/Magazines/Magazines-extras/Biological-Sciences-Review-extras>

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- Choose one of the articles to read from one of the issues of the Biological Sciences Review periodical.
- Write a summary of your chosen article to share with the group at the start of the year. Include a suitable reference.

### **Business A-Level**

The A level course is structured into ten stimulating topic areas.

1. What is business?
2. Managers, leadership and decision making
3. Decision making to improve marketing performance
4. Decision making to improve operational performance
5. Decision making to improve financial performance
6. Decision making to improve human resource performance
7. Analysing the strategic position of a business
8. Choosing strategic direction
9. Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
10. Managing strategic change

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A level Business***

#### **Functional Objectives and Strategies.**

Use the Tutor2u website to answer the following questions.

- 1) The following key terms are very important for the overall performance and direction of a business. What is meant by: (2 marks each)
  - Mission statement
  - Vision
  - Aims or goals
  - Objectives
- 2) What is the difference between corporate and functional objectives? (3 marks)
- 3) What is a SMART objective? Give an actual example of a SMART objective. (4 marks)

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- 4) Using a large business of your choice, investigate what the mission, vision, aims and objectives are for that business. You probably will not be able to find all the information so make an educated guess on what you think they might be. (10)
  - 5) Consider various internal and external influences on the businesses ability to meet its mission, objectives etc. (10)
  - 6) Evaluate which factors pose the biggest threat to the business, justifying your answer. (15)
- Total=50 marks.

### **Business and Administration NVQ**

NVQ's are based on the national occupational standards that describe the level and breadth of performance expected of anyone working in the industry or sector that these NVQ's cover. Carrying out 'real' work within a chosen business makes up the portfolio and using this work the student then follows a set of knowledge & performance criteria laid down by the Examination Board to produce evidence to achieve the unit.

#### ***Bridging the gap to Business and Administration NVQ***

- One of the NVQ course requirements is to update your Curriculum Vitae. You will need to update your CV with your grades and any other details that have changed.
- You also need to use the internet and see how a job application letter looks like, then write up an application letter that you will use to apply for jobs in various companies.
- Make a script that you will use when making telephone calls asking whether the manager of a company can offer you a job. You will be reading this script when phoning companies.
- In a paragraph, explain how the NVQ course will be suitable to you bearing in mind that you will be working for two days and be in school for three days. Explain how the course will help your career?

### **Chemistry A-Level**

Chemistry is the branch of science concerned with the substances of which matter is composed, the investigation of their properties and reactions, and the use of such reactions to form new substances. Chemistry is a challenging subject, which appeals to pupils who wish to better understand the world around them.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A level Chemistry***

1. 'Head Start to A-level Chemistry'  
ISBN: 978 1 78294 280 1  
[https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/Student/books\\_a\\_level\\_chemistry\\_ocr.book\\_CBR71.pageFlip\\_CBR71](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/Student/books_a_level_chemistry_ocr.book_CBR71.pageFlip_CBR71)  
Please read the book and complete the exercises (it's very short, so hopefully it will not take long).
2. Browse the following website to get a flavour of the content of the course.  
<http://www.chemguide.co.uk/>
3. Look at the Chemistry specification on the VLE using the following link  
<http://vle.stmarys.net/course/view.php?id=476>

### **Computer Science A-Level**

Computer Science is a practical subject where students can apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems. It's an intensely creative subject that combines invention and excitement, that can look at the natural world through a digital prism.

#### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Computer Science***

In preparation for A Level Computer Science:

#### **Programming:**

- Learn a language e.g. Java or Javascript using online resources such as codecademy.com

#### **Theory:**

- Visit YouTube and search for Computer Science videos from Craig n Dave

### **Design & Technology A-Level**

Design & Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. This specification encourages learners to use creativity and imagination when applying iterative design processes to develop and modify designs, and to design and make prototypes that solve real world problems, considering their own and others' needs, wants, aspirations and values.

#### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Design & Technology***

Product Design at A level requires a flexible approach to gaining knowledge about all areas of the subject and then applying it independently through project work the book attached onto the website is the foundation from which this knowledge is

gained and an understanding of the contents of the book will allow progress at an early stage on the course.

## **Economics A-Level**

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

- **Theme 1** introduces students to markets and market failure
- **Theme 2** introduces students to the UK economy, focusing on performance and policies
- **Theme 3** explores business behaviour and the labour market
- **Theme 4** considers a global perspective.

### ***Bridging the gap to A Level Economics***

In preparation for A Level Economics you should:

- 1) Define what is meant by the term economics? (3)
- 2) Define the following important economic terms: (15)
  - Scarcity
  - Opportunity cost
  - Market
  - Supply
  - Demand
- 3) Investigate what is meant by the following types of economies: (9)
  - Free market economy
  - Mixed economy
  - Centrally planned economy
- 4) Explain the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three types of economies at 3) above. (15)
- 5) Rank the three types of economies in order of most effective to least effective. Give reasons for your judgements. (13)

Total= 55 marks.

## **English Language A-Level**

English Language is a subject which requires students to think analytically, and almost scientifically at times, in their breakdown of language. It asks students to look closely

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at how writers and speakers manipulate language, express emotions (intentionally and unintentionally) and create a power divide through their choice of lexis and sentence structure.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level English Language***

Over the two year study period your course will cover:

- A variety of discourse structures and modes
- The study of lexis, semantics, phonetics, pragmatics, graphology and grammatical structures
- Child language development
- Language change over time
- Global English
- Accent
- Dialect
- Sociolects
- Ethnolects
- Language and gender
- Language and occupation
- Language and Power

To prepare yourself for the course it is important that you become familiar with a wide variety of text types. Take yourself out of your comfort zone and really stretch yourself with your reading: if you are not a newspaper reader then start; if you haven't read political speeches then start; if you have only read contemporary texts then start to read texts from the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ensure that you understand how a dictionary works i.e. how to find the etymology of a word and how some word classes can change according to their use.

### **Recommended reading list for students:**

- *The Story of Language:* C.L. Barber (Pan Books)
- *Introduction to English Language:* Blake and Moorhead (Macmillan)
- *The English Language:* ed. W.F. Bolton and David Crystal (Sphere History of Literature)
- *Mother Tongue – The English Language:* Bill Bryson (Penguin)
- *The English Language:* David Crystal (Penguin)
- *Introducing Stylistics:* John Hayes (Routledge)
- *Language: the Basics:* R.L. Trask (Routledge)
- *The State of the Language:* Philip Howard (Penguin)

## English Literature A-Level

This course provides students with an introduction to the discipline of advanced literary studies and presents opportunities for reading widely and for making creative and informed responses to each of the major literary genres of poetry, prose and drama. The course covers eight literary texts in total from these three areas.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level English Literature***

We expect that you will join the course in September ready to move your study of literature on to the next academic level. With this in mind we have produced a reading list of titles that are appropriate to this level of learning. We strongly recommend that you spend time over the summer reading at least two titles from the list.

### **Reading List:**

You should read at least two titles that you have not already read from the following list. When you have read your choices, pick one of the essay questions that follow and answer it in approximately 850 words with close reference to ONE of your chosen texts.

- A selection of William Shakespeare's sonnets
- Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte
- Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
- Catcher in the Rye by JD Salinger
- To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
- Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
- 1984 by George Orwell
- Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
- The Collected Poems of Sylvia Plath
- Enduring Love by Ian McEwan
- The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini
- The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams
- Othello by William Shakespeare
- The Trial by Franz Kafka
- The Woman in White by Wilkie Collins
- A Tale of Two Cities by Charles Dickens
- Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte
- The Birds by Daphne Du Maurier

### **Questions to Consider:**

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1. How does the author/poet/playwright convey a particular theme?
2. How is dramatic technique used to heighten tension?
3. How does the author/playwright encourage you to empathise with a character?
4. What poetic techniques are used by the poet to convey tone?
5. How is setting used to develop your understanding of the text?

### Film Studies A-Level

Students will be introduced to a wide variety of films in order to broaden their knowledge and understanding of film and the range of responses films can generate. This specification therefore offers opportunities to study mainstream and independent American and British films from the past and the present as well as more recent global films, both non-English language and English language.

#### *Bridging the gap to A Level Film Studies*

#### **Film Studies?! Do I get to watch films all day?**

No! Many consider film to be the main cultural innovation of the 20th century and a major art form of the last hundred years. Those who study it characteristically bring with them a high degree of enthusiasm and excitement for what is a powerful and culturally significant medium, inspiring a range of responses from the emotional to the reflective. Film Studies consequently makes an important contribution to the curriculum, offering the opportunity to investigate how film works both as a powerful medium of representation and as an aesthetic medium.

Students at St Mary's will be introduced to a wide variety of films in order to broaden their knowledge and understanding of film and the range of responses films can generate. We can learn much from films when we consider them as reflections of social and political context in which they are produced: what do German Expressionist films reveal about the challenges of life in post-World War One Germany? How do the films produced in 1970s Hollywood reflect one of the tumultuous political periods in US history? How was mainstream cinema used as a means of propaganda during the Cold War?

St Mary's will enable learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- a diverse range of film, including documentary, film from the silent era, experimental film and short film
- film and its key contexts (including social, cultural, political, historical and technological contexts)
- how films generate meanings and responses

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It also aims to enable learners to apply critical approaches to film and in order to prepare properly for this course it would be advisable to access some of the following texts (any edition will do – the cheaper the better!):

- David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson Film Art: An introduction
- Pam Cook (ed.) The Cinema Book
- John Gibbs Mise-en-scène: Film Style and Interpretation
- John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (eds.) Oxford Guide to Film Studies
- James Monaco How To Read a Film
- Jill Nelmes (ed.) An Introduction to Film Studies
- V.F. Perkins: Film as Film: Understanding and Judging Movies
- Robert Stam Film Theory: An Introduction
- Patricia White and Timothy Corrigan The Film Experience

### **Financial Studies – Level 3/Diploma**

The Financial Studies course is a vocational course, mainly aimed at helping students understand the financial world and apply the skills in a work environment. Students must have good Mathematics and Analytical Skills. The course is divided into two parts.

- Unit 1 and 2 which awards students a Level 3 Certificate in Finance at the end of Year 12. Students must pass Unit 1 in order to proceed to unit 2 and the pass mark is 14/35 marks. This is a multiple choice exam. The second Unit is a pre-released case study and has a pass mark of 40%.
- In Year 13 students who have passed the Certificate at Level 3 will then do a Diploma level. This has Unit 3 which is multiple choices and then Unit 4 which is a pre-released case study.

### ***Bridging the Gap – Year 12***

Find out the differences between three different types of accounts:

- Savings Account
- Current Account
- ISA account

1. Which account provides a cheque facility?

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2. Which account would you recommend to a student who is joining university and why?
3. Comparing the three accounts which one has the best savings option and who would you recommend this account to? Explain giving two reasons

### French A-Level

At A-level, students greatly develop their awareness of culture and society of France and French-speaking countries. Over the two years, all students are actively encouraged to develop their listening and reading skills through the use of the media, including interactive web resources.

#### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level French***

Welcome aboard! As you begin your A Level journey in Year 12, this year will be one of your most challenging yet rewarding ever.

#### **Books:**

You should obtain the following books:

- L'étranger (Folio edition) Buy L'etranger (Folio) by Albert Camus (ISBN: 9782070360024) from Amazon's Book Store - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/LEtranger-Folio-Albert-Camus/dp/2070360024>
- Un sac de billes (Livre de Poche edition) Buy Un sac de billes by Claude Lapointe, Joseph Joffo (ISBN: 9782019110246) from Amazon's Book Store
- [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Un-sac-billes-Joseph-Joffo/dp/2019110245/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1499866663&sr=1-1&keywords=un+sac+de+billes](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Un-sac-billes-Joseph-Joffo/dp/2019110245/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1499866663&sr=1-1&keywords=un+sac+de+billes)
- Elan French A Level grammar book OUP
- AQA A Level French Hodder Education ISBN 978-1-4718-5795-9

#### **Specification:**

You will be expected to be familiar with all the grammar points covered at GCSE and although they will be reviewed in Year 12, you will need to plug the gaps in your knowledge yourself. Use the Grammar pages of your text book. To practice grammar: <http://www.language-gym.com/#/verb-trainer> . Knowledge of grammar is vital to your success at A Level. To refer to the specification/syllabus and to see a full list of

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grammatical structures, refer to the online version at <http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/french-7652>

### Knowledge of France:

Read about current affairs, in English as well! The biggest difference students find generally between GCSE and A-Level French is the level of oral fluency needed. You will be required to discuss contemporary society issues which are very different from GCSE topics such as « your school » or « your holidays ». For example, you will have to discuss the impact of new technologies on social relationships, whether globalization works and whether prison works as a deterrent to crime. A Level is much more interesting than GCSE and you will need a good knowledge of France.

### Assessment:

The assessment will test listening, reading, speaking, writing and translation skills. You will be studying literature and will be expected to read the two texts in the French and write about them in French. A good site to familiarise yourself with studying literature is <http://www.etudes-litteraires.com/>

### Learn on the go!

If you are lucky enough to have a smart phone that can have Apps, download all the free versions of French Apps that you can find. They will be useful to practise vocabulary and some even offer exam-style reading comprehension questions.

## Geography A-Level

The geography syllabus is designed to highlight the main issues and concepts that young adults are likely to encounter in their current and future lives. Topics are examined on a local, national, and global basis; it is hoped that those who follow the course will find it most helpful in equipping them to make better-informed decisions; and also be sensitive to a wide range of viewpoints and challenges.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Geography***

- Textbook – OCR A Level Geography (Includes AS) *Michael Raw, David Barker, Helen Harris, Andy Palmer, Peter Stiff* 2016 Hodder Education ISBN 9781471858703

Websites that are worth visiting frequently:

- Geographical <http://geographical.co.uk/> this is a really useful website for recent articles related to Geography. Great for keeping your case studies up to date and relevant.

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- National Geographic <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/> another good website for recent Geography but also links well to other subjects. Limited access without subscription.
- The Economist <http://www.economist.com/> some useful articles linked to geographical concepts.
- The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/uk> and The Independent <http://www.independent.co.uk/> Good geographers have a broad knowledge of current affairs so keep up to date with all of the news that takes place.
- TED talks <https://www.ted.com/talks> watch some videos on issues that interest you.

The topics that you will focus on at the start of Year 12 are:

- Coastal Landscapes
- Changing Spaces; Making Places (how places are created, how places are perceived, inequality)

## Government & Politics A-Level

This course aims to provide students with a general introduction to the study of politics by developing an understanding of political and governmental processes in the UK, and the study of the origins and development of political ideologies. Students are introduced to the key principals and beliefs of political ideologies and their respective views on concepts such as human nature, equality, freedom, the state, religion and gender. Students also analyse contemporary political, social and economic issues and developments such as law and order, membership of the European Union, public/private ownership, welfarism and equal rights and their links to the ideological traditions.

### ***Bridging the gap to A Level Government & Politics***

- Complete a written case study of the 2017 General Election. Include turnout, number of seats, type of electoral system used, percentage of vote compared to percentage of seats for each party and key points from the result.
- Compare 2017 General election to 2015 and 2010 and again include turnout, number of seats, type of electoral system used, percentage of vote

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compared to percentage of seats for each party and key points from the results.

- Write up a **brief** summary of the most recent European Election (UK only), London Mayor, London Assembly, Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly. Include turnout, number of seats, type of electoral system used, percentage of vote compared to percentage of seats for each party and key points from the results.
- Complete a written case study of the 2016 US Presidential Election. Include turnout, type of electoral system used and key points from the result.
- Research recent referendums in the UK, Scottish Independence, Changing electoral system to AV and membership of the EU. What was the question? What was the turnout? What was the result? Add some key points from the campaigns
- Use the Politics page from the BBC website to keep up to date with current political developments in both the UK and the US.
- Research a Pressure Group such as the RSPCA, Greenpeace, RSPB, Amnesty, FOREST, ASH, Unison, Stop the War, NUS, Howard League for Penal Reform, FBU, Friends of the Earth, Gingerbread, Anti-Fracking or any other group that represents a section of society or promotes a particular cause.
- Complete a profile for a post Second World War Prime Minister of the UK and a President of the USA.

## History A-Level

This course is designed to offer students opportunities to learn about the past and present arguments and ideas effectively. Students will learn to understand how people think and what motivates them and will develop skills of interpretation, analysis and the ability to construct clear and logical arguments. The A Level History Course is a two year in depth study of both Early Modern and Modern History which reflects the skills and understanding gleaned from the GCSE course in order to develop as committed Historians.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level History***

#### **Essential texts for the course:**

##### **The Tudors:**

1. OCR A Level History: England 1485–1603 Paperback by Nicholas Fellows & Mary Dicken ISBN: 978-1471836695 \*
2. Access to History: Henry VII third edition by Roger Turvey ISBN: 978-0340888964

##### **Russia and its Rulers 1855 – 1964**

1. Access to History: Russia and its Rulers 1855 – 1964 by Andrew Holland ISBN: 978-1471838941\*
2. My Revision Notes: OCR A-level History: Russia and its Rulers 1855-1964 by Andrew Holland ISBN: 978-1471875915

### **Maths/Further Maths A-Level**

September 2017 sees a re-organisation of the Maths A Level; students will study two branches of Mathematics; Pure and Applied.

- In Pure, students will cover a range of topics including; Proofs, Coordinate Geometry, Advanced Trigonometry, Differentiation, Integration, Exponentials and Logarithms and Vectors.
- In Applied, students must cover topics from both Mechanics and Statistics and therefore a strong knowledge of Physics is essential. Topics will include: Sampling, Probability, Hypothesis Testing, Kinematics and Forces and Newton's Laws.

Further mathematics involves a more in depth study of the subject. As well as studying A Level Maths, students will follow a course in Further Pure and Decision Maths. Areas of study will include: further calculus, differential equations, further vectors and inequalities. Please note: Students are only allowed to study Further Mathematics if they are also opting for Mathematics.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Maths/Further Maths***

As well as completing the booklet that will be given to you, the following will help your successful transition to KS5:

- Mathswatch – Use your current St Mary's Year 11 log-ins - focus on the Grade 8-9 materials, especially the algebra topics. <https://www.vle.mathswatch.com/vle/>
- Mymaths – You have access to A Level material on mymaths. Again use your current Year 11 log-ins and access the C1, S1 and M1 materials. If you are

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planning on studying further maths, you can also use the D1 materials.  
<https://www.mymaths.co.uk/>

- Corbett Maths - <https://corbettmaths.com/more/core-1/> this site has a good selection of videos that will help you prepare for Year 12.
- CGP Head Start to A Level Maths is an excellent support text, recapping all of the key skills from GCSE and extending them so you are practised and ready for Year 12. ISBN: 978 1 78294 792 9 (rrp £5.95)

### Physical Education A-Level

The course for Physical Education focuses on a wide range of topics relating to sport. These are arranged into a number of units spread over two years.

#### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Physical Education***

OCR PE for A Level Year 1 (includes AS) text book (John Honeybourne & Sarah Powell)  
ISBN: 978-147-85173-5

### Physical Education BTEC

The Physical Education BTEC is a QCF level 3 qualification designed to provide highly specialist, work-related qualification. There are four mandatory units:

- Principles of anatomy, and physiology in sport,
- The physiology of fitness,
- Assessing risk in sport and
- Fitness testing for sport and exercise.

A range of optional units are then offered to make up the other credits.

#### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to BTEC Physical Education***

Pearson BTEC National Sport Student Book 1 (For the 2016 Specification) ISBN: 978-1-292-13400-0

Students can borrow a copy of these text books from the PE office but it would be helpful if they are encouraged to purchase this book ASAP.

## Physics A-Level

A Level Physics is a linear two year course with three exams covering 12 modules and practical principles.

### *Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Physics*

1. Head Start to A-level Physics – useful book that includes recaps of the main topics as well as exercises to try. ISBN: 978 1 78294 281 8. [https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/Student/books\\_a\\_level\\_physics\\_edexcel.book\\_PBR71](https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/Student/books_a_level_physics_edexcel_book_PBR71)
2. Browse this website: <http://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/>  
It is always quite useful for discussions and assistance.
3. Subscribe to Physics Review - This has interesting articles that are content based and topical. <https://www.york.ac.uk/physics/public-and-schools/secondary/phys-review/>
4. Look at the link below to access the Physics Specification on the Edexcel website: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/physics-2015.html>

## Psychology A-Level

Psychology is a fascinating and popular subject and looks at the scientific study of the human mind, behaviour and experience. Believe it or not psychology is all around us and students will gain an insight into this through studying a range of exciting topics.

### *Bridging the gap to A Level Psychology*

#### **Books:**

- Butler, G. and McManus, F. **Psychology: A Very Short Introduction**, Oxford University Press
- Kesey, K. **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest**, Penguin Books
- Byron, T. **The Skeleton Cupboard**, Pan Books
- Haddon, M. **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time**, Penguin
- Sacks, O. **The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat**, Pan McMillan
- Ronson, J. (2012) **The Psychopath Test**, Picador
- Akeret, R. (1997) **The Man who Loved a Polar Bear and other Psychotherapist Tales**, Penguin
- Taleb, N. N. (2008) **The Black Swan: the impact of the highly improbable**, Penguin Books
- Rymer, R. (1994) **Genie: a scientific tragedy**, Harper Perennial
- Pinker, S. (2003) **The Blank Slate**, Penguin Books

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- Baddeley, A. (2007) **Working Memory, Thought and Action**, Oxford University Press
- Zimbardo, P. (2008) **The Lucifer Effect**, Rider & Co
- Shriver, K. (2016) **We Need to Talk about Kevin**, Serpent's Tail
- Nesti, M. (2010) **Psychology in Football**, Routledge
- Milgram, S. (2010) **Obedience to Authority**, Printer & Martin Ltd.
- Wilson, C. and Seaman, D. (2007) **The Serial Killers: a study in the psychology of violence**, Virgin

### Websites:

- [www.simplypsychology.org](http://www.simplypsychology.org) <https://www.tutor2u.net/>

### Films:

- A Beautiful Mind;
- One flew over the Cuckoo's Nest; 1
- 2 Angry Men;
- Split

### TV Series:

- Criminal Minds;
- Frasier

## Religious Studies A-Level

The A Level in Religious Studies focuses on three main disciplines: 'Ethics' and 'Philosophy of Religion' and a Systematic study of a world religion. Approximately a third of the teaching time is spent studying each section.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Religious Studies***

Read "The Puzzle of Christianity" by Peter Vardy. It is available second-hand on Amazon for about £3. See link below.

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_ss\\_i\\_4\\_8?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=the+puzzle+of+christianity&srefix=the+puzz%2Caps%2C127&crd=23GWRRNVHRIU6](https://www.amazon.co.uk/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_4_8?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=the+puzzle+of+christianity&srefix=the+puzz%2Caps%2C127&crd=23GWRRNVHRIU6)

## Sociology A-Level

Sociology, like other social sciences, attempts to explain human behaviour. However, Sociology is unique in that it explains behaviour by studying how the social groups people belong to influence their actions and beliefs.

### ***Bridging the gap to A Level Sociology***

Students should keep abreast of social issues. Students should read broadsheet newspapers and the Guardian newspaper is a good source for this, particularly the

society pages <https://www.theguardian.com/society>. Students may also wish to download the free Guardian newspaper app.

## Spanish A-Level

At A level, students greatly develop their awareness of the culture, society and recent history of Spain and Spanish-speaking countries. Throughout the two years, all students are actively encouraged to develop their listening and reading skills through the use of the media, including interactive web resources. Literature and film studies as well as independent research are also important features of the course.

### *Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Spanish*

In preparation for A level Spanish you should:

- Read or watch the Spanish news on the internet as often as possible. Try the following websites:

<http://www.20minutos.es/>

<http://www.rtve.es/directo/canal-24h/>

- Revise the key grammar from GCSE including tenses (present, preterite, imperfect, future and conditional as well as perfect and pluperfect).
- Watch some Spanish language films (with subtitles in English, not dubbed into English!). Try 'Maria, full of grace', 'Pan's Labyrinth' and 'Volver' or anything else you can get hold of.
- Research 20th century Spanish history including the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) and Franco's dictatorship (1939-75). Do some research on a Latin American (Spanish-speaking) country that interests you.

If you do all the above you'll be giving yourself a head start and helping yourself deal with the all-important and sometimes tricky transition from GCSE to A level.

¡Suerte!

## Theatre Studies A-Level

In A Level Theatre Studies students will:

- Work in a group and perform a script 'in the style of' a famous director or theatre company.
- Devise their own piece as a group.
- Study great plays and write essays on them.
- Learn about contemporary theatre companies
- Go on theatre trips to London, Cambridge and local venues.

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- Read new plays every week and study theatre history.

### ***Bridging the gap GCSE to A Level Theatre Studies***

- **As You Like It** -Students will be studying "As You Like It" in Year 12 and should purchase the penguin classics version of the text. (ISBN 978-0-141-39627-9)
- Before starting the course, students should read the play and research three past professional productions at the Globe (dir. Thea Sharrock), the RSC (dir Michael Boyd) and the National theatre (dir. Polly Findlay). Students should read Education packs on the play, print images of the costume and set design of these three productions and annotate the images, suggesting the director's concept, mood and atmosphere, time period, characterisation etc. These comments should be informed by extensive research on the production. This work should be a minimum of 20 A4 pages long, with detailed notes from research as well as images.
- Students should watch two complete versions of the play, for example on digital theatre. <http://www.digitaltheatre.com/>

### In Addition:

- Students must be word perfect on their lines for the school production "The Sound of Music".
- A-level students should attend the theatre regularly, so students must organise a visit to the theatre with friends or family in the first half-term. e.g. Pay What You Can at Harlow Playhouse.
- Students should also research theatre history, creating a timeline of key events and styles.
- Students could also evaluate A-level devised and scripted pieces created by other schools and be prepared to share examples of work from 'YouTube' with the class.

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