The Sixth Form

St Mary's Catholic School

PROSPECTUS 2027









Contents

Headteacher's Welcome	3
Director of Sixth Form's Welcome	5
Application Process and Key Dates	6
Subject Offering and Entrance Criteria	7
Extended Curriculum	10
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	11
Extended Project Qualification	12
I Can You Can Too	13
Post-18 Pathway Preparation	14
Destinations	16
Accounting and Finance	17
Art (Fine Art)	18
Fine Art (Photography)	19
Biology	20
Business	21
Chemistry	22
Computer Science	23
Creative Digital Media Production	24
DT: Three-Dimensional Design	25
DT: Textile Design	26
DT: Graphic Communication	27
Economics	28
English Language	29
English Literature	30
Film Studies	31
French	32
Geography	33
Health and Social Care	34
History	35
ICT - Digital Systems and Data	36
Italian	37
Mathematics	38
Mathematical Studies	39
Further Mathematics	40
Performing Arts	41
Philosophy	42
Physical Education	43
Physics	44
Politics	45
Psychology	46
Religious Studies	47
Science (Applied)	48
Sociology	49
Spanish	50
Notes pages for your reflections...	51

Headteacher's welcome

Welcome to our Sixth Form

As Headteacher, it is my great pleasure to introduce you our Sixth Form here at St Mary's Catholic School. Founded in 1896, St Mary's has a proud tradition of educational excellence, inspired by the vision and mission of our founders, the Sisters of St Mary of Namur. For over 130 years, we have remained committed to providing an education that transforms lives, nurtures individual talents and equips young people to make a meaningful difference in the world.

Our record-breaking Summer 2026 examination results reflect the ambition, resilience and determination of our students, alongside the expertise and dedication of our staff. Beyond academic success, we are equally proud of the exceptional destinations our students secure, from leading universities and competitive courses to higher-level apprenticeships and exciting careers. Our success is measured not only by results, but by the opportunities we create and the futures we help shape.

Faith lies at the heart of St Mary's, shaping our values and enriching every aspect of school life. We believe that every young person is created in the unique image of God, with individual gifts, talents and potential. We warmly welcome students of all faiths and none, encouraging them to explore their spirituality, develop their values and find their place in an ever changing world. Our ambition is to nurture confident, compassionate and principled young people, equipped not only for future success but for lives of purpose, fulfilment and meaning.

With more than 30 courses available, including three exciting new additions this year, students benefit from breadth of choice, academic challenge and the opportunity to pursue pathways that reflect their individual aspirations. Whether their ambition is to progress to university, secure a prestigious apprenticeship or move directly into their chosen career, we are committed to ensuring they have the guidance, qualifications, experiences and confidence to make that next step successfully.

We have invested significantly in our facilities, including new classrooms, a Sixth Form Digital Creative Media Suite, state-of-the-art Design Technology workshops, a new Sixth Form Café, an enhanced Refectory and improved sports facilities. Together with high-quality teaching, exceptional pastoral care and extensive enrichment opportunities, these developments reflect our commitment to providing an inspiring environment where every student can flourish and achieve excellence.

There has never been a more exciting time to join St Mary's Sixth Form.

I warmly invite you to explore this prospectus, visit our website and, most importantly, come and experience St Mary's Sixth Form for yourself. I hope you will discover what makes our Sixth Form such a special place and that St Mary's will be your natural choice for the next stage of your educational journey.

I look forward to welcoming you to our Sixth Form community.



Miss Deirdre McHugh
Headteacher





Record-Breaking A Level Results 2026

St Mary's Catholic School Sixth Form





- A record proportion of A* and A grades, equalling the benchmark set in 2018.
- Record levels for A*–B, overall pass rate and early indications of value added.
- Students are progressing to first-choice universities, apprenticeships and employment.

Leading destinations include UCL, Bristol, York, Leeds and Bath.

> "St Mary's Sixth Form is flourishing."
>
> Paul Carroll, Chair of Governors

> "Our record breaking performance is testament to our staff, parents and wonderful students."
>
> Deirdre McHugh, Headteacher

Love • Respect • Flourish

Director of Sixth Form's Welcome

Welcome to St Mary's Sixth Form, where you will enjoy a supportive, ambitious and enriching student experience — helping you thrive academically, socially and personally.

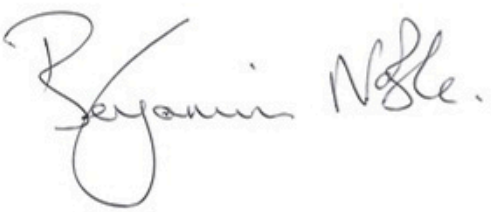
With over 30 A-Level and Vocational courses, you can choose a personalised curriculum that reflects your interests, talents and aspirations. Our strong academic outcomes, with student progress placing us amongst the highest-performing providers nationally, reflect our commitment to helping every student achieve their potential. Our dedicated Sixth Form facilities, structured independent study programme and personalised pastoral support provide the environment and guidance students need to flourish.

Each year, we are immensely proud to see our students progress to exceptional destinations, including competitive courses such as Medicine, Engineering and Law at universities such as Cambridge, Imperial and across the Russell Group, alongside prestigious degree apprenticeships with leading employers such as BDO and Price Bailey.

Alongside academic excellence, we want our students to leave St Mary's as confident, compassionate and articulate young adults. Our extensive enrichment and super-curricular offer, including the exclusive I Can You Can Too programme, provides opportunities to develop character, leadership and wider interests. From inspiring guest speakers and tailored university and apprenticeship preparation to student leadership, mentoring and memorable experiences such as visits to CERN and Parliament, we encourage students to broaden their horizons, embrace new opportunities and grow beyond the classroom.

Above all, we are proud of our inclusive, high-achieving and supportive Sixth Form, where every student is Loved. Guided. Inspired. The achievements, ambition and maturity of our students make them outstanding ambassadors for our community, reflecting our commitment to nurturing every individual and helping them fulfil their potential.

Our comprehensive transition and induction programme ensures students feel welcomed, confident and prepared for Sixth Form life. I look forward to welcoming you to St Mary's and helping you embrace the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.



Mr Benjamin Noble
Director of Sixth Form



Application process and key dates

Following the Sixth Form Open Evening on Wednesday 11th November 2026, the application process will open via Applicaa. This online admissions system streamlines, centralises and guides the whole process, from initial application all the way through to enrolment.

To proactively support with this process, each Year 11 St Mary's student has already received a 'Welcome Email' (to their school email address) which will guide them to their unique account that has already been created.

Students currently studying at another school can create their Applicaa account and commence their application via the **Sixth Form applications webpage** using the link here QR code below**.**



Wednesday 11th November 2026, 6pm-8.30pm	Sixth Form Open Evening. Applications open 8.30pm on Wednesday 11th November 2026
Monday 14th December 2026, 9am	Deadline for applications
Monday 25th January-Friday 5th February 2027	GCSE mock examinations
March 2027	Future meetings for Year 11 students
March 2027	Offer holder interviews for new students, by appointment.
Wednesday 30th June 2027	Sixth Form Induction
Thursday 19th August 2027	GCSE results day and Sixth Form enrolment
September 2027	Start of Year 12

Subject Offering and Entrance Criteria

All Year 11 students will be awarded a grade 9-1 for all their subjects in August 2027.

- Requirements:

  i. Students must meet each chosen subject's criteria – generally a grade 6 but please take care to check the entry criteria summary page of this prospectus.

  ii. Students must also have at least Grade 4 in English Language or Literature to study any course.

  iii. At least 5 GCSEs at grade 4 or above.

- Please note: to ensure students are guided to appropriate courses of study for which they have a good chance of success, St Mary's Sixth Form strictly adheres to the published entry criteria for each subject.

- If a student meets all other criteria but does not get a Grade 4 in Maths, the school will ensure the student undertakes a retake in Maths until they secure their Grade 4 or above.

- Year 12 students will commence the academic year studying four subjects, with a view to then discontinuing one of these subjects by the October half-term to remain on their three firm subject choices. The offer of a place in the Sixth Form is determined by a student having met St Mary's minimum entry criteria for their chosen courses.

- Level 3 qualifications obviously present greater all-round demands on students, and many students understandably seize the exciting opportunity to commence the study of new subjects that are available for the first time. The flexibility this considered approach provides is to the benefit of the student as it increases the likelihood of students settling on three subjects that are most appropriate for them.

- After the October half-term, should a student wish to continue with the study of four subjects this will be discussed and agreed with the Director of Sixth Form, with the best interests of the student being the guiding principle.

- A student's previous behaviour and attendance record will be considered when processing the application. St Mary's Sixth Form welcome's almost all our students back because they have worked to deadlines, behaved well and will be good role models for younger students.



Subject Offering and Entrance Criteria

Subject	Qualification	Entrance Criteria
Accounting and Finance	V-level	5 GCSE grades at 9-4 (must include Maths)
Art (Fine Art)	A-level	Grade 5 in GCSE Art
Fine Art (Photography)	A-level	Grade 5 in GCSE Art or portfolio
Biology	A-level	Grade 7 in GCSE Biology OR Grade 7-7 in GCSE Double Science. Must also have a Grade 6 in GCSE Maths
Business	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE Business **OR** Grade 6 in GCSE Maths (if Business has not previously been studied)
Chemistry	A-level	Grade 7 in GCSE Chemistry **OR** Grade 7-7 in GCSE Double Science. Must also have Grade 6 in GCSE Maths
Computer Science	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE Computer Science **OR** Grade 6 GCSE Maths (if Computer Science has not previously been studied)
Creative Digital Media Production	Level 3 BTEC National	5 GCSE grades at 9-4
DT:Three-Dimensional Design	A-Level	Grade 6 in GCSE Art **OR** DT
DT: Textile Design	A-Level	Grade 6 in GCSE DT
DT: Graphic Communication	A-Level	Grade 6 in GCSE Art **OR** DT
Economics	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE Maths **AND** Grade 6 in GCSE English
English Language	A-level	Grade 6 in either GCSE English Language or Literature
English Literature	A-level	Grade 6 in either GCSE English Language or Literature
Film Studies	A-level	5 GCSE grades at 9-4
French	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE French
Geography	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE Geography

Subject Offering and Entrance Criteria

Subject	Qualification	Entrance Criteria
Health & Social Care	Level 3 AAQ BTEC National	5 GCSE grades at 9-4 (must include Science)
History	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE History
ICT - Digital Systems and Data	V-level	5 GCSE grades at 9-4 (must include Maths)
Italian	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE Italian
Mathematics	A-level	Grade 7 in Mathematics
Mathematical Studies	Level 3 qualification	Grade 4 in GCSE Maths (this is not a full course and is studied in addition to 3 main subjects. It cannot be taken alongside A-level Maths)
Further Mathematics	A-level	Grade 8 in GCSE Maths (must also be studying A-level Maths)
Performing Arts	Level 3 BTEC National	Grade 5 in GCSE Drama **OR** English
Physical Education	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE PE **OR** Grade 6-6 in Science and evidence of high-level sports participation (if GCSE PE has not previously been studied)
Physics	A-level	Grade 7 in GCSE Physics **OR** Grade 7-7 in GCSE Double Science. Must also have Grade 6 in GCSE Maths
Politics	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE English, History, Geography **OR** Religious Studies
Psychology	A-level	Grade 5 in GCSE Science or GCSE Maths **AND** Grade 6 in GCSE English
Religious Studies	A-level	Grade 5 in GCSE English **AND** GCSE Religious Studies
Science (Applied)	Level 3 AAQ BTEC National	Grade 5-5 in Science **AND** Grade 5 in GCSE Maths
Sociology	A-level	Grade 5 in GCSE English **OR** GSCE Geography, History or Religious Studies
Spanish	A-level	Grade 6 in GCSE Spanish

Extended Curriculum



St Mary's Sixth Form offers a wide range of **enrichment opportunities** designed to ensure that you flourish, whether that be by indulging existing passions or helping find new ones! The programme also serves to develop a **holistic skillset** whilst also improving your mental health and overall wellbeing. The options are reviewed and expanded on a regular basis to ensure the needs and wishes of the students are met.



You will attend a weekly timetabled Enrichment option. Examples are:

- Cooking
- DT – Design and Creation / Sketching
- Developing Financial Skills / Budgeting
- Sports
- Russell Group Universities Coaching
- Mindfulness
- Law
- Spanish
- EPQ
- Post-18 pathways
- Debating Society



We also encourage you to use your Enrichment time to gain **valuable and rewarding experience working in community service**, for example

- assisting Teachers in lessons with lower school pupils who need help with literacy or numeracy,
- leading or supporting with after-school clubs
- volunteering at local primary schools or local charities (e.g. Grove Cottage, Age Concern, Herts and Essex hospital).



A variety of exciting trips and visits that broaden your academic, cultural, career and spiritual horizons take place throughout the two years, including:

- Nuclear Races team building
- CERN in Switzerland
- Houses of Parliament
- Westminster Cathedral
- UCAS Fair

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

As part of our extended curriculum activities we are delighted to offer the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. Established in 1956, the DofE is the world's leading achievement award for young people with over 8 million 14-24 year olds having participated in the scheme over more than 140 countries.

You can undertake the prestigious Gold Award commencing at the start of Year 12, allowing you time to complete it before your summer exams in Year 13. We accept entrants whether you have previously started or completed the Bronze Award, the Silver Award, both or neither. Previous completion of Silver will determine the length of time each section will take at Gold level. Taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh award is a very popular option at St Mary's, with over 30 students per year taking part.



Taking part in the DofE Gold Award will help you develop:

- Self-confidence
- Initiative
- A sense of responsibility
- A greater awareness of their strengths
- The ability to plan and use time effectively
- The ability to learn from and give back to others in the community
- Problem solving skills
- Presentation and communication skills,
- Leadership and team working skills.



> *"I really enjoyed the experience of completing my Duke of Edinburgh award. I have made lifelong memories with my friends and learnt an array of new skills along the way. Although it was challenging, I am really proud that I completed the expedition."*



The Gold Award consists of five components:

- **Volunteering:** 12 or 18 months for one hour per week
- **Physical:** 6, 12 or 18 months for one hour per week
- **Skills:** 6, 12 or 18 months for one hour per week
- **Residential:** 5 days and 4 nights
- **Expedition:** 4 days and 3 nights during term 6

Extended Project Qualification

In 2026, St Mary's students who completed their Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) received reduced entry criteria offers from nine universities.

Exam Board
AQA

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a prestigious qualification designed for students who are eager to push boundaries, explore beyond the A-level syllabus, and gain crucial skills for university and employment. You will design, plan and carry out a project on a topic of your choice. This could be linked to an area of personal or academic interest or even a future career aspiration. However, it must not overlap with your A-level studies.

What will I study?

You will learn how to identify a focused question, conduct independent research, manage your time effectively and present your findings.

The final product may take the form of a written dissertation or an artefact with an accompanying evaluation. Throughout the process, you will develop academic and practical skills that prepare you for the independent learning expected in higher education and professional environments.

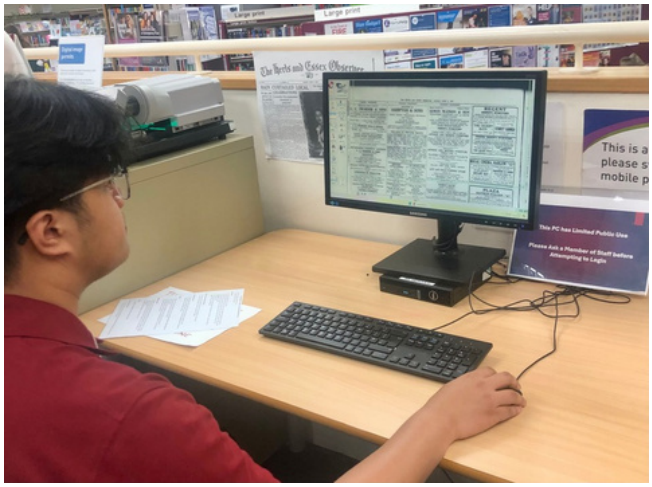
Previous EPQ topics at St Mary's include:

- Biological and psychological treatments of Schizophrenia over the last 100 years
- The impact of chess on cognitive development
- The likelihood of humans reaching type 1 on the Kardashev scale
- Computer Aided Drug Design (CADD) as a suitable alternative to Clinical Trials
- Overcoming barriers of speech and language disorders on academic experience
- The impact of chronic sleep deprivation on human health and performance
- The architectural lessons learned from the Grenfell Tower fire

Why should I take the EPQ?

- **Tailored to You**: Explore something you love or delve deeper into your academic interests.
- **Boost Your CV & UCAS Application**: Universities and employers see the EPQ as a mark of initiative and critical thinking.
- With **28 UCAS points** (half an A-level), the EPQ can significantly enhance your university applications. Many top universities highly value this qualification, recognizing the independence, dedication, and depth of knowledge that it requires. It's your chance to stand out.
- **Independence & Research Skills**: Gain valuable skills that prepare you for the future—whether in further education or in your career. Skills gained include project management, analysis, evaluation and communication.
- **Enhance Your Future**: EPQ supports progression to higher education and careers in research, medicine, psychology, education, law and many other disciplines.
- **Supportive Structure**: You'll have a dedicated supervisor guiding you from January of Year 12 until January of Year 13.





I Can You Can Too

I Can You Can Too is a social enterprise charity that provides participants with **exclusive** access to **professional coaching**, **immersive work experiences**, and **connections to real world role models** across top industries such as finance, law, and healthcare.

St Mary's is in the incredibly privileged position of being **one of only four schools** in the entire country to have secured a partnership with this prestigious charity.

What you will gain:

- career-boosting skills
- confidence
- real-world connections and networking opportunities
- access to practical work experience in the industry of your choice

Our students have taken part in immersive work experiences at:

- Barclay's Law department
- Ernst & Young
- Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital
- Private Equity insight day @ August Equity
- Full day practical session relating to healthcare

> *"this programme has made me better prepared and confident to enter the workforce"*

> *"ICYCT...made me realise how important connections are...to help answer questions, you just need that initial boost of confidence to ask"*

> *"icanyoucantoo has the power to change your life — if you let it"*

> *"the most memorable encounter for me was with Mark Gillett...who serves as the Chief Medical Officer for the Premier League...Thanks to this connection, I was fortunate enough to secure a work experience placement with him—an incredible opportunity made possible through icanyoucantoo.*

> *"I wanted to say just how amazing the 'I can you can too' course has been for [my son]. Nilesh and his team have been amazing and [my son] could not speak more highly of this amazing opportunity he has been given*

Participants on the latest ICYCT programme have benefited from:

- an evening at the **Financial Times** news desk
- meeting three times **Olympic gold medal swimmer Tom Dean**
- tickets and backstage passes to meet the cast of **The Lion King** in the West End, including a Q&A with the Director
- a day at **Cambridge University**, including visits to two Colleges and a personal statement workshop
- a full day immersive experience at **Sky TV**
- an exclusive dinner at **Canary Wharf**
- a financial literacy day at **HSBC**
- a Cyber Security day at **Barclays**







For more inspirational stories and detailed information on the programme visit the icanyoucantoo website.

Post-18 pathway progression

Career and Future Progression

We have an outstanding record of supporting students to achieve their goals—whatever career pathway they choose. From the moment you join our Sixth Form, we'll help you start planning for your future and guide you every step of the way.

We take great pride in our exceptional pastoral care and the personal support we provide throughout your Sixth Form journey. Whether you're applying to university, considering an apprenticeship, or preparing to enter the world of work, you'll receive expert guidance tailored to your ambitions.

Mrs Jo Knight has worked at St Mary's for 10 years, with 3 years as Careers Leader. She is a Level 6 Qualified Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives.



Every student has the opportunity to meet with our Independent Careers Adviser to explore their options post-18, and our Careers Leader, Mrs Knight, is always available for advice, encouragement, and practical tips—just down the corridor whenever you need her!

'Mrs. Knight has been an incredible source of guidance and encouragement throughout my university application journey... Her patience, insight, and genuine belief in me have made such a difference, turning what felt like an overwhelming process into an exciting and achievable goal.'

'The Sixth Form gave me the confidence to apply to universities I would never have thought about, with the support I received I was able to submit my university application early and aim higher than I ever thought possible.'

Career Focused Resources

All Sixth Form students have full access to

- **Unifrog**, our online destinations platform where you can explore careers, research university courses and apprenticeships, and discover labour market insights.
- **Sixth Form Careers Teams page** also shares regular updates on opportunities such as job vacancies, taster days, and university events.

Our goal is to give you as many chances as possible to develop your skills and experiences—helping you stand out from thousands of applicants across the country when applying for university or apprenticeships.

We also run a variety of exciting **future-related trips** over your two years in Sixth Form:

- university taster days
- UCAS and apprenticeship fairs
- visits to Parliament
- local careers fairs
- subject related employer visits to organisations such as Sky Studios and care homes

Personalised UCAS Support

Our comprehensive UCAS programme begins in Year 12:

- **tailored PSHEE sessions**, where you'll learn to craft strong personal statements for both university and apprenticeship applications.
- **UCAS workshop** that guides you through every stage of the process—from researching courses to submitting your final application.
- **personalised support** from the UCAS Adviser who will meet with you individually to help choose suitable courses and universities, and review your application.
- meetings with the Sixth Form Manager, Careers Leader, Form Tutor, and the Director of Sixth Form to ensure you aim high and achieve your goals.

Alongside personalised UCAS support, we run an annual **Apprenticeship Workshop**, providing students with expert advice, practical tips and guidance on navigating the apprenticeship application process with confidence.

Post-18 pathway progression

Aiming High

We offer dedicated support for students aspiring to apply to highly competitive courses such as Medicine, Law and Engineering, at prestigious universities including Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College, and other Russell Group institutions.

Former students who have gone on to these universities regularly return to share their experiences, offer tips, and even host Q&A sessions. We also arrange visits to meet these students and gain an insight into university life.

Students receive one-to-one guidance with applications, as well as practice interviews, admissions test preparation, and access to a wide range of specialist resources to help them succeed.



Kings College, Cambridge

Inclusive PSHEE Provision

During PSHEE and study sessions, students build essential employability skills, develop their CV and applications, and take part in interview preparation activities.

You'll also have the opportunity to experience a formal mock interview as part of our Mock Interview Day, helping you develop confidence and professionalism for university or job interviews.

Work Experience

In Year 12, every student completes work experience the week before the February half term. We encourage students to secure placements in industries linked to their future ambitions and to take on additional opportunities wherever possible.

Opposite are examples of fabulous placements secured by some of our recent students.

Students are also allowed up to four days of authorised leave during the year to attend career-related or university events.

Enrichment Week

At the end of the summer term, we host an exciting **Enrichment Week** for Year 12 students. We welcome employers, alumni, and universities to deliver talks on career opportunities, apprenticeships, writing personal statements, student finance, and choosing the right courses.

You'll also take part in our **Outside Inside Day**—a day dedicated to planning your own enriching activity designed to boost your personal development, strengthen your UCAS application, and enhance your career progression.



Destinations

A very high percentage of our Year 13 students go on to higher education. Nearly all our students secure their first choice on their university courses, or successfully seek and secure degree-apprenticeships or apprenticeships.

The OFSTED 2024 inspectors said of the Sixth Form students : 'they are well prepared for future study and/or employment'

In 2026, our students secured places at these Russell Group universities:

University of Bristol

University of Exeter

University of Liverpool

Manchester 1824 The University of Manchester

Newcastle University

The University of Nottingham

University of Sheffield

University of Southampton

University of Warwick

University of York

Students have secured degree-apprenticeships or apprenticeships at:

Royal Air Force

BDO

Price Bailey Chartered Accountants

Rolls Royce

AON

Metropolitan Police

EY Building a better working world

Accounting and Finance

This new V level qualification is intended to give students a broad, applied understanding of accounting and finance rather than train them for a specific accounting occupation. Students will use financial information in realistic organisational contexts, developing their ability to interpret data, analyse performance, evaluate financial decisions and communicate conclusions clearly.

What will I study?

- Financial and accounting information – understanding financial statements, cash flow information, budgets, cost and contribution data and performance indicators.
- Financial performance and position – including profitability, liquidity, efficiency and solvency ratios, percentage change and trend analysis.
- Financial decision-making – including budgeting, fixed and variable costs, contribution and margin, break-even information, payback and simple rate of return.
- Accounting concepts and principles – including accruals, prudence, consistency, materiality, going concern and the conceptual basis of double-entry bookkeeping.
- Ethics, governance and regulation – considering integrity, objectivity, confidentiality, professional behaviour, internal controls and the consequences of misleading financial reporting.
- Digital finance – including accounting systems, spreadsheets, data security, cyber security and the opportunities and risks associated with artificial intelligence.
- Communication – presenting and explaining financial information appropriately to different stakeholders.



How will I be assessed?

A mixture of external exams and non-exam assessments (NEA).

Where could this take me?

With an accounting and finance business qualification, you can pursue a variety of career paths, including roles in financial analysis, budgeting, forecasting, business control, and commercial finance.

Exam Board
Pearson/Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mr Eamon McElhinney, Subject Lead

Art (Fine Art)

Discover your creative potential with A-level Art — a course that empowers you to experiment, express, and refine your artistic voice. Through painting, drawing, mixed media, and digital techniques, you'll build a strong portfolio while developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills that open doors to careers in design, architecture, fashion, illustration, and more. A-level Art is your chance to showcase individuality, explore big ideas, and gain the confidence to turn creativity into opportunity.

What will I study?

The aims of the syllabuses 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.

'Studying Art A-level has given me the freedom to express myself in ways I never could before. I love that I can experiment with different materials and ideas, and it's helped me grow in confidence, not just in my artwork but in how I approach challenges in general.'



How will I be assessed?

A-level students will be directed in their study for the autumn term of their coursework unit. You will be introduced to a variety of media, materials and techniques through workshop style lessons and mini-projects. You will also begin to explore different methods of presentation, helping you develop your artistic style and personal practice. You will be guided to a more personal theme of study in the Easter and Summer term culminating in the production of a final piece requiring sustained focus and skill. You will return after the summer holiday to complete another coursework project before the release of the OCR Set Task in February. This will then be completed with a 15-hour controlled assessment at the end of the unit. Breakdown of the marks is as follows:

- **Unit 1** Coursework 60%
- **Unit 2** OCR Set Task 40%

Students are encouraged to be selective about work to put forward for external moderation and can use this to build a portfolio of work ready to take to interview for higher education courses if applicable.

Where could this take me?

An Art A-level can open doors to a wide range of creative futures, from studying fine art, graphic design, illustration, architecture, and fashion, to pursuing careers in animation, game design, set design, or advertising. It develops transferable skills like creativity, problem-solving, independent thinking, and visual communication.

Exam Board
OCR

For further information please contact:
Miss Holly Nairn, Subject Lead

Fine Art (Photography)

Capture the world through your lens with A-level Photography — a dynamic course that encourages you to explore both technical skills and creative vision. From studio lighting to digital editing, you'll learn how to tell powerful stories, experiment with style, and build an impressive portfolio. Whether you're drawn to fine art, fashion, documentary, or commercial work, the course equips you with the confidence and expertise to pursue exciting creative pathways and make your mark in a visual world.

What will I study?

- You will be able to explore, research and acquire techniques and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of photographic media.
- You will explore relevant images, artefacts and resources relating to traditional and/or digital photography.
- You may use traditional methods such as photographic film and/or digital techniques to produce images.
- Students in Photography will be able to demonstrate specialisation in particular media or processes to allow an appropriate depth of study. This can be achieved by working toward the extension and development of particular themes, ideas or issues.
- Drawing skills will be understood and developed as appropriate to the ways of recording and communicating intentions, ideas and emotions in the context of Photography.

You will build and evidence an understanding of:

- relevant technologies, materials, processes and resources.
- continuity and change in different genres, styles and traditions relevant to Photography and the chosen areas of study within this specialism .
- how ideas, feelings and meanings can be conveyed and interpreted in images and artefacts.
- how images and artefacts relate to the time and place in which they were made and to their social and cultural context .
- a working vocabulary and specialist terminology which are relevant to Fine Art Photography.

'Photography A-level has completely changed the way I see the world — I notice details and moments I would have missed before. I love being able to express my ideas through images while building a portfolio I'm really proud of.'



How will I be assessed?

Assessment for the course comprises the following:

- **Unit 1:** Coursework 60%
- **Unit 2:** OCR Set Task 40%

Students are encouraged to be selective about work to put forward for external moderation and can use this to build a portfolio of work ready to take to interview for higher education courses if applicable.

Where could this take me?

An A-level in Photography can lead to exciting creative pathways, including careers in commercial, fashion, portrait, or documentary photography, as well as roles in film, media, advertising, and graphic design.

Exam Board
OCR

For further information please contact:
Miss Holly Nairn, Subject Lead

Biology

Biology is the science of life itself. From how our bodies fight disease to how ecosystems are shaped, Biology helps us understand the processes that keep living things alive and thriving. It's a subject that connects directly to real-world issues such as health, genetics, climate change, and conservation. Studying A-Level Biology will develop your curiosity, scientific thinking, and practical skills, preparing you for higher study and a wide range of careers.

What will I study?

You'll dive into the fascinating details of how life works. Topics include the structure and function of cells, DNA and genetics, how organisms exchange substances, and the role of energy in living systems. You'll study biological molecules, explore how organisms respond to changes in their environment, and investigate ecosystems and the impact of humans on biodiversity. Alongside this, you'll carry out practical investigations that bring Biology to life, from exploring enzyme activity to analysing genetic information. You'll also develop data-handling and problem-solving skills, learning to apply your knowledge in unfamiliar situations. By the end of the course, you'll have a deep understanding of Biology and its importance in solving some of today's biggest challenges.

'Biology makes you see the bigger picture – from tiny cells to entire ecosystems.'



How will I be assessed?

Assessment takes place at the end of the two-year course through **three written exams**. These test both your knowledge and your ability to apply it in new contexts, using a mix of short-answer, extended-response, and essay-style questions.

You'll also complete a series of required **practical activities** throughout the course. While these don't contribute to your final grade, they lead to a separate **Practical Endorsement certificate** that highlights your laboratory skills – a valuable addition when applying for science-related degrees or jobs.

Where could this take me?

A-level Biology opens the door to many exciting futures. It's essential for medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, and biomedical research, but also highly valued for courses such as psychology, sports science, pharmacology, and environmental studies. Employers and universities alike recognise the transferable skills you gain – from problem-solving to critical analysis. Whether you want to work in healthcare, research, conservation, or even outside the sciences, Biology gives you the tools to succeed and adapt in a fast-changing world.

Exam Board
OCR A

For further information please contact:
Mrs Jo Ryan, Subject Lead

Business

Studying A-level Business is an exciting opportunity. It is beneficial for understanding how the modern world functions, developing valuable skills like critical thinking and problem-solving, and providing a strong foundation for university courses or a wide range of careers. Our A-level course offers a dynamic and practical insight into the business world, connecting theory to real-life examples and current events, which helps students develop both specific business knowledge and transferable skills for the workforce.

What will I study?

The A-level course is structured into four themes:

- **Theme 1**: Marketing and people
- **Theme 2**: Managing business activities
- **Theme 3:** Business decisions strategy
- **Theme 4:** Global business

'I enjoy Business lessons and I look forward to setting up my own business in the future. I feel studying this subject has helped me have a plan and a vision for my future business enterprise.'

How will I be assessed?

You will complete 3 exams which will determine their grade:

- **Paper 1**: Marketing, people and global businesses. Total marks: 100 Weighting: 35% Exam time: 2hrs. Questions drawn from Theme 1 and Theme 4 content.
- **Paper 2**: Business activities, decisions and strategy. Total marks: 100 Weighting: 35% Exam time: 2hrs. Questions drawn from Theme 2 and Theme 3 content.
- **Paper 3**: Investigating business in a competitive environment. Total marks: 100 Weighting: 30% Exam time: 2hrs. A broad context will be issued in November of the previous year. Questions drawn from all themes.



Where could this take me?

An A-level in Business is an excellent springboard for your career prospects. Business A-level can lead to various degree courses, such as business, finance, marketing, and law, or directly to careers in these fields. It equips you with transferable skills like problem-solving and financial literacy, making it valuable for roles in management, human resources, finance, marketing, and even entrepreneurship.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mr Eamon McElhinney, Subject Lead

Chemistry

Chemistry is the science of matter – exploring how substances are made, how they interact, and how they can be transformed. From developing new medicines and sustainable fuels to improving everyday products like food and cosmetics, chemistry underpins countless industries and innovations. Studying A-level Chemistry will challenge you to think logically, analyse data, and apply knowledge to real-world problems. It provides an excellent foundation for further study and careers in science, healthcare, and beyond.

What will I study?

The course is divided into key areas that build a broad and deep understanding of chemistry. You will study the fundamentals of **physical chemistry**, including atomic structure, bonding, energetics, kinetics, and equilibrium. In **inorganic chemistry**, you will explore trends in the Periodic Table, group and transition metal chemistry. **Organic chemistry** covers the study of carbon-based molecules, including reactions, mechanisms, spectroscopy, and polymers. Throughout, there is a strong emphasis on developing practical laboratory skills through regular hands-on investigations, giving you the opportunity to apply theory to practice. These experiments not only prepare you for assessment but also help you become confident and independent in a laboratory setting.

'Challenging but rewarding – it makes you see the world around you in a completely new way.'



How will I be assessed?

Assessment is through **three written examinations** at the end of Year 13, covering content from across the two years. The exams test your knowledge of **physical, inorganic, and organic chemistry**, as well as your ability to apply understanding to unfamiliar contexts.

You will also complete a series of **practical activities** throughout the course to demonstrate key experimental skills. These are assessed internally and reported as a separate **Practical Endorsement**, which is essential for progression into higher-level scientific study. There is no coursework component.

Where could this take me?

Chemistry is a highly respected A-level that opens doors to a wide range of opportunities. It is a required subject for medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, pharmacy, and many biological sciences. It also provides a strong foundation for degrees in chemistry, chemical engineering, environmental science, and materials science. Beyond science-based careers, the problem-solving, analytical, and numeracy skills developed are valued in law, finance, and business. Whether you aim to work in healthcare, research, or industry, chemistry gives you the tools to make a real impact.

Exam Board
OCR (A)

For further information please contact:
Mrs Jo Ryan, Subject Lead

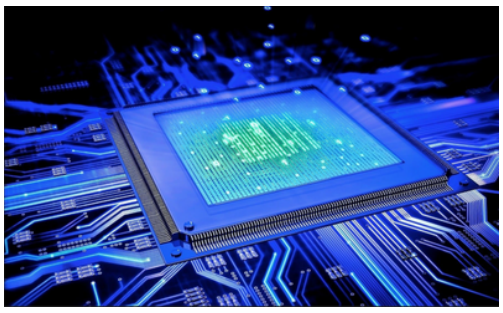
Computer Science

A-level Computer Science course offers students the opportunity to explore the core principles that underpin today's technological world. Designed for students who are curious about how computers work and how they can be harnessed to solve real-world problems, this course provides a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical programming skills. Whether you aspire to be a software developer, data scientist, or work in any tech-related field, this course will equip you with the essential tools to thrive in the digital age.

What will I study?

A-level Computer Science develops both practical and theoretical expertise. **Paper 1** focuses on programming and problem solving, teaching you to code in procedural and object-oriented styles, design efficient algorithms, and understand how data structures organise and store information. It also introduces the theory of computation, exploring what can be computed and the limits of computer systems. This paper emphasises systematic approaches to breaking down complex challenges. **Paper 2** builds a strong theoretical foundation. You will study how data is represented, processed and stored, and examine how hardware and software interact through computer systems, organisation and architecture. They also explore communication and networking, databases and big data, gaining insight into how information moves and is managed. Ethical and social issues arising from the use of computing are also considered.

'Computer Science is a growing industry with endless opportunities, combining hands-on programming with fascinating theoretical knowledge.'



How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed through a combination of exams and a practical project.

- **Paper 1** (worth 40%) is an on-screen exam focused on programming and practical problem solving. In September of Year 13, students are provided with pre-release code, which they develop and extend during the exam.
- **Paper 2** (worth 40%) is a written exam that tests students on the theoretical aspects of computing, including data representation, computer systems and related topics.
- **Non-Exam Assessment (NEA) project** (worth 20%), in which students independently apply the principles of problem solving to analyse, design, build, test and evaluate their own coding project.

Where could this take me?

An A-level in Computer Science opens the door to a wide range of exciting opportunities. It provides a strong foundation for studying subjects such as Computer Science, Software Engineering, Cybersecurity, Artificial Intelligence or Data Science at university. The analytical, problem-solving and programming skills developed are also highly valued in related fields like mathematics, engineering and the sciences. Beyond higher education, this qualification supports entry into apprenticeships or careers in areas such as software development, IT support, network administration, digital forensics and project management. It equips students with adaptable skills for a rapidly evolving, technology-driven world.

Exam Board
AQA

For further information please contact:
Mr Rob Davis, Subject Lead

Creative Digital Media Production

Students completing their BTEC National in Creative Digital Media Production will be aiming to go on to employment within the media industry, often via the stepping stone of higher education. The qualification provides a coherent introduction to the study of creative digital media production at this level. Learners develop an understanding of the media industry through analysing media representations across a range of platforms and products, and pitching and producing media projects. Units provide a balance of breadth and depth, while retaining a degree of choice for individual learners to study content relevant to their own interests and progression choices.

What will I study?

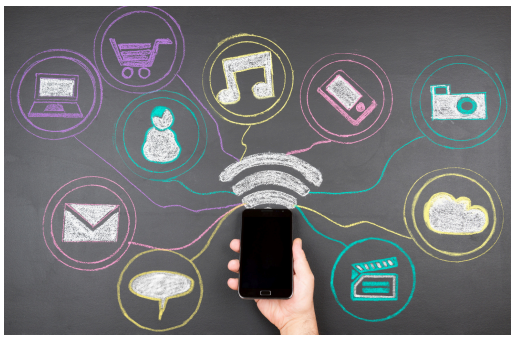
Unit 1: Media Representations. You complete an exam onscreen where you watch and control audio-visual or print media products and analyse in terms of media messages. You will draw on your skills and understanding of media analysis and consumption from across the qualification to analyse the products and their associated meanings.

Unit 4: Pre- Production portfolio. You study the requirements of planning and delivering a digital media product, carrying out essential pre-production tasks and creating a pre-production portfolio. You will gain an understanding of the requirements of the planning stage, from finance and logistics to regulations, which will help to develop and manage their own project.

Unit 8: Responding to a Commission. In this unit, you will understand how to respond to a commission brief with ideas based on the required content proposed by the client. You will work within the requirements and constraints of the client's specifications and consider your response in terms of ethos, format, budget, platform and duration.

Optional units: Learners must complete at least one optional unit:

- Unit 10: Film Production Unit
- Unit 14: Digital Magazine Production



How will I be assessed?

- **Unit 1**: Media Representations Exam (2 hour onscreen external assessment - 25% of overall grade)
- **Unit 4**: Pre- Production portfolio (internally assessed - 25% of overall grade)
- **Unit 8**: Responding to a Commission Exam (6 hours external assessment where learners are provided with a commission/ brief for a media product and will create pre-production documents - 33% of overall grade)
- Optional Unit (one of the following – internally assessed – 17% of overall grade):
  - Unit 10: Film Production Unit **or**
  - Unit 14: Digital Magazine Production

Where could this take me?

Those who study the course develop transferable knowledge and skills for university, apprenticeships or working in the creative industries. These include the managing their time effectively, presenting professional pitches confidently, conducting market research and leading teamwork. Students acquire audio-visual literacy and journalistic written skills, in addition to industry standard IT skills using Adobe creative suite to develop desktop publishing, photography, web-design, cinematography and advanced editing skills.

Exam Board
Pearson BTEC

For further information please contact:
Ms Huma Malik-Brown, Subject Lead

DT: Three-Dimensional Design

The A-level Art and Design qualification with a specialism in Three Dimensional Design offers a dynamic and practical creative experience. Delivered by the Design and Technology department, this course combines artistic skills with technical knowledge to explore the design and making of functional and sculptural objects. You will work with a variety of materials, including wood, metal, and plastics, developing skills in furniture design, product prototyping, and architectural modelling.

What will I study?

You will study a broad range of design practices including furniture design, product development, metal fabrication, environmental design, and architectural modelling. The course focuses on hands-on skills such as computer-aided design (CAD), mixed-material prototyping, and manufacturing processes.

'This course has helped me develop both practical skills and creative thinking. I love turning ideas into real, usable products and preparing for a career in design.'

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is split into two main components. The **Personal Investigation (60%)** includes a practical portfolio and a minimum 1000-word written element, both internally assessed and externally moderated. This project allows you to explore your own design interests deeply.

The **Externally Set Assignment (40%**) is based on a brief released in February of your second year. You prepare work during a study period before completing a 15-hour supervised sustained focus project under exam conditions.

Both components assess your creativity, technical skills, ability to develop ideas, and understanding of design contexts.



Where could this take me?

This pathway equips you with skills relevant to careers in product design, furniture making, industrial design, and architecture. Many students progress to university courses in Product Design, Industrial Design, or Architecture. The practical, creative, and technical expertise you gain also prepares you for roles in design consultancies, manufacturing industries, or entrepreneurship in creative fields. The ability to combine artistic expression with problem-solving is highly valued by employers and higher education providers. This course provides a strong foundation for a career in the creative and technical industries, encouraging innovation and independent thinking.

Exam Board
Eduqas (WJEC Eduqas)

For further information please contact:
Mr Marcus Hunt, Subject Lead

DT: Textile Design

The A-level Art and Design qualification with a specialism in Textile Design offers a creative and technical exploration of fabric and fashion. Delivered by the Design and Technology department, this course enables you to develop skills in designing and making with textiles, including fabric manipulation, printing, dyeing, and garment construction. You will experiment with both traditional and digital techniques to create innovative textile products, from fashion and costume to interior textiles and accessories.

What will I study?

You will explore a variety of textile design areas including fashion, costume, digitally or traditionally printed fabrics, constructed textiles like knitted or woven materials, and textile installations. The course covers both practical skills and theoretical understanding, allowing you to experiment with fabric manipulation, dyeing, printing, and garment construction techniques. You'll also develop digital skills using design software relevant to textile creation.

'Textile Design helped me combine creativity with technical skills, inspiring me to develop my own fashion ideas and prepare for university in fashion design.'

How will I be assessed?

Assessment consists of two main parts. The **Personal Investigation (60%)** includes a portfolio of practical and theoretical work alongside a 1000-word written essay, both internally assessed and externally moderated. This allows you to explore a textile theme in depth.

The Externally Set Assignment (40%) is based on a brief released in February of the second year. You will complete preparatory work and then a 15-hour sustained focus practical project under exam conditions.

Both components assess creativity, technical skills, design development, and critical thinking

Where could this take me?

This pathway opens doors to further study and careers in fashion design, textile technology, costume design, interior textiles, and accessories. Many students progress to university courses in Fashion, Textile Design, or related fields. The skills you develop in fabric manipulation, design software, and garment construction prepare you for roles in the fashion industry, costume departments, textile manufacturing, or even sustainable fashion initiatives. This course also supports creative entrepreneurship and working within design studios or marketing agencies, offering a strong foundation for many creative and technical career paths.



Exam Board
Eduqas (WJEC Eduqas)

For further information please contact:
Mr Marcus Hunt, Subject Lead

DT: Graphic Communication

The A-level Art and Design qualification with a focus on Graphic Communication offers an exciting creative journey into visual storytelling and design. Delivered by the Design and Technology department, this course explores graphic design principles, combining art and technology to develop skills in areas such as illustration, typography, branding, and advertising.

What will I study?

You will study a wide range of graphic design practices including illustration, typography, editorial layout, advertising, branding, package design, and storyboarding. The course blends practical skills with theoretical understanding, teaching you how to communicate ideas visually and solve design problems. You will use both traditional and digital tools, including design software, to develop your work.

'Graphic Communication has helped me develop my digital design skills and creative thinking, preparing me for university and a career in the design industry.'

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is divided into two parts. The **Personal Investigation (60%)** consists of a portfolio of practical and theoretical work plus a 1000-word written element, internally assessed and externally moderated. This in-depth project allows you to explore your interests in graphic communication.

The **Externally Set Assignment (40%)** is based on a brief issued in February of the second year. It includes preparatory work followed by a 15-hour sustained focus project completed under exam conditions.

Both components are assessed against Eduqas criteria, evaluating your creativity, technical ability, development of ideas, and understanding of design context.



Where could this take me?

This pathway provides excellent preparation for careers and further study in graphic design, advertising, branding, digital media, and marketing. Many students progress to university courses in Graphic Design, Visual Communication, or related fields. The skills developed in visual storytelling, digital design, and branding are highly valued in creative agencies, publishing, media companies, and corporate design departments. This course also supports careers in animation, illustration, and user interface design. It nurtures your ability to communicate ideas visually, work creatively under deadlines, and adapt to evolving design technologies, making you well-equipped for a wide range of creative industries.

Exam Board
Eduqas (WJEC Eduqas)

For further information please contact:
Mr Marcus Hunt, Subject Lead

Economics

A-level Economics provides a solid foundation for understanding the complexities of economic systems and prepares students for further studies in economics, business, finance, and related fields. It is a subject that encourages critical thinking about how economic forces shape our world.

What will I study?

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. It is excellent not only as a qualification but also in preparation for future financial decisions.

'A-level Economics will transform the way you view the world you live in... The course is deeply interesting whilst also providing enjoyable challenges. It will improve your interpretation, problem solving and critical thinking skills.'

How will I be assessed?

There are three externally assessed papers.

Each paper comprises 100 marks and is two hours in duration.

Questions range from short answer (including multiple choice), data response and extended open response.



Where could this take me?

Economics is a respected social science that is highly valued by universities, making it a strong choice for Russell Group and Oxbridge applications. It provides excellent preparation for roles in financial analysis, consulting, economic policy, and government. Beyond finance, economics knowledge is valuable for careers in journalism, data science, diplomacy, and international organizations.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mr James Gitau, Subject Lead

English Language

English Language provides you with an introduction to the discipline of advanced language studies and presents opportunities for analysis of a variety of texts, from newspaper articles to political rhetoric. English Language is a subject which requires you to think analytically, and almost scientifically at times, in their breakdown of language. You will look closely 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.

What will I study?

The course requires you to show knowledge and understanding of:

- linguistic terminology and the key frameworks of language analysis
- the differences between spoken and written modes of language
- sentence level, clause level and word level analysis of a text

'The course helped me appreciate the English language like never before. I loved learning about the different ways we speak and why, and how English has become so many different things around the world'



How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Language, the individual and society (2.5 hours)

- Textual variations and representations
- Children's language development (0-11 years)
- Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities

Paper 2: Language, Diversity & Change (2.5 hours)

- Language diversity and change
- Language discourses
- Writing skills
- Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities

Non-Exam Assessment

Language in Action Tasks:

- a language investigation (2,000 words excluding data)
- a piece of original writing and commentary (1,500 words total)

Where could this take me?

English Language is a subject that brings together a range of skills, from written communication to filtering and analysing data trends. As such, it can open up many doors and is accepted as a strong A-level qualification by every major university. Past students have gone on to work in areas such as speech therapy, child/educational psychology, journalism, advertising, public relations/marketing and primary education.

The subject really does cover a wide variation of skills, making it suitable for both those of a more artistic frame of mind, and those for whom a scientific approach to study is more natural.

Exam Board
AQA

For further information please contact:
Mr Richard Graves, Subject Lead

English Literature

English Literature is a dynamic course that will introduce you to the discipline of advanced literary studies with the opportunity for wider reading around poetry, prose and drama. Studying literature develops your analytical and critical-thinking skills, whilst encouraging you to consider and explore individual, moral, ethical, social, cultural and contemporary issues.

What will I study?

Paper 1: Poetry

Study of three texts:

- Section A (pre 1900): selected poetry by John Donne
- Section B (post 1900): *The Whitsun Weddings* by Philip Larkin and *Mean Time* by Carol Ann Duffy

Paper 2: Drama

Study of three drama texts:

- Section A (Shakespeare): King Lear
- Section B (pre and post 1900): *The Duchess of Malfi* by John Webster and *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams

Paper 3: Unseen literature

- Section A: unseen prose
- Section B: unseen poetry

'Literature taught me more about the world. Science won't teach you right from wrong, or how to cope with a broken heart!'

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1. Written exam: 2 hours; open book; 30% of A-level

Paper 2. Written exam: 2 hours; closed book; 30% of A-level

Paper 3. Written exam: 2 hours; 20% of A-Level

Non-Exam Assessment (NEA):

- Study of two novels (one pre 2000 and one post 2000)
- One comparative essay of 2500-3500 words; 20% of A-Level



Where could this take me?

English Literature is a classic A-level subject beloved by all major universities, for a wide range of degree courses. Given the requisite skills of evidence-based argument and written communication, it often opens pathways to careers in areas such as law and marketing; but is also a subject valued by many STEM related degrees, owing to its need for both creativity and rigorous investigation. Past students have gone on to work in areas such as journalism, law, the NHS, advertising, public relations/marketing and education.

Exam Board
EDUQAS

For further information please contact:
Mr Richard Graves, Subject Lead

Film Studies

Film is one of the main cultural innovations of the 20th century. 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.

What will I study?

Paper 1: Film History

Section A: Film Form in US Cinema from the Silent Era to 1990

- The Silent Era - The Gold Rush (1925) directed by Charlie Chaplin.
- 1930 - 1960 - Vertigo (1958) directed by Alfred Hitchcock.
- 1961 - 1990 – Raging Bull (1980) directed by Martin Scorsese.

Section B: European Cinema History

Experimental Film - (European Surrealist film)

- L'Age D'Or (1930) directed by Luis Buñuel.
- Un Chien Andalou (1929) directed by Luis Buñuel.

European Cinema History: German Expressionism

- Nosferatu (1922) directed by F. W Murnau.



Paper 2: Critical Approaches to Film

Section A: Contemporary British and US Film

- Skyfall (2012) directed by Sam Mendes.
- Guardians of the Galaxy (2014) directed by James Gunn.

Section B: Documentary

- Searching for Sugarman (2012) directed by Malik Bendjelloul

Section C: Ideology – Conflict.

- US Independent: The Hurt Locker (2008) directed by Kathryn Bigelow.
- English Language (Non-US): District 9 (2009) directed by Neill Blomkamp
- Non-European Non-English Language: The Grandmaster (2013) directed by Wong Kar Wai.

Non-examined assessment: Making Short Film

A synoptic, non-examined assessment that gives learners the opportunity to produce their own complete short film or screenplay for a short film.

Where could this take me?

Those who study the course develop transferable knowledge and skills for university, apprenticeships or working in the creative industries. Students develop their critical analysis skills, understand the technical and contextual influences on film and the creative side of film making. They will acquire industry standard IT skills using Adobe creative suite to develop photography, marketing, cinematography and advanced editing skills.

How will I be assessed?

Paper 1: Film History (2 hour written exam paper - 35% of overall grade)

Paper 2: Critical Approaches to Film (2 hour written exam paper - 35% of overall grade)

Paper 3: Non-examined Assessment (formally coursework - 30% of overall grade)

Exam Board
OCR

For further information please contact:
Ms Huma Malik-Brown, Subject Lead

French

Studying A-level French opens doors to a world of opportunities. It not only develops strong communication and analytical skills but also deepens cultural awareness and global understanding. French is an official language in over 25 countries and is widely used in international business, diplomacy, and the arts. By mastering French, students gain a valuable skill that enhances university applications, broadens career prospects, and fosters a lifelong appreciation for language and culture.

What will I study?

A-level French covers a wide range of topics which are covered over four themes:

- **Theme 1 :** Changes in French society Family, education, world of work.
- **Theme 2:** Culture in the French-speaking world Music, media, festivals and traditions.
- **Theme 3:** Immigration and multi-cultural society in France. The positive impact of immigration and the extreme right in France.
- **Theme 4:** The occupation and role of the resistance in France during the Second World War. Occupied France, the Vichy regime and the resistance movement.

You are also required to study and critically analyse a French novel and film, as well as practising your translation and essay writing skills. The book and film link to the topics, giving you further insight into French culture and history. As part of the speaking examination you will complete an Independent Research Project based on your own area of interest related to the society and culture of the French-speaking world.

'A-level French was my favourite subject. I loved learning about Francophone culture and history, and studying the film and book. I really enjoyed the challenge of learning more complex grammar and my communication skills improved massively.'

How will I be assessed?

You will sit the A-level exam at the end of Year 13. It consists of three papers:

- **Paper 1:** Listening, reading and translation into English: 2 hours: 80 marks (worth 40%)
- **Paper 2:** Written response to film and text, translation into French: 2 hours 40 minutes: 120 marks (worth 30%)
- **Paper 3:** Speaking: 21-23 minutes: 72 marks (worth 30%)



Where could this take me?

Languages complement many subjects at university and can be studied as a joint honours degree with another subject. The skills learnt through languages are easily transferable to other A-levels and further study. A foreign language will help to improve cultural awareness, increase adaptability and make you a more confident and effective communicator.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mrs Tamzin Catmur, Subject Lead

Geography

Geography encourages learners to develop a range of essential skills for Higher Education and the world of work through content which is relevant to any citizen of the planet in the 21st century. Through exciting topics you will learn about the nature of physical and human geography whilst unpicking the debates surrounding contemporary challenges that face the world.

What will I study?

- **Unit 1: Physical systems** – you will develop an understanding and appreciation of **Landscape Systems**, contextualised through coastal landscapes and **Earth's Life Support Systems.**
- **Unit 2: Human interactions** – you will study **Global Connections**, with a choice between focusing on the systems of trade or migration and the governance of human rights or sovereignty on a global scale, and **Changing Spaces; Making Places**, which gives you an insight into the nature of places and the fluidity of their meanings and representations.
- **Unit 3: Geographical debates** – this unit allows you to study in depth a geographical challenge that currently faces global citizens; options include climate change, disease, food security, oceans and tectonic hazards. The heart of this component is the implications for people and the environment.
- **Unit 4: Investigative Geography (NEA-Non Examined Assessment**) – you undertake an independent investigation linked to any aspect of the specification to deepen your knowledge and understanding of your chosen topic



How will I be assessed?

There are three written exam papers at the end of Year 13, with a range of different length and style of questions, including, short response, source analysis, explanation, synoptic discussion and extended essay writing.

- **Paper 1: Physical Systems** (1 hour 30 minutes, 22% of A-Level).
- **Paper 2: Human Interactions** (1 hour 30 minutes, 22% of A-Level).
- **Paper 3: Geographical debates** (2 hours 30 minutes, 36% of A-Level).

Students also complete their own independent fieldwork and submit a written report of 3000-4000 words for the Investigative Geography unit (NEA -Non Examined Assessment). This is worth 20% of the overall A-level grade.

Where could this take me?

Geography graduates are very employable, with the skills, knowledge and understanding gained during a geography degree are held in high regard by employers. They also have a good range of career options across sectors, are paid above average salaries and enjoy rapid progression to more senior roles.

Exam Board
OCR

For further information please contact:
Mr David O'Leary, Subject Lead

Health and Social Care (AAQ BTEC National)

Health and Social Care equips students with practical knowledge and skills to support the wellbeing of individuals and communities. It develops understanding of health, social, safeguarding and emotional needs, while fostering empathy, problem-solving, and communication skills.

What will I study?

In the AAQ (BTEC) National Extended Certificate Level 3 in Health and Social Care, you will explore a combination of mandatory and optional units designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the health and social care sector. The course consists of four units:

- **Unit 1**: Human Lifespan and Development
- **Unit 2**: Human Health and Biology
- **Unit 3**: Principles of Health and Social Care Practice
- **Unit 6**: Safe Environments in Health and Social Care

'My studies in Health and Social Care have opened my eyes to the diverse paths and opportunities that a career in nursing has to offer.'



How will I be assessed?

The course is assessed through a combination of internal and external assessments:

- External Assessments: Two mandatory units are externally assessed through written examinations, each of which is 90 minutes.
- Internal Assessments: The remaining units are assessed internally through Pearson Set Assignment Briefs (PSABs), which are set by Pearson and marked and moderated by your teachers.

Units 1 and 6 are studied and assessed in Year 12 and Units 2 and 3 are studied and assessed in Year 13.

Where could this take me?

The course opens doors to a wide range of higher education courses and careers. The new Alternative Academic Qualification (AAQ) course contains more biological content, making it an ideal route into nursing or paramedic degrees.

The analytical and practical skills gained are highly valued in various sectors, including healthcare, social services, education, police work and public health. Graduates are well-prepared for roles such as Healthcare Assistant, Social Care Worker, Health Promotion Specialist and Policy Advisor.

Exam Board
Pearson

For further information please contact:
Miss Dawn Compton, Subject Lead

History

History is the story of people, power, and ideas — and how they have shaped the world we live in today. By exploring revolutions, wars, and the rise and fall of leaders, you'll learn to question evidence, weigh up arguments, and make your own judgements. These skills aren't just useful in the classroom: they're highly valued by universities and employers alike. History challenges you to think critically, to understand different perspectives, and to see how past decisions still shape our lives. It's about learning from the past to make sense of the present.

What will I study?

You'll study three fascinating periods of history, each with its own focus and challenges. In **The French Revolution and Rule of Napoleon (1774–1815)**, you'll uncover how ordinary people brought down a monarchy and how Napoleon built — and lost — an empire. In **Britain, 1930–1997**, you'll explore Winston Churchill's leadership in wartime, the rise of post-war governments, and the dramatic changes of the Thatcher era, using real historical sources to test your ideas. In **Russia and its Rulers (1855–1964)**, you'll compare how Tsars and Communist leaders used power, and examine how historians interpret their legacies.

Alongside these units, you'll complete a coursework essay (3,000–4,000 words) on a topic that really interests you, giving you the chance to carry out your own research and explore history your way.

'Studying A-level History has enabled me to develop strong analytical and critical thinking skills, particularly when analysing evidence and trying to understand different interpretations of events. In future, this will help me to assess complex issues, think independently, and communicate my ideas clearly'









How will I be assessed?

Assessment is designed to test your knowledge and the skills you develop along the way. Each of the **three exam units** focuses on something different: analysing causes and consequences for the **French Revolution**, working with historical sources for **Britain**, and tackling big thematic questions and historians' interpretations for **Russia**. This variety keeps the course fresh and ensures you can show your strengths in different ways. On top of this, your **coursework** is a chance to take ownership of your learning by researching and writing in depth about a subject you choose. It's demanding but also highly rewarding.

Where could this take me?

History is a subject that opens doors. Universities and employers value the ability to think critically, argue clearly, and back up your ideas with evidence. Many history students go on to study the subject at university, or branch into areas such as politics, law, or international relations. Beyond that, history is a great foundation for careers in heritage, museums, journalism, public administration, law, the civil service, or education. The skills you gain — research, analysis, communication — are also prized in business, management, and the media. With History A-level, you'll be prepared for a wide range of futures.

Exam Board
OCR

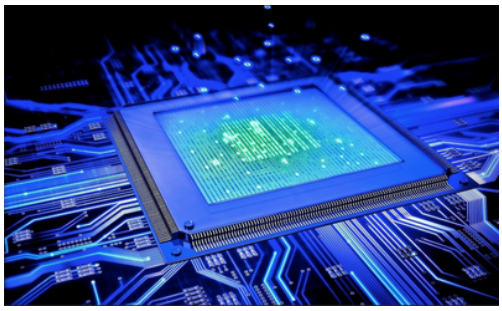
For further information please contact:
Mr Tom Juliff, Subject Lead

ICT - Digital Systems and Data

Are you fascinated by technology, interested in how computers work or curious about the world of data and cyber security? The V Level in Digital Systems and Data gives you the opportunity to explore the technologies shaping our world. You will develop practical digital skills, tackle real-world challenges and discover how technology can be used to solve problems, make decisions and protect information. This course is ideal for students who enjoy hands-on learning and want to combine their interest in technology with other Level 3 subjects.

What will I study?

Get behind the technology and discover what makes digital systems work! You will explore computer systems, digital security and the threats facing organisations in an increasingly connected world. You will learn how to analyse data, uncover patterns and present information that can help people make better decisions. You will also investigate cyber security and develop your understanding of how digital systems can be protected. Along the way, you will have the opportunity to configure digital systems or design and develop your own digital solutions, putting your knowledge into practice.



How will I be assessed?

Show what you know and, more importantly, what you can do! This course combines two written examinations with practical assignments, allowing you to demonstrate both your understanding and your technical skills. The examinations account for 40% of the qualification, while 60% is assessed through practical assignments in data analytics, cyber security and either implementing digital systems or developing digital solutions. If you enjoy applying your learning to meaningful challenges, this course offers plenty of opportunities to demonstrate your abilities.

Where could this take me?

Your future could be digital! This qualification provides a strong foundation for further study in areas such as Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Data Analytics, Information Technology and Software Engineering. It can complement other Level 3 qualifications and help prepare you for university study in a wide range of technology-related subjects. You will also develop valuable transferable skills in problem-solving, communication, decision-making and independent learning – skills that will help you stand out in an increasingly digital world.

Exam Board
OCR

For further information please contact:
Mr Rob Davis, Subject Lead

Italian

Studying A-level Italian offers students the chance to explore one of the world's richest cultural heritages while gaining valuable language and communication skills. Italian is the language of art, music, fashion, and design, and learning it opens doors to exciting academic and career opportunities across Europe and beyond. It also enhances analytical thinking, cultural awareness, and confidence in global communication—skills that are highly valued by universities and employers alike.

What will I study?

A-level Italian covers a wide range of topics which are covered over four themes:

- **Theme 1:** Changes in Italian society Family, education, world of work.
- **Theme 2:** Culture in Italy Music, media, festivals and traditions.
- **Theme 3:** Immigration and multi-cultural society in Italy The positive impact of immigration, the challenges of migration to Italian society, the North/ South divide.
- **Theme 4:** History The rise of Mussolini, fascism in the Second World War, the move from dictatorship to democracy in Italy.

You are also required to study and critically analyse an Italian novel and a film, as well as practising your translation and essay writing skills. The book and film link to the topics, giving you further insight into Italian culture and history. As part of the speaking examination you will complete an Independent Research Project based on your own area of interest related to the society and culture of the Italian-speaking world.

'Studying A-level Italian has helped improve my communication skills. I loved studying the book and the film, and exploring Italian history was really interesting too. It really helped me strengthen my problem-solving abilities, as I had to deal with quite complex texts and passages.'

How will I be assessed?

You will sit the A Level exam at the end of Year 13. It consists of three papers:

- **Paper 1:** Listening, reading and translation into English: 2 hours: 80 marks (worth 40%)
- **Paper 2:** Written response to film and text, translation into Italian: 2 hours 40 minutes: 120 marks (worth 30%)
- **Paper 3:** Speaking: 21-23 minutes: 72 marks (worth 30%)



Where could this take me?

Languages complement many subjects at university and can be studied as a joint honours degree with another subject. The skills learnt through languages are easily transferable to other A-Levels and further study. A foreign language will help to improve cultural awareness, increase adaptability and make you a more confident and effective communicator.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mrs Tamzin Catmur, Subject Lead

Mathematics

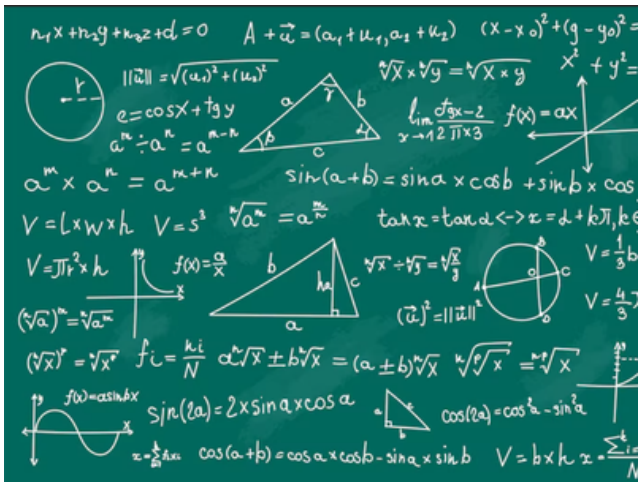
Studying Mathematics at A-level offers a valuable opportunity to enhance your reasoning abilities, refine mathematical techniques, and develop analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. As you progress to more advanced topics, you'll discover the elegance and depth of mathematical concepts—many of which are both powerful and surprisingly simple.

What will I study?

Since 2017 in Maths A Level all students study both **Statistics** and **Mechanics** (comprising 1/3 of the course) and **Pure Mathematics** (2/3 of the course).

In **Pure Maths**, students will cover a range of topics including Advanced Algebra, Trigonometry and Calculus, Exponentials, Logarithms and Vectors.

In **Applied Maths**, topics will include: Probability, Correlation, Binomial and Normal Distributions, Hypothesis Testing, Kinematics and Forces and Newton's Laws.



How will I be assessed?

Assessment is conducted through three written examinations at the end of Year 13:

- Pure Mathematics 1
- Pure Mathematics 2
- Applied Mathematics (covering Statistics and Mechanics)

Each paper is 2 hours in duration, allows the use of a calculator, and contributes equally to the final grade.

Where could this take me?

This course introduces you to areas of mathematics that are widely applied across a range of disciplines, including biology, chemistry, physics, economics, psychology, computing, and engineering. The skills you gain will not only support further academic study but are also highly transferable and sought after in the workplace.

An A-level in Mathematics is well regarded by universities and employers alike, making it a strong asset for any degree or career path.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mr Simon Antwi, KS5 Subject Lead

Mathematical Studies

Core Maths is designed to complement and support mathematical content found in other A-level and vocational qualifications, such as Biology, Psychology, Business, Geography, Sociology, and more. It also serves as a valuable stand-alone qualification for students who are not pursuing A Level Mathematics but wish to continue developing practical, everyday mathematical skills.

What will I study?

The course focuses on applying familiar mathematical concepts in real-world contexts, helping students become confident and competent in using mathematics throughout their studies, careers, and daily lives. Topics include data analysis, financial mathematics and critical thinking. Content is primarily based on the GSCE Mathematics Higher Tier, with approximately 20% drawn from other qualifications.



Where could this take me?

This Level 3 qualification is equivalent to half an A-level, carrying UCAS points. It is highly regarded by employers, particularly in industry and business sectors. Studying Mathematical Studies shows a commitment to continued development of your mathematical skills.

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is through two written papers, each lasting 90 minutes and worth 60 marks.

Paper 2 includes a dedicated section on the analysis of mathematics in the media, as well as the use of spreadsheets and tables, encouraging students to appreciate the practical value of mathematics in everyday scenarios.

Exam Board
AQA

For further information please contact:
Mr Simon Antwi, KS5 Subject Lead

Further Mathematics

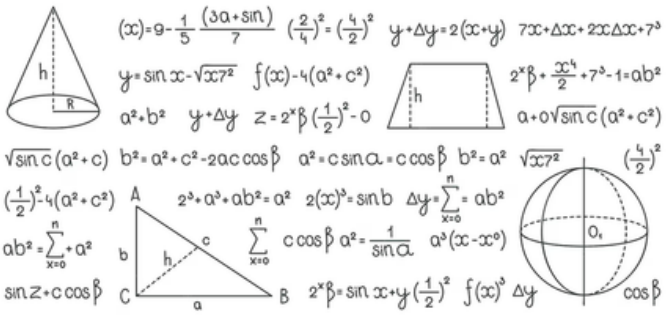
Further Mathematics offers a deeper and broader exploration of mathematical concepts beyond the standard A Level syllabus. Studying Further Mathematics significantly enhances performance in A-level Mathematics and provides a strong foundation for university-level study in mathematically intensive disciplines.

What will I study?

In addition to the A Level Mathematics curriculum, students will study:

- Core Pure Mathematics
- Decision Mathematics 1
- Further Mechanics 1

Topics covered include: Further Calculus, Differential Equations, Further Vectors, Matrices and Complex Numbers, Momentum and Impulse, Elastic Collisions in One Dimension, Work, Energy and Power, and Elastic Strings and Springs.



How will I be assessed?

Assessment takes place at the end of Year 13 and consists of four examination papers, each lasting 1.5 hours:

- Core Pure Mathematics 1
- Core Pure Mathematics 2
- Decision Mathematics 1
- Further Mechanics 1

Where could this take me?

Further Mathematics is a prestigious qualification, highly valued by universities—particularly for courses in mathematics, engineering, physics, computer science, and economics. It demonstrates a high level of commitment and academic ability. Students often find the subject intellectually stimulating, rewarding, and empowering.

Students must also be enrolled in A-level Mathematics. Common third subjects include Computer Science and Physics, with many students opting for a fourth A-level such as Chemistry or Economics to broaden their academic profile. High-achieving mathematicians typically manage the workload well, and this combination presents a compelling application to top universities.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mr Simon Antwi, KS5 Subject Lead

Performing Arts (BTEC Level 3)

This two year course provides an excellent stepping stone for those wishing to pursue a career in Performing Arts, or who would like to progress onto an appropriately related course or occupation. This course would lead to a BTEC Extended Certificate in Performing Arts (equivalent to one A Level).

What will I study?

Where the BTEC in Performing Arts differs from A Level is that it has practical led elements which drive the course.Students should expect to be involved in rehearsal and performance activities at a consistently high standard, which requires a great deal of focus, discipline and professionalism. Students will be taught by subject specialist teachers within their field.

The BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Performing Arts is a 360 guided learning hours(GLH) qualification that consists of four units. Three are mandatory, with two of those being externally assessed, and two internally assessed. Mandatory content makes up 83% of your BTEC.



How will I be assessed?

- Unit 1: Investigating practitioners' work, 90 GLH, mandatory, externally assessed.
- Unit 2: Developing skills and techniques for Live Performance, 90 GLH, mandatory, internally assessed.
- Unit 3: Group Performance Workshop, 120 GLH, mandatory, externally assessed.

Specialist Units: Based upon the cohort of students

Where could this take me?

Career opportunities include: Performing Arts/Drama school, member of a Theatre/Performing Arts company, actor/Director in film, television or media, teacher or workshop facilitator, manager/leadership, communication based job requiring well rounded and confident employees.

Exam Board
Pearsons

For further information please contact:
Mr John McHugh, Subject Lead

Philosophy

We are proud to offer a Philosophy course to all our A-level students which builds upon knowledge and understanding acquired during GCSE studies and in particular focuses on the disciplines of Religious Philosophy, Moral Philosophy and the Philosophical Sciences.

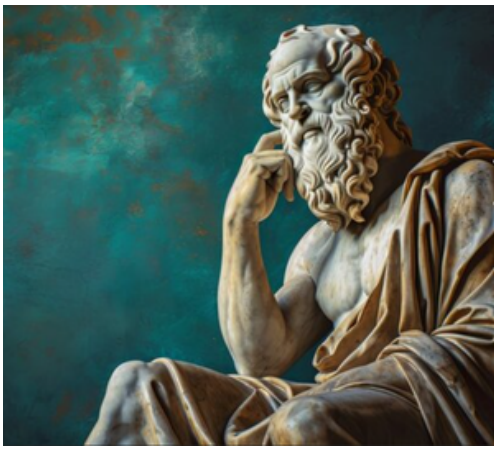
Why do we study Philosophy?

- To develop critical and structured thinking skills
- To consider key questions of the purpose and role of human existence
- To enhance problem solving skills
- To broaden religious understanding
- To understand how human thinking has developed over time
- Provides opportunities for spiritual development
- It is constantly being applied to modern world issues, changing ideas and tough questions
- It enhances UCAS applications, other subject disciplines and career skills

Every student is timetabled one Philosophy lesson per week

The study of Philosophy will enable you:

- To further develop a good understanding of Catholic Social Teaching
- To develop an awareness of how religious teachings influence social-political attitudes and action
- To apply teachings, ideas and concepts to other academic disciplines
- To engage fully and to contribute to the betterment of the society in which you live.



How does Philosophy contribute to my future career?

The study of Philosophy will:

- Equip you with transferable and people skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication, empathy, observation and reflection
- Make you more employable since you will stand out as a person equipped with a lot more than book learning

How is Philosophy taught?

- It is based on some Key facets of Catholic Social Teaching namely: Human Dignity, Solidarity, the Common Good, Subsidiarity and Participation, Preferential Option for the Poor, Stewardship, The Dignity of Work, Rights and Responsibilities, Family, Community and Society
- It is not aimed at exams
- It follows our Gospel Values of Love – Respect - Flourish
- Therefore, you have the opportunity to reflect on Church documents, relate them to issues that arise in society such BLM, Homelessness, Poverty, Inclusion, Social Mobility, Human Trafficking etc.
- You will contribute to discussions, make presentations, design campaign videos and promotion posters, plan and lead assemblies to raise awareness
- To mark your completion of the course, you will be given a certificate which will contribute to your UCAS personal statement and to your CV for job applications

Physical Education

A-level Physical Education is ideal for you if you are passionate about sport, health, and performance. You'll explore the science behind movement, the psychology that drives success, and the cultural impact of sport in society. The course blends theory and practice, encouraging you to apply classroom learning to real sporting experiences. Whether your future lies in sport, science, healthcare, or education, this subject helps develop analytical, communication, and problem-solving skills that are valued in many career paths.

What will I study?

The course covers a wide variety of areas within physical education. You'll investigate **anatomy and physiology**, focusing on how the body adapts to exercise and recovers after activity. Through **biomechanics**, you'll analyse human movement and learn how to optimise performance. **Skill acquisition** explores how we learn and develop sporting techniques, while **sport psychology** examines motivation, confidence, and decision-making in athletes. You'll also study the role of s**port and society**, looking at how issues like technology, inclusivity, and health shape participation today. Finally, you'll explore **contemporary issues in sport**, linking your learning to real-world debates. Alongside this, you'll continue to develop practical performance in your chosen sport, applying theory to practice.

'A-level PE lets you explore all aspects of sport, from physiology to psychology, taught by teachers who are experts in each area.'

How will I be assessed?

Assessment is a mixture of exams and practical work:

- **Three written examinations** make up 70% of the final grade, testing your knowledge across physiology, psychology, and socio-cultural aspects of sport.
- **Practical performance element** (15%), you will be assessed in one chosen sport, demonstrating both technical and tactical ability.
- The remaining 15% comes from a **performance analysis task**, where you critically evaluate your own performance, apply theoretical knowledge, and suggest strategies for improvement. Regular participation in sport outside the classroom is essential to support your progress.



Where could this take me?

Studying A-level PE opens doors to a range of exciting pathways. Many students go on to degrees in sport science, physiotherapy, coaching, physical education, psychology, or healthcare. Others use the skills gained—such as resilience, critical thinking, and communication—in fields as varied as business, the armed forces, or public services. The blend of theory and practice makes this course a strong foundation for careers where understanding people, performance, and wellbeing are key.

Exam Board
OCR

For further information please contact:
Mr William Lawn, Subject Lead

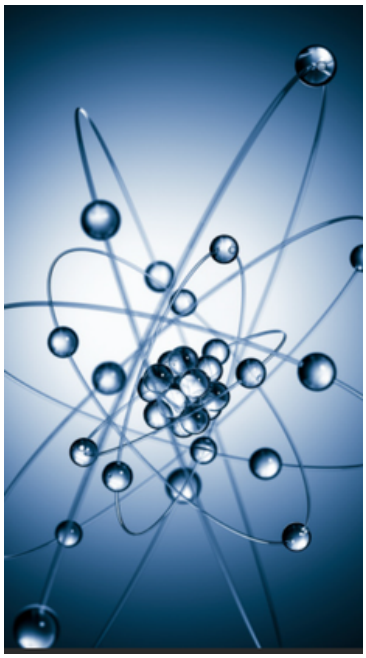
Physics

Physics explores the fundamental principles that govern the universe, from the tiniest subatomic particles to the vastness of galaxies. It encourages logical thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to apply concepts to new and unfamiliar situations. Physics underpins many of the technologies we rely on daily, from smartphones and medical imaging to renewable energy and space exploration. By studying A-level Physics, you will gain not only scientific knowledge but also highly transferable analytical skills, preparing you for a wide range of academic and career pathways.

What will I study?

The AQA A-level Physics course covers a rich blend of classical and modern physics. You will build on GCSE topics such as forces, energy, waves, and electricity, before progressing into more advanced areas. These include particle physics, quantum phenomena, thermal physics, and nuclear physics, as well as practical applications such as fields and mechanics. In the second year, you'll explore astrophysics and medical physics, applying principles to real-world scenarios. Alongside theory, there is a strong emphasis on experimental work, developing your ability to plan, carry out, and evaluate investigations. This balance ensures you gain both a deep conceptual understanding and the hands-on skills needed to test ideas, solve complex problems, and think critically—qualities that are valued by universities and employers alike.

'Physics challenged me to think differently about the world, and the practicals made everything come alive.'



How will I be assessed?

Assessment is through three written exam papers at the end of the two-year course. **Papers 1 and 2** focus on core physics content, while **Paper 3** assesses practical skills, data analysis, and one optional topic.

You will also be awarded a separate **Practical Endorsement** for demonstrating competence in a series of **required experiments** throughout the course. This ensures you develop not only theoretical knowledge but also the ability to apply physics in a laboratory setting. The exams combine multiple-choice questions, structured answers, and extended written responses to test both breadth and depth of understanding.

Where could this take me?

A-level Physics is highly regarded by universities and employers due to its emphasis on problem-solving and critical thinking. It is an essential subject for those considering degrees in engineering, physics, or astrophysics, and is also valuable for medicine, computer science, architecture, and finance. Careers can range from designing renewable energy solutions and developing cutting-edge technology to working in healthcare, aviation, data science, or research. The analytical and mathematical skills gained in Physics open doors to countless opportunities, whether you pursue science directly or take your transferable skills into other sectors.

Exam Board
AQA

For further information please contact:
Mrs Jo Ryan, Subject Lead

Politics

Politics shapes the world around us—learning how it works gives you real power to question, debate, and influence the people and the world around you. Studying Politics is exciting, rewarding, and more relevant than ever in today's fast-changing world. It's a respected, intellectually challenging course that develops skills universities and employers value. The course is fast-paced and content-rich, and it rewards curiosity, a passion for current affairs, and engagement beyond the classroom. If you're ready to think critically, challenge ideas, and make sense of the news, this course could be your gateway to understanding—and shaping—the world around you.

What will I study?

Year 12 – UK Politics & Political Ideas. Discover how British politics works in practice. Explore elections, the media and how power is shared between the Prime Minister, Parliament and the Supreme Court. Debate important and controversial topics such as the rise of populism, whilst also getting to grips with the big ideas and famous political thinkers that have shaped the world we inhabit: liberalism, conservatism, socialism, feminism.

Year 13 – US Politics. Step across the Atlantic to compare UK and US politics. Investigate the Constitution, Congress and the Presidency, and unpack the drama of presidential elections and campaign finance. Examine Democrat and Republican ideas, their voters and internal rivalries. See how interest groups and the Supreme Court shape civil rights and democracy.

'Studying Politics at St Mary's has furthered my understanding of my own political views, and has been a great introduction to tackling divisive debate with classmates of various different opinions.'

How will I be assessed?

At the end of Year 13 there are three equally weighted exam papers covering the units: UK Politics, US Politics, and Political Ideologies. There is no coursework element.

Each exam paper is two hours long and features mainly essay-style questions worth up to 30 marks. As such, success depends on producing clear, well-structured arguments and using evidence effectively. Therefore, strong written communication and the ability to construct precise, persuasive analysis are essential for achieving the top grades.



Where could this take me?

The knowledge and skills developed through studying Politics will not only enhance your understanding of other A-Level subjects (e.g. History), but also open doors to a wide range of career opportunities. Many students go on to pursue roles in the Civil Service, law, academia, business, journalism, media, and finance or banking. Beyond these traditional paths, Politics equips you with critical thinking, analysis, research, and communication skills that are highly valued in almost any profession. It could even lay the groundwork for leadership at the highest level—who knows, it could be your first step toward becoming the future Prime Minister!

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mr Benjamin Noble, Subject Lead

Psychology

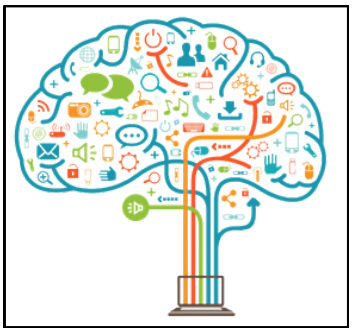
A-level Psychology offers fascinating insights into human behaviour, thought and emotion. It helps students understand why people think and act the way they do, while developing strong analytical, research, and communication skills. Psychology connects to real-world issues in health, education, and society, making it an engaging and valuable subject that supports a wide range of university courses and career paths.

What will I study?

In A-level Psychology, you will study a combination of core topics, research skills and optional modules. **Core topics** include: **Social Influence**; **Memory**; **Attachment**; **Clinical Psychology & Mental Health; Biopsychology** and **Approaches in Psychology**. An intrinsic part of your learning will be **Research Methods,** where you learn to design, conduct and analyse psychological studies scientifically and ethically. In addition you will explore the mandatory Issues and Debates topic, which encourages critical thinking about key questions in psychology, such as whether humans have free will to choose behaviour or if it is determined by biological or environmental factors. You will also study optional topics, including **Schizophrenia** (investigating causes, symptoms, and treatments); **Forensic Psychology** (exploring criminal behaviour and offender profiling) and **Relationships** (examining the formation, maintenance and breakdown of romantic relationships).

The course combines theory, research and practical investigation, helping you develop analytical, evaluative and problem-solving skills.

'I specifically chose this course as it had Forensic Psychology as an optional topic, which a lot of other schools didn't offer.'



How will I be assessed?

You will be assessed through three written exams at the end of the two-year course.

- **Paper 1** covers **Introductory Topics**, including social influence, memory, attachment and clinical psychology.
- **Paper 2** focuses on **Psychology in Context**: approaches, research methods and biopsychology.
- **Paper 3** assesses **Issues and Options**, incorporating issues and debates and the optional topics—Schizophrenia, Forensic Psychology and Relationships.

Exams include multiple-choice, short-answer, and extended-answer questions, testing knowledge, understanding and evaluative skills. Practical research skills are assessed indirectly through exam questions, demonstrating your ability to conduct and interpret studies ethically and scientifically.

Where could this take me?

Studying Psychology opens doors to a wide range of higher education courses and careers. Many students progress to psychology degrees, exploring specialisms such as clinical, forensic, or educational psychology. The analytical and research skills gained are highly valued in healthcare, social work, human resources, marketing and law. Psychology graduates develop strong problem-solving, critical thinking and communication skills, making them attractive to employers across multiple sectors. With further study or professional training, opportunities include becoming a clinical psychologist, counsellor, occupational psychologist, or academic researcher to name just a few. The subject also provides a strong foundation for interdisciplinary fields, such as neuroscience, education and criminology.

Exam Board
AQA

For further information please contact:
Miss Dawn Compton, Subject Lead

Religious Studies

A-level Religious Studies allows students to explore the world's major religions, ethical questions, and philosophical ideas, fostering a deeper understanding of different beliefs and cultures. It develops critical thinking, reasoning, and reflective skills, helping students engage thoughtfully with complex moral and social issues.

What will I study?

Paper 1: Philosophy of Religion

- Arguments for the existence of God: design, cosmological, moral and ontological.
- The nature and influence of religious experience: mystical, numinous, conversion, miracles.
- Problems of evil and suffering, atheism and agnosticism.
- Life after death and philosophical language.

Paper 2: Religion and Ethics

- Significant concepts in issues or debates in religion and ethics: medical ethics, environmental issues, equality, war and peace, justice and sexual ethics.
- A study of ethical theories: Natural Law, Utilitarianism, Virtue ethics, Kant and Situation ethics
- Ethical language, Deontology, and the relationship between religion and morality.

Paper 3: Christianity

- Nature of God: personal, creator, purpose of life, trinity, moral principles and the nature of the Church.
- Wisdom and authority: the Bible, Jesus, Church history.
- Christian practices: Eucharist, prayer, identity, art and music.
- Social and historical developments: science and secularisation. Liberation, feminist and black theology. Evangelicalism.
- Works of scholars: Atonement theory, pluralism, diversity and equality.

'I have found that Religious Studies has developed my interest in political morality, geopolitics and human rights. It has enabled me to explore society from many different perspectives.'



How will I be assessed?

An externally assessed written examination for each of the **three papers**, comprising of three sections:

- Section A has two short structured questions.
- Section B has one two-part essay question on an excerpt, sourced from the extracts list (anthology).
- Section C has one extended essay question.

Where could this take me?

Studying A-level Religious Studies can lead to a future in a wide range of careers that range beyond the traditional careers paths within the education and religious sectors. Careers in fields such as journalism, media, law, international relations and social work value the transferable skills of critical and ethical thinking, and the strong communication skills developed by students of the subject.

Exam Board
AQA

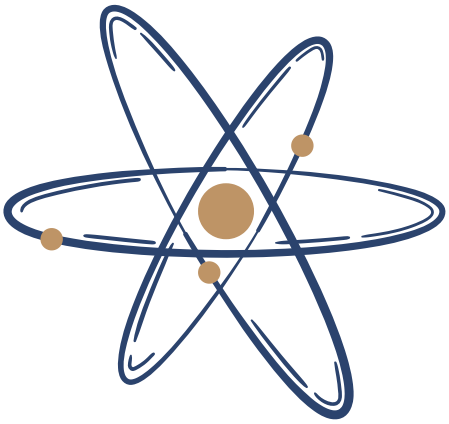
For further information please contact:
Mr Thomas Hutchinson, Subject Lead

Science (Applied)

Explore Biology, Chemistry and Physics through practical investigations and real-world applications. Develop laboratory, problem-solving, analytical and research skills valued in higher education and science-related careers.

What will I study?

- Biology - cells and biological systems
- Chemistry - bonding, reactions and analysis
- Physics - waves, forces and applications
- Practical science - investigations, data analysis and evaluation.



How will I be assessed?

- Principles and applications of Biology - External exam
- Principles and applications of Chemistry - External exam
- Principles and applications of Physics - External exam
- Practical Scientific Procedures and Techniques - Internal assignment
- Science Investigation Skills **OR** Contemporary Issues in Science* - Internal assignment

*Students complete one optional unit (Unit 5 or 6)

Overall assessment: 50% external examinations and 50% internal assessment.

Where could this take me?

Study alongside two A-Levels or other suitable Level 3 qualifications. Universities may accept Applied Science for relevant degrees, depending on the course and subject combination.

Potential routes include Biomedical Science, Forensic Science, Nursing and Allied Health Professions, Pharmaceutical Science, Biological Sciences, Environmental Science and laboratory research.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mrs Jo Ryan, Subject Lead

Sociology

Sociology helps us understand day-to-day human behaviour to make sense of the diverse beliefs, values, and perspectives coexisting in our society. With the practical application of sociology, we can understand the existing power structure and systems and work towards creating a fairer society.

What will I study?

The A-level Sociology course is made up of three mandatory components which are taught over a two year period and externally assessed at the end of the two years.

- The first component introduces learner to the key themes of **socialization, culture and identity** and develops these themes through the context of **youth subcultures**. These options develop skills that enables individuals to focus on their personal identity, roles and responsibilities within society and develop a lifelong interest in social issues.
- The second component explores the methods of **sociological enquiry** and develops knowledge and understanding of contemporary social processes and social change in the context of social inequality and difference. This component aims to foster the development of critical and reflective thinking with a respect for social diversity in terms of social class, gender, ethnicity and age. It develops links between the nature of sociological thought and methods of sociological enquiry.
- The final component engages students in **theoretical debates** and how these relate to contemporary global society. Contemporary and global debates are introduced through a compulsory topic of 'Globalisation and the digital social world' and a detailed study of Crime and deviance.

'If everybody studied sociology then the world would be a better place.'



How will I be assessed?

There are three examination papers:

- **Component one**: Socialisation, Culture and Identity. 1.5 hours (30% final grade)
- **Component two**: Researching and understanding social inequalities. 2.15 hours (35% final grade)
- **Component three**: Debates in contemporary society 2.15 hours (35% final grade)

Where could this take me?

Studying A-level Sociology can take you many places, including university degrees in social sciences, law or psychology, leading to careers in social work, education, human resources, journalism or criminal justice. It provides a foundation for understanding societal issues, developing critical thinking, and gaining skills in research and analysis, which is valuable in many sectors.

Exam Board
OCR

For further information please contact:
Mrs Fiona McGloin, Subject Lead

Spanish

Studying A-level Spanish equips students with the skills to communicate confidently in one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. It opens doors to rich and diverse cultures across Europe, Latin America, and beyond, while also enhancing analytical thinking and cultural understanding. Spanish is highly valued in global business, travel, and international relations, making it an excellent choice for students who want to broaden their horizons and stand out in future studies and careers.

What will I study?

A-level Spanish covers a wide range of topics which are covered over four themes:

- **Theme 1:** Changes in Spanish society Family, education, world of work.
- **Theme 2:** Culture in the Spanish-speaking world Music, media, festivals and traditions.
- **Theme 3:** Immigration and multi-cultural society in Spain Immigration in Spain and the Civil War
- **Theme 4:** History Franco's dictatorship and the transition from the dictatorship to the democracy

Students are also required to study and critically analyse a Spanish novel and a film, as well as practising their translation and essay writing skills. The book and film link to the topics, giving you further insight into Spanish culture and history. As part of the speaking examination you will complete an Independent Research Project based on your own area of interest related to the society and culture of the Spanish-speaking world.

'Doing A-level Spanish is great because you get to properly learn a language that's spoken all over the world. You also get to dive into Spanish and Latin American culture — films, music, and even politics — so it never feels boring. It has taught me to think a different way, and I loved how the course covered a little of loads of different subjects.'

How will I be assessed?

You will sit the A Level exam at the end of Year 13. It consists of three papers:

- **Paper 1:** Listening, reading and translation into English: 2 hours: 80 marks (worth 40%)
- **Paper 2:** Written response to film and text, translation into Spanish: 2 hours 40 minutes: 120 marks (worth 30%)
- **Paper 3:** Speaking: 21-23 minutes: 72 marks (worth 30%)



Where could this take me?

Languages complement many subjects at university and can be studied as a joint honours degree with another subject. The skills learnt through languages are easily transferable to other A-levels and further study. A foreign language will help to improve cultural awareness, increase adaptability and make you a more confident and effective communicator.

Exam Board
Edexcel

For further information please contact:
Mrs Tamzin Catmur, Subject Lead

Notes

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