

Dear Student

Sixth Form at Skipton Girls' High School

May I thank you for your interest in our Sixth Form and hope that this booklet, along with your invitation to our 'Open Evening', will provide you with the information necessary to guide you through to the next stage of your career.

This booklet outlines the admissions procedure for entry to Sixth Form and gives some information on the range of courses on offer.

Whatever you choose to do after your GCSEs, we wish you every success for your future.

Yours faithfully



Mrs J Renou
Headteacher

Procedures and Calendar for Sixth Form Admissions 2010

Entrance to our Sixth Form is open to any girl who has completed her GCSE (or equivalent) studies. Each year we welcome an increasing number into the Sixth Form both from other local schools and from further afield. There is no special entrance exam but it is essential that you achieve 5 GCSEs at grade C or above (including English and Mathematics) as well as meeting any subject specific requirements for individual courses.

Separate entry requirements for each course (often a grade B in that subject at GCSE) are set out in the relevant sections of individual course information. Of course, many of our students have much higher GCSE grades but a willingness to work hard and to contribute to the life of the Sixth Form is more important than high GCSE grades.

Outlined below is the admissions calendar but of particular note is 29th January 2010 which is this year's closing date for preliminary applications. We do still accept applications after this date but choices of courses may become restricted.

8 th January	New Sixth Form Handbook available for students. (Handed out to internal students and sent out to external students, and available from www.sghs.org.uk)
	Preliminary Application Form enclosed with the prospectus to enable us to assess demand for subjects
21 st January	Sixth Form Open Evening – a chance to hear about what we offer and to talk to subject staff and careers co-ordinator.
29 th January	Deadline for return of Preliminary Application Forms.
24 th February	Final subject option blocks published.
	These will be determined by the subject combinations identified from the Preliminary Application Form.
	Final Application Form issued.
15 th – 26 th March	Guidance interviews take place on the basis of the final forms.
	Information to help with this process will be requested for external candidates.
21 st April	Final offers of places sent to applicants.

- 2nd July Sixth Form Induction Day. This will introduce you to the Sixth Form and to the courses you will be studying. All applicants are expected to attend.
- 24th August GCSE Results and Enrolment Day.
Students to contact SGHS with their GCSE Results and a decision on whether they wish to take up their place. If the student does not achieve her expected results then a further interview can be arranged at this time.
- 3rd September Start of Autumn Term.

You are very welcome to apply whatever school you are currently studying at; if you are at a different school at the moment your application will be treated in exactly the same way as those from our own Year 11 students.

If you have any queries or problems at any stage please contact either Mr A Smith (Deputy Headteacher) or Mrs F McMillan (Learning Director with responsibility for the Sixth Form).

Why choose to study at Skipton Girls' High School?

Recognised in March 2008 by OFSTED, as an 'Outstanding' school, we believe that we offer you the opportunity to enjoy the care, guidance and support you need to achieve your academic potential along with the responsibility of playing a major role in the life of the school.

Obviously it is up to each student to make the most of her opportunities, but we are confident that we can offer an atmosphere of individual support, care and challenge that will guide you into developing a balance between high academic achievement and the personal qualities needed to become a successful professional and leader in the future.

As the first all girls' school to achieve specialist Engineering status (in 2003) we have a unique position nationally which is continuing to create exciting opportunities for the school and its students to work on new initiatives both with industry, business and Universities. In specialising in Engineering we aim to foster an environment which challenges gender stereotypes, raises the post-16 participation rate in engineering, mathematics, science and technology and contributes nationally to the pool of young women entering the most demanding professions. We live in a manufactured world, in which the science and practice of engineering underpin every human activity - even sitting listening to a lecture. Part of the point of being a specialist engineering school is to remove the magic from the technology, and to give young women an authority over their lives and careers which is not available if they are simply the passive recipients of a world they never made and without the keys to unlock it.

So if your interest is in Botticelli, Byron or Beethoven you are just as welcome here as you are if you are obsessed with Brunel!

Some of the highlights

- **High achievement.** Our results consistently put us in the top 50 state schools in the country for A Level achievement. In 2009 our pass rate was over 99%, with 62% of entries reaching either A or B grade. It's not just high achievers at GCSE who thrive at the school - our 'value added' score, along with that of all Sixth Form providers in North Yorkshire and in many other areas, is calculated by comparing how much progress students make from GCSE to A Level; our score in 2009 put us in the top 15% of schools in the country. Our full A Level results for 2009 are at the back of this handbook.
- **Expert teaching.** All courses are taught by specialists, often with many years experience of getting the best from Sixth Form students. You will be in relatively small classes (rarely more than 20) with individual attention.
- **A welcoming atmosphere.** Here you are part of a Sixth Form and a school which is big enough to offer you choice but small enough for you to be treated as an individual. Sixth Form students have their own

building to use (West Bank House) and you will quickly get to know other students and make friends.

- **A wide choice of A Level courses.** We offer 22 different A and AS Level courses, including some which are shared with Ermysted's Grammar School Sixth Form. The difficulty for most students is choosing which courses to do!
- **A range of opportunities.** Our students are encouraged to participate in our programme of enrichment activities, including accredited courses in areas ranging from counselling to Sports Leadership along with sporting, theatrical and musical activities. You can also complete an individual "Extended Project" in an area of your choice which is equivalent to half an A Level. Students are encouraged to join in the life of the school as a whole – for example, by organising activities along with younger students or by acting as academic mentors. In common with many other high achieving schools we offer you the chance to bring together your academic and non-academic achievements together in the "AQA Baccalaureate". More detail on this qualification can be found below.
- **Excellent ICT support.** Skipton Girls' High School is at the forefront locally and regionally in developing support for students through ICT. Our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) provides support for most of our courses, and allows you to work independently online in school and at home as well as taking advantage of the excellent teaching available at the school. We have several modern ICT suites, two of which are exclusively for Sixth Form use, as well as a developing laptop loan and netbook lease scheme which allows individual access to the resources students need.
- **Guidance for your future.** We have a long history of preparing students successfully for very competitive universities and courses, with a significant number of students going to Oxford and Cambridge each year. We also know that, while the vast majority of our students go on to Higher Education, not all will want to and we employ our own Careers Advisor who can guide you whatever direction you see yourself taking.

What the Ofsted Inspectors said...

The whole school (including the Sixth Form) was inspected by OFSTED in March 2008. We were graded 'Outstanding' overall, and gained the highest grade (1) in 26 out of 29 possible areas, including 'Achievement' and 'Quality of Teaching and Learning' in the Sixth Form. A selection of what they said about the Sixth Form follows; you can find the full report at www.ofsted.gov.uk or by following the link on our school website (www.sghs.org.uk)

"This is an outstanding school. Standards are high and students achieve very well."

"Standards [in the Sixth Form] are very high with performance in nearly all subjects significantly above the national average. Progress is rapid and achievement is very good."

"Care, guidance and support are good."

"Students' outstanding personal development is demonstrated by their responsible attitudes and very good behaviour."

What courses can I apply for?

At the initial application stage you will be asked to select your main courses of study – (normally 4 subjects) to take to AS Level. The subjects available for September 2010 are:

- Art and Design
- Biology
- Business (Applied)
- Chemistry
- Engineering (Applied)
- English Language
- English Literature
- French
- Geography
- German
- Government and Politics
- History
- Mathematics
- Further Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education (E.G.S.)
- Physics
- Psychology
- Religious Studies
- Theatre Studies

E.G.S. – Taught at Ermysted's Grammar School

All courses are offered subject to demand.

Choices of enrichment activities (including sporting, dramatic and musical opportunities as well as further academic study) will be made later on in the application process.

Sixth Form Life

The separate facilities in West Bank House, with study areas, ICT suites and bistro, provide an environment in which you can both work and relax. Being a student in the Sixth Form is very different from earlier school experiences. There is less supervision, but you will be expected to manage your time, look after the premises, and respect the rights and wishes of others.

Privilege brings individual responsibility and members of the Sixth Form are encouraged to take on responsibilities within the school, which present them with rewarding and enjoyable challenges and help them develop a sense of community.

Academic Study

Entrance to the Sixth Form is conditional on achieving at least five GCSEs at C grade or above to include Maths and English Language (in exceptional circumstances you may be able to re-sit Maths if you do not yet have a GCSE grade C). It is usual to have grade B or above in the subjects taken for AS/A Level though this is not always obligatory for every subject. The emphasis on Sixth Form studies at Skipton Girls' High School is academic, and students normally study four AS Levels. Full details of the courses offered and the necessary background for each are given in this handbook.

The workload can be heavy and you should be prepared to put in at least four to five hours private study per week in each subject. You will be able to use the West Bank study rooms and the Learning Resource Centre in study periods. Laptop computers are available for loan during the school day on a booking system. In addition to completing the assignments set regularly in each subject on time, you will be expected to do the extra reading recommended by subject teachers.

You will be able to follow an enrichment programme to help you broaden your horizons. As well as lessons and preparation for the General Studies examination, students are strongly encouraged to take part in one or more aspect of this programme.

Paid employment outside school can be a valuable and enriching experience as well as helping you out financially. Experience has shown that students can and do successfully fit this in along with their academic work, but we also find that academic work suffers if students devote too much time to paid part-time employment. You should definitely not undertake more than about nine hours per week.

Attendance at all lessons is expected and is strictly monitored; you must understand that undue absence inevitably affects grades.

Throughout the AS and A2 courses guided work will be set; this is viewed as a valuable opportunity, contributing to the policy of the school in encouraging students to develop independent learning through use of the Learning Resource Centre, internet and your own thought processes. By the end of your two years in the Sixth Form we expect you to have increased both your

level of self-motivation and responsibility for your own learning to carry you forward to the next stage of your education or training for a career.

Support

You will be assigned to a tutor group and will remain in that tutor group with the same Personal Tutor for two years. Our tutor groups are 'family groups', with students from Year 7 right through to Year 13 in the same group. The Personal Tutor helps students to settle into the Sixth Form, can offer support and help in case of difficulty, and give advice on future options. The Sixth Form Learning Director is also available to give guidance and help. The Careers Co-ordinator provides expert advice on university and college applications and on future careers.

In September, at the beginning of the Sixth Form course, you will be set targets for your progress throughout the two years. There is regular monitoring of your progress and twice in the year there is a review by subject and Personal Tutors leading to a formal report to you and your parents.

Sixth Form Dress Code

Sixth Form are expected to follow the Sixth Form Dress Code, which states that students should wear business dress, (black suit and optional coloured top with dark coloured shoes), which is appropriate for a working day. More details are available from the school if you require them at this stage.

Structure of the A Level Curriculum

Students study for the A Level qualification in 2 sections which consist of the AS (Advanced Subsidiary) in Year 12 followed by the A2 in Year 13. The marks obtained for each section are aggregated to produce the final A Level grade.

Advanced Subsidiary (AS)

This represents the first half of the full A level qualification so accounts for 50% of the final marks. Subjects have two or three assessment units or modules (depending on subject) and are assessed either in January or at the end of Year 12.

Students normally take four AS subjects along with General Studies. In some circumstances it may be possible to take five subjects; for a small minority of students three subjects may be more appropriate.

Students can re-sit one or more of these units in the January of Year 13 to improve their grades if necessary.

Second Year (A2)

Two or three more units per subject are studied in Year 13 and these are, naturally, of a higher level than the AS. They account for a further 50% of the total A Level marks. Students can either complete A2 in all four of their subjects or finish one at AS Level to allow them to concentrate on three subjects.

Some subjects may enter students for one of the A2 modules in the January of Year 13 and students may want to re-sit these modules in June to gain higher marks. Modules are again taken either in January or at the end of Year 13.

Joint Courses with Ermysted's Grammar School

To extend choice for students at both schools, the Physical Education course at Ermysted's Grammar School is available to Skipton Girls' High School students and we are pleased to welcome Ermysted's Grammar School students onto a selection of our courses. Further details can be found later in the handbook. Ermysted's Grammar School is only a few hundred metres from SGHS so travel between the two schools is not a problem.

The Enriched Curriculum

The stated aim of the school is "to encourage girls to develop into confident and independent young women, with an understanding of and a respect for the needs of others." We are proud of our high academic standards and seek to impart a love of learning whilst giving you many opportunities to further your skills and talents in other spheres and to develop qualities of leadership and a sense of responsibility.

The opportunities available this year included:

- The Extended Project Qualification – undertaken in a topic selected by the student
- AS and A Level General Studies (taken by all students)
- PE – as well as recreational sport we offer the Sports Leaders' Award Level 2
- Institute of Leadership and Management Award in Team Leading (an introduction to business management)
- Introduction to Counselling
- Languages from scratch
- Digital imaging course
- The Engineering Education Scheme
- Young Enterprise
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme

Student Leadership

Students of all ages, but particularly Sixth Form students, are given the opportunity to develop their leadership skills – after all, many of our students will be taking up leadership positions in business or public service a few years after leaving us.

This extends well beyond the traditional 'Student Council' to involve all areas of school life. As part of an all age tutor group you will be able to advise and mentor younger students. All Sixth Form students receive peer mentor training, and many choose to undertake further training to act as mentors in specific areas such as literacy or ICT. Sixth Form students run clubs for younger students in a variety of areas (dance, drama, languages, science, maths and others), and act as House Captains and Head Girls, running high profile school events. Our Student Executive Body contributes to all areas of decision making within the school.

Our CSLA programme (developing leadership skills in a sporting context) and ILM programme (developing leadership skills in a business context) help to build leadership skills as well as providing qualifications.

Voluntary work

You will be actively encouraged to do voluntary work in the community. Through this you are expected to develop knowledge, skills and understanding by, for example, learning more about fairness, responsibility, social justice, respect for the elderly, and the work of community-based national and international voluntary groups.

This work can mean working with the elderly, in charity shops, playgroups, primary schools and Citizens' Advice Bureaux. You can do voluntary work in school time if your timetable allows.

Work Experience or Work Shadowing can be extremely helpful for Sixth Formers and is encouraged as part of the general post-16 curriculum. Building on Work Experience done in Year 10, you can develop your awareness of the demands of employment, gain a more realistic picture of particular careers and learn how to adapt to new environments, situations and people. For those who wish to go into teaching, law or a veterinary / medical career, a short period of Work Experience / Shadowing is essential. For others it can prove stimulating and enlightening. European Work Experience in Germany or France may be an option for Languages students.

Higher Education Opportunities and Careers Advice

The vast majority of our students go on to Higher Education in universities or colleges, while others go into various areas of employment. Increasingly students are taking up places in many areas of Engineering following our achievement of Specialist Status.

Each year in the summer term we hold a Higher Education Day for Year 12. At this event you can find out at first hand from a university admissions tutor what the institutions of Higher Education are looking for from their applications. Specific support is given to students who wish to apply to Oxford or Cambridge or for highly competitive courses such as Medicine.

Many students also spend time on 'taster' courses; particularly those in Engineering, Law, Medicine and Primary Teaching. Visits are arranged to Open Days and to the Careers Convention in Harrogate, a Higher Education fair where universities are represented.

We have a Careers Co-ordinator, who is in school on a regular basis to help and advise students on their university and Higher Education choices. Specific careers lessons are also part of our General Studies programme in Year 13 along with individual support and guidance.

The AQA Baccalaureate

This "umbrella qualification" brings together students' achievement at A Level with their wider achievements in our Sixth Form. To gain the AQA Baccalaureate you need to gain:

- o At least 3 A Levels in any combination of subjects
- o An AS Level in General Studies

- An Extended Project. This is an independent piece of work undertaken in an area entirely chosen by you – it does not have to be in an area covered by the normal school curriculum. It can be a traditional essay, but it can also be a performance or art work with supporting documentation. The project is marked using the same grading system as A levels, and is equivalent to half an A Level, but much more important is the way it helps you to develop the skills to succeed at university. Students this year have also found that becoming an expert in one particular area has been invaluable at university interviews.
- 100 hours of enrichment activity inside and / or outside school over the two years of your course. This covers the three broad areas of Community Service, Personal Development and Work-Based Learning, and thousands of different combinations of activities can be included. You will keep an electronic enrichment diary to log your achievements.

More information on the AQA Baccalaureate is available from the school on request. Please note that this is not the same as the International Baccalaureate, which is an alternative to A Levels offered at some schools and colleges.

Your Partnership with the School

You will get the most out of our Sixth Form if you view it as a partnership between you and the school. Our aims as a school for you in the Sixth Form are:

- to enable you to achieve the highest standards possible in your academic studies.
- to help you to develop the skills and attributes you will need to succeed in Higher Education and in your later life.
- to enable you to have an enjoyable and fulfilling experience both educationally and socially.

We will work hard as a school to make this a reality for you; you can do your part by working hard with the support of your teachers in your academic courses but also by throwing yourself into the wider life of the Sixth Form and of the school as a whole. After all, it is often the skills you pick up and memories you keep outside your academic studies which mean most to you when you look back on your time in the Sixth Form.

We hope that when you have seen what we can offer you will choose Skipton Girls' High School but, whatever you do, we wish you every success in the future.

ART AND DESIGN

Specification: AQA A Level Art and Design (2200)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/arts/art_overview.php

What students have said:

- *"I have really enjoyed being able to work independently on my project and choosing my own direction. I also enjoyed the trips to London and to Craven Museum which gave me lots of inspiration for my work".*
- *"I like the freedom we have to explore any idea, to express our individuality, and try out different types of media, and also the tutor sessions where we get to go through our project - they are really helpful."*
- *"I have learnt how to challenge myself and push myself to experiment with different media. I have learnt how to use Adobe PhotoShop – editing and merging images."*
- *"Our exhibition was good with people admiring the hard work we had put in!"*
- *"I've really improved my drawing skills and am learning to manage my time better. I enjoy developing my ideas and seeing them progress into the final product."*
- *"I have learnt skills from the workshops such as using linseed oil on graphite. Moreover, I really found that I can let a lot of stress out in doing art and feel calm. I am always satisfied and happy in the doing of my art."*

For more information, please contact Miss M Chen

Necessary Background: GCSE grades A*, A or B in Art

The AS Course - two compulsory units of assessment:

Unit 1 - Coursework

This is a practical project, consisting of preliminary/supporting studies leading to 2 final pieces. You will be introduced to a wide variety of experiences employing a range of media, scale, processes and techniques, whilst exploring your chosen area of study and related artists. One of these workshops is in a gallery setting and will be led by a practising artist.

Unit 2 - Examination

This Controlled Test, set by AQA, is centre-assessed but moderated by AQA. The test is in two parts: the preparatory period for research and a timed five-hour session to plan further developments for the final piece.

Unit 1	Practical Coursework based on a set theme	50% of the total AS Level mark 25% of the total A Level mark	Portfolio of work – centre-assessed
Unit 2	Externally-Set Assignment	50% of the total AS Level mark 25% of the total A Level mark	5 hour exam

The A2 Course – two compulsory units of assessment:

Unit 3 - Coursework

This is a practical project, which builds on the experience of Units 1 and 2 of the AS course. This unit is a personal investigation based on an idea, issue or theme of your own choosing. This unit is supported by written work of between 1000 – 3000 words. You will have the chance to display your portfolio of work and final pieces in the end of year exhibition.

Unit 4 - Examination

The Controlled Test is set by AQA, centre-assessed and moderated by AQA. The test is in two parts: a lead-in preparatory period for initial research and investigation and a timed fifteen-hour period during which time you will produce a final piece(s). In this unit you are to draw together the knowledge, understanding and skills learned during the A level course.

Unit 3	Coursework based on a self-identified theme	25% of the total A Level mark	Practical and written work – centre-assessed
Unit 4	Externally-Set Assignment	25% of the total A Level mark	15 hour exam

Skills you will develop during this course

- Problem solving and independence
- Creative, technical and research skills
- Improving own learning and performance
- The ability to work with others
- A critical awareness of both your own work and the work of other artists.

Possible Progression

Our Art and Design students have gone on to study a wide range of Art, Craft and Design related courses; these include Architecture, Arts Management, Advertising and Journalism, Corporate Branding, Fashion Design, Film and Television Studies, Interior Design, History of Art, Jewellery Design, Photography ... to name but a few. Art & Design is also helpful for degrees/employment in many other areas e.g. the fast-growing world of media and technology.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The study of Art and Design involves a wide range of research methods and processes as well as the need to refine, modify and communicate ideas, feelings, images and experiences through visual and written means.

- You will be actively encouraged to develop your own ideas through one-to-one student/tutor discussion and to feel confident in pursuing your chosen area of study
- Research and investigation is an on-going process, and you will use sketchbooks and logbooks throughout the AS and A2 courses
- You will refer to and make positive use of the work of artists, designers and crafts people as an aid to the development of your own work. You will be encouraged to keep abreast with current trends in contemporary art
- Knowledge of and proficiency with a variety of media will vary according to the particular direction in which your work develops
- Drawing from direct observation is an essential aspect of A level Art and Design
- You will be encouraged to make use of opportunities offered by Craven College (Life Drawing classes) and Leeds Metropolitan University (working with the lecturers plus workshops and access to the facilities; project work and exhibitions) and to make full use of rooms in school outside timetabled sessions
- Opportunities for visiting galleries and exhibitions are actively encouraged. We usually have at least one visit to a major city art gallery during Year 12 and Year 13
- Communication in Art and Design is predominantly in the form of visual imagery, but oral communication is also an essential element and Unit 3 requires evidence of written communication
- Information Technology is used when researching or presenting coursework units. Word processing, use of the Internet, CD ROM, CAD/paint programmes, digital imaging and professional quality printmaking are all-available to candidates in Art and Design

Useful weblinks (including careers info)

Your Creative Future	www.yourcreativefuture.org
View Real Creative Jobs	www.creativepool.co.uk
Arts Council of England	www.artscouncil.org.uk
Association of Illustration	www.theaoi.com
Crafts Council	www.craftscouncil.org.uk
Icon Art & Design Magazine	www.iconeye.com
Interior Design	www.bida.org
Textiles Magazine	www.selvedge.org
Art and Technology	www.he.courses-careers.com/technology.htm

BIOLOGY

Specification: AQA A Level Biology (2410)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/science/biology_overview.php

For more information, please contact Mr A Hinchcliffe

What students have said:

"I chose to do Biology as an A level because I enjoyed it at GCSE. I am glad I took it because I think it is interesting."

"Biology A level is a lot different to GCSE, you can see a different aspect of it as you learn. Biochemistry is very interesting but you must be prepared to do some independent learning."

"Biology was one of my favourite subjects at GCSE and, although it is a hard subject, if you enjoy learning about how the body, animals and plants work I would definitely recommend it."

"I am very interested in the Human Biology topics and find the subject fascinating."

Necessary Background: Grade B or above in GCSE Biology or Additional Science.

Students who are successful at AS or A Level in Biology need to be able to use Mathematics proficiently.

Assessment Summary:

Unit 1	Biology and Disease	34% of the total AS Level marks 17% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 15 minute exam
Unit 2	The Variety of Living Organisms	46% of the total AS Level marks 23% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 45 minute exam
Unit 3	Practical and Investigative Skills	20% of the total AS Level marks 10% of the total A Level marks	Internal Assessment and written exam

Unit 4	Populations and Environment	17% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 30 minute exam
Unit 5	Control in Cells and in Organisms	23% of the total A Level marks	2 hour 15 minute exam
Unit 6	Practical and Investigative Skills	10% of the total A Level marks	Internal Assessment and written exam

Topics Covered

AS emphasises the way in which biologists work and the contributions of biology to society. Topics covered include, how digestive and gas exchange systems may be affected by communicable and non-communicable diseases and the influence of genetic and environmental factors on intraspecific variation.

At A2, there are additional sections summarising biological principles and establishing contexts for How Science Works. Students study how living organisms form ecosystems through which energy is transferred and chemical elements cycled, how human activity affects ecological balance, homeostasis and the maintenance of a constant internal environment and genes and genetic expression.

Teaching and Learning Methods

These may include: working from printed material, e.g. information/work sheets, discussion, making notes in class, structured guided study, comprehension exercises, past question papers, regular tests, essays, presenting posters, use of ICT including CD-ROMs, simulations, PowerPoint and research-based learning; practical investigations, educational visits/revision conferences, ecological fieldwork.

The department has excellent textbook facilities, both for issue and reference, together with good library resources including biological journals that students may order.

Specific skills you will develop during the course

Communication: There are many opportunities for developing effective communication skills, both written and oral. Particular areas include group practical work, evaluation of investigations, oral presentations, essay work and comprehension exercises.

Application of Number: Useful sources of evidence include processing of raw data, tabulation and graphical presentation, data interpretation and analysis, and statistical testing.

Information Technology: Word processing skills, graphs, tables and research using the Internet may all be used in the preparation of written work; use of data-logging equipment in practical / ecological investigations.

Useful web links:

www.aqa.org.uk/admin/qp-ms_library.php (Library of Past papers and Mark Schemes)

www.biologymad.com

Further Information

No whole animal dissections are undertaken except by request and in students' free time. They are not essential for any aspect of the course.

APPLIED BUSINESS

Specification: AQA A Level Applied Business (8616)

Website address:

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/business/app_business_overview.php

For more information please contact Mr Blythe

Necessary Background: It is anticipated that anyone wishing to take the GCE Applied Business will have pursued the normal spread of GCSE subjects and achieved at least grade B in Mathematics and English Language. The subject may be started without having first attained a GCSE pass in Business. Students should however, be aware of the extra commitment that is involved, if this is their starting point, and the decision is not to be taken lightly.

The qualification structure

The GCE award comprises six units to be taught over two years with students receiving an end grade between A-E. Four of the units will be internally assessed through a programme of assignments. The other two units are externally assessed through examinations.

UNIT 1 Investigating Business

In this portfolio assessed unit, candidates will explore the aims and objectives of businesses, the needs of their customers and how these are met through the use of the marketing mix. They will investigate how businesses deal with competition from other businesses and how external factors, such as changing social values, can affect a business. Candidates will explore the meaning of enterprise and enterprising behaviour and why individuals and teams are vital to the success of a business.

UNIT 2 People in Business

In this portfolio assessed unit, candidates will study the roles and responsibilities of people in business and the qualities an employer looks for in its employees. They will investigate the training and development opportunities available to individuals and why motivation is vital in retaining staff. This unit gives candidates the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge needed to carry out the activities associated with the recruitment process.

UNIT 3 Financial Planning and Monitoring

In this externally assessed unit, candidates will be assessed on their ability to calculate business costs, revenues and hence profits and will be required to know how managers use this information in decision making. They will need to know the ways in which businesses plan their finances by, for example, drawing cash flow forecasts or budgets and how businesses use these data to monitor the performance of the organisation.

The above areas will be assessed as follows:

Unit 1	Investigating Business	One third of the total AS Level marks	Assignment based
Unit 2	People in Business	One third of the total AS Level marks	Assignment based
Unit 3	Financial Planning and Monitoring	One third of the total AS Level marks	1 hour exam

The equivalent of an AS level award could be claimed at this point.

UNIT 8 Business Planning

In this portfolio assessed unit, candidates will be given the opportunity to produce a structured business plan for a new product or service. The plan should be suitable to present to an external lender, such as a bank, who might provide finance for a new or existing business, or to an internal stakeholder, such as a senior manager, who may have the authority to give the go-ahead for the business idea.

UNIT 10 Promotional Activities

In this portfolio assessed unit, candidates will learn how promotional activities, such as advertising and personal selling, are carried out by profit and not-for-profit businesses. Candidates will investigate how businesses combine promotional activities into a promotional mix and how the choice of promotional mix is vital to the success of a promotion campaign.

UNIT 12 Managing People

In this externally assessed unit, candidates will be required to demonstrate that they understand how different types of management style impact upon the way in which a business operates and upon the staff who work in it. They should be able to recognise that different management styles are appropriate in different situations and be able to discuss whether a particular style is appropriate in a given situation.

The above areas will be assessed as follows:

Unit 8	Business Planning	One third of the total A Level marks	Assignment based
Unit 10	Promotional Activities	One third of the total A Level marks	Assignment based
Unit 12	Managing People	One third of the total A Level marks	1 hour exam

Teaching and Learning Methods

Teaching will combine traditional methods with activities that will enable students to develop their skills, knowledge, and understanding of business. Visits to businesses and Guest Speakers in school will help students to apply their learning in a practical and realistic way. Students are expected to supplement their studies with wider reading (text books, news articles/internet research) and to further develop their writing skills so that they can fully meet the criteria laid down by the Examining body in relation to coursework. In addition to this students must prepare themselves fully for the examined units of this course. The use of computer applications will be encouraged in order to further enhance students' learning.

Skills you will develop during this course

You will develop your information gathering skills on this course, as many of the units require background research. Once you have collected the information you will then need to utilize and develop your power to analyse and evaluate situations in order to arrive at appropriate conclusions. This process should help you to develop your ability to solve problems. You will work independently on some tasks, whilst others will enable you to develop ICT and report writing skills.

Useful websites

<http://www.tutor2u.com>

<http://www.businessstudiesonline.co.uk>

<http://www.bized.co.uk>

CHEMISTRY

Specification: AQA A Level Chemistry (2420)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/science/chemistry_overview.php

For more information, please contact Miss J Fawcett

What students have said:

- *I chose Chemistry because it interests me and I wanted to know more...*
- *I really enjoyed learning about atomic structure – there's so much more to it than they'd have you believe at GCSE! It's a lot more in depth but much better for it.*
- *A level Chemistry can be quite challenging but you feel you have really achieved something when you understand it.*
- *Learning A level Chemistry is much more fun than doing it at GCSE and so much more interesting. With starting a new sixth form too, the teachers and students made it really easy to settle in.*
- *It's interesting to see why things happen and how often it crops up in real life and other subjects.*

Necessary background: Grade B or above in GCSE Chemistry or Additional Science and GCSE Mathematics.

Assessment Summary:

Unit 1	Foundation Chemistry	34% of the total AS Level marks 17% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 15 minute exam
Unit 2	Chemistry in Action	46% of the total AS Level marks 23% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 45 minute exam
Unit 3	Investigative and Practical Skills	20% of the total AS Level marks 10% of the total A Level marks	Internal Assessment

Unit 4	Kinetics, Equilibria and Organic Chemistry	20% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 45 minute exam
Unit 5	Energetics, Redox and Inorganic Chemistry	20% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 45 minute exam
Unit 6	Investigative and Practical Skills	10% of the total A Level marks	Internal Assessment

Topics Covered:

At AS Level the students are given a solid grounding in foundation Chemistry. The specification introduces the chemical reactivity of atoms and molecules and provides an understanding of their structures. The development and use of the periodic table is explained.

At A2 students develop the concepts of physical chemistry studying kinetics, equilibria, organic chemistry and spectroscopic techniques to determine the molecular formulae and structures of organic compounds.

Throughout the course students are credited for work done in class practicals via the Practical Skills Assignments.

Teaching and Learning Methods:

- Making notes in class
- Practical work which is closely linked to theoretical work
- Class discussions
- Regular tests after each topic based on A Level standard questions
- Practice with past A Level questions and essays
- Information technology where appropriate

Specific skills you will develop during the course:

- Scientific research and information gathering skills
- Practical skills involved with planning and implementing experiments as well as analysing and evaluating data
- Problem solving, deduction and decision making skills
- Effective work organisation and time management
- Communication skills gained in class discussions
- ICT skills such as databases, graph plotting and internet research
- Effective revision and exam technique

Useful web links:

www.rsc.org (Royal Society of Chemistry)

www.aqa.org.uk/admin/qp-ms_library.php (Library of Past papers and Mark Schemes)

www.alevelchemistry.co.uk

www.chemguide.co.uk

www.whynotchemeng.com

www.science-engineering.net/chemistry.htm

Further Information:

If you are studying Chemistry without AS Maths you will be provided with some extra Maths tuition to assist you with the mathematical content of the subject.

ENGINEERING

Specification: EDEXCEL A Level Engineering (9731)

Website address:

<http://www.edexcel.com/QUALS/GCE/APP-GCE/ENGINEERING/Pages/default.aspx>

For more information, please contact Mr R Dyson

Necessary background: Starting in September 2010 this exciting and rigorous new A level engineering course is aimed at inspiring and engaging students with engineering challenges facing the world today. This course provides candidates with a fantastic opportunity to design and make engineered products of their own design to meet engineering briefs set by genuine clients. The course has been developed in conjunction with NYBEP (North Yorkshire Business & Enterprise Partnership) and will provide opportunity for students to work with actual Engineering Ambassadors on real life projects. A GCSE grade B in GCSE Engineering or a GCSE Technology subject will normally be expected.

Three AS Units consist of

Unit 1: Engineering Materials, Processes and Techniques

AS Compulsory Unit - Externally Assessed

Throughout this unit you will examine the properties of a range of common engineering materials and their suitability for various applications. You will look at the way materials can be shaped into components for use in products, such as by machining or by moulding. You will also learn how different materials can be joined together to manufacture high quality finished products.

Unit 1 Assessment	This unit will be assessed through an examination set and marked by Edexcel. The paper will be a question and answer booklet. Each examination paper will have one or more themes. A theme will be a common engineered product.	33.3% of AS Level marks 16.7 % of the total A Level marks	1 ½ Hours
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Unit 2: The Role of the Engineer

AS Compulsory Unit - Internally Assessed

In this unit you will investigate the role of an engineer by working with them designing a solution to a real life engineering challenge. You will understand how new technologies, time and cost constraints, legislation and standards, and health and safety legislation influenced the engineering decisions made during the design and/or manufacture of an engineered product or service. You will be making a site visit to investigate the situation first hand with the engineer and then through subsequent research suggest a solution to the engineering challenge set.

Unit 2 Assessment	Assessment evidence will be in the form of a portfolio, submitted on A4 paper. The portfolio should contain evidence of work carried out in response to your investigation into the role an engineer has in the design and/or manufacture of an engineered product or service.	33.3% of AS Level marks 16.7 % of the total A Level marks	Approx 50 hours
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Unit 3: Principles of Design, Planning and Prototyping

AS Compulsory Unit - Internally Assessed

Engineers are problem solvers. They are given a specification from a client, which they develop into a practical product. In Unit 3 you will use a given client brief to produce a design solution and an engineered product. You will report back to your peers about the project in the form of a short oral presentation.

Unit 3 Assessment	Assessment evidence will be in the form of a designed and made engineered product.	33.3% of AS Level marks 16.7 % of the total A Level marks	Approx 60 hours
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Unit 4: Applied Engineering Systems

A2 compulsory unit - Externally Assessed

Engineered products are many and varied. They range in complexity from everyday items such as bicycles and mobile phones to aircraft and space vehicles. It is often useful to think of these as engineering systems, each with its particular input and output. In this unit you will look at ways in which engineering techniques and principles are applied in some important systems and how a systems approach can be used to solve engineering problems. The range covered includes static structures, pneumatic systems and the electrical lighting and power systems used in homes, offices and public buildings. You will also look at elements of the electro-mechanical and electronic systems found in everyday life and the means by which they are controlled.

Unit 4 Assessment	This unit is externally assessed and will be based on a practical activities brief set by Edexcel each year. You will have the opportunity to carry out relevant research based on the content of the brief before you carry out your practical activities. Working under examination conditions, you will work independently to complete all three practical activities to fulfill the requirements of this unit. You must complete all activities in 10 hours or less.	16.7 % of the total A Level marks	10 hours or less
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Unit assessed 5: The Engineering Environment

A2 Compulsory Unit - Internally Assessed

In this unit you will investigate a different engineered product or service to the one studied in Unit 2: The Role of the Engineer, and you will extend your studies to learn how laws, regulations and codes of practice are used to ensure developments are safe. You will explore how procedures and paperwork systems are used to control engineering practice and product quality. You will also learn about different ways in which the environment is protected by the way products are designed and manufactured. You will explore how new techniques and scientific advances are used to improve the way products work, and how to create new products and services.

Unit 5 Assessment	Assessment evidence will include a portfolio containing evidence of your work carried out in response to your investigation into an engineering product or service and the engineering activities that surround it.	16.7 % of the total A Level marks	Approx 40 hours
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Unit 6: Applied Design, Planning and Prototyping

A2 compulsory unit - Internally Assessed

This unit will involve designing, developing and making a solution to meet a client brief that will be given to you. You will carry out appropriate research, develop a technical design specification, generate alternative design ideas and a final design solution; finally you will produce a prototype of the engineered product that fully meets the specification requirements.

Unit 6 Assessment	Assessment evidence will be in the form of a Portfolio and made product. The Portfolio will contain evidence of your work carried out in the design, development and evaluation of your manufactured engineered product.	16.7 % of the total A Level marks	Approx 60 hours
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Teaching and Learning Methods

A wide variety of teaching and learning methods are used. Experimentation, modelling, testing, making and visits to real life high-tech engineering companies involved in 21st Century product manufacture.

Skills you will develop during this course

Research and development, design synthesis, production planning and manufacturing skills will be developed throughout this course. Through building up a bank of knowledge and skills you will be able to design and make complex engineered products.

Further Information and Advice

Engineering will give students a firm foundation to go onto Higher Education courses in most areas of Science, Maths and Engineering, alongside other appropriate A level courses. This course links all these disciplines together providing the student with a holistic experience of STEM related subjects. As well as entering Higher Education, this course is ideal for students seeking graduate apprenticeships with companies like Rolls Royce, BAE Systems and Pace Electronics. Entry to the services for training as officers, pilots and graduate technicians is also a recognised and a popular route to take from this course. All these areas are in high demand and offer excellent career opportunities and future advancement in whichever area the candidate chooses to follow.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Specification: AQA A Level English Language B (2705)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/english/eng_lang_b_overview.php

For more information, please contact Mrs C McKinnell

What students have said:

- *"A Level English Language is different from GCSE, but just as good! Studying English at ALlevel gives you a totally different insight into the language we use everyday"*
- *"Language is forever changing, never static. English Language is an intriguing subject that can soon become your passion as it brings out the originality in everyone who writes"*
- *"You can analyse everyday conversation, articles, posters and surprise your friends with your knowledge of what they really mean"*

Necessary background: Grade B in GCSE English Language.

Assessment Summary AS

Unit 1	Written paper	60 % of the total AS Level marks 30% of the total A Level marks	2 hour written paper
Unit 2	Coursework	40% of the total AS Level marks 20% of the total A Level marks	Coursework

Topics covered at AS

Unit 1	Categorising Texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A - Text varieties • Section B - Language and social context <p>This unit covers introductory aspects of language study and also focuses on language and power, language and gender and language and technology</p>
Unit 2	Creating texts coursework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two pieces of writing (1500 – 2500 words) • Two accompanying commentaries (1000 words) <p>Texts will be creating for writing to entertain, writing to persuade, writing to inform, writing to instruct</p>

Assessment Summary for A2

Unit 3	Developing Language	30% of the total A Level marks	Written paper 2 hours 30 minutes exam
Unit 4	Investigating Language	20% of the total A Level marks	Coursework

Topics covered at A2

Unit 3	Developing Language <ul style="list-style-type: none">Section A – Language Acquisition The nature and functions of language acquisition from 0 – 11 yearsSection B – Language Change Historical and contemporary changes in English Language from 1700 to the present day
Unit 6	Investigating Language <ul style="list-style-type: none">Coursework exploring and analysing language dataProduction of a media text (e.g. newspaper or magazine article) focusing on the language ideas and issues surrounding the investigation topic

Teaching and Learning Methods

Teaching and Learning will concentrate on the skills required to analyse with linguistic expertise any text written in English.

Consequently the content of texts is never learnt – only used. Lessons will develop awareness of language by demanding that students are prepared to analyse texts individually and in small and large groups. Assessment criteria will not be ‘hidden’ and student will assess their own work and also, through verbal discussion, that of their peers.

Original writing will operate through a writing workshop where effectiveness will be judged by the target audience not just the teacher. This is a practical approach to writing which includes learning conversations about the writing process which will lead to a number of redrafts.

The original research investigation of A2 involves a high level of research, analytical and evaluation skills. The level of research and use of research methodologies is dynamic and topical. Teaching will be through individual tutorial.

Specific skills you will develop

Apart from the linguistic skills involved in the study of language, you will also develop a sense of your own creativity and individuality. The confidence that comes from the high level of communication skills learnt will never be lost.

Careers Information

English Language develops personal understanding of the way we communicate. This is obviously important in all walks of life. English Language is a useful development of literary skills and is often studied in conjunction with English Literature at university. If you wish to develop as a journalist or writer this course is useful. Most higher education, whether academic or vocational, scientific or artistic, will benefit from the skills obtained on this course.

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Specification: AQA A Level English Literature A (2740)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/english/eng_lit_a_overview.php

For more information, please contact Mrs C McKinnell

What students have said:

- *"You can express your creativity through individual opinions"*
- *"It broadens your perspective on life"*
- *"If you love reading, then you will love delving into the vast range of texts on offer and exploring all the exciting details that you have never realised were there in the first place!"*
- *English Literature lessons are always different and interesting. We are encouraged to think for ourselves"*

Necessary background: Grade B or above in English Literature GCSE.

Assessment Summary

Unit 1	Texts in context	60 % of the total AS Level marks 30% of the total A Level marks	2 hour written exam (open book)
Unit 2	Creative study	40% of the total AS Level marks 20% of the total A Level marks	Coursework – one task on prose text, one task on drama text

AS Course

Topics covered

Unit 1		Unit 2	
Set text 1 poetry	Wider reading 1 poetry 1 drama 1 prose	Set text 1 drama 1 prose	Wider reading May use Unit 1 drama writing texts

A Level Course

Assessment Summary

Unit 3	Unit 4
2 ½ hour written exam, two compulsory questions	Coursework portfolio of an extended essay and Shakespeare study

A Level Course

Topics covered

Unit 3	Unit 4
The topic for this unit is 'Love through the Ages'. Candidates' reading of the literature of love should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The three genres of prose, poetry and drama• Literature written by men and women• Literature through time-fiction, non-fiction	The extended essay will be on three texts. One text will be any Shakespeare play. The other two texts, for comparison, will be of any genre

Teaching and Learning Methods

This course teaches both close and wider reading as well as academic argument essay writing. The wide reading is an exciting component of this new course and allows the student to choose which books to read, what connections to make and consequently to research around a title for the extended essay which interests them personally.

Lessons will include presentations by students to their peers and there will be a requirement to learn from each other. The essays will be marked and redrafted through an individual tutorial system. There will be time allocated in lessons for individual research.

The exam requires you to use the skills developed through the coursework and the study through form, structure and language of the wide reading. Students' response to unseen texts is therefore an important part of the thinking process in the exam.

Specific skills you will develop

You will develop skills of creativity, analysis and explore connections and comparisons using the skill of synthesis. Evaluation of a broad variety of texts and the way they work will inform coherent and sophisticated written expression.

All the above are high level skills which are challenging and rewarding to develop.

Careers Information

All skills developed will be useful in any career you may choose – whether it be Arts, Science or vocationally based.

English Literature is usually a requirement to study an English Literature degree. As communication skills will have been developed to a high level, this A level is desirable for both the study of Law and Medicine.

Useful English Literature weblinks:

<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/litlinks/> - to help guide your own wider reading with information on 100 authors.

GEOGRAPHY

Specification: AQA A Level Geography (2030)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/humanities/geography_overview.php

What students have said:

- *"All my Geography lessons so far have been really interesting ; I find that it complements my other subjects really well, as it covers a broad range of topics. I especially enjoyed studying coasts."*
- *"I enjoy Geography at sixth form so much more than any of my other subjects because it is so interesting learning about the world we live in."*

For more information, please contact Mrs N Bean

Necessary background: Previous study at GCSE with a grade B or above in either Geography or Humanities. The most important requirements for a potential A Level student are enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to follow current affairs. Geography is a broad and multi skilled subject. It sits comfortably with both arts and science subjects – there are close links with a number of subjects, especially Biology – and provides an opportunity to study contemporary events which students are able to relate to the everyday world in which they live.

The AS Examination

Unit 1

Physical and Human Geography

Geography is a subject which describes the relationships of human population to each other over space and time and their relationship with their physical environment at a variety of scales from local to the global. The subject content follows an issues and impacts approach throughout and investigative fieldwork skills are developed along with many other skills essential for geographical interpretation of the available evidence for these issues and impacts.

Core physical Section:	Core human section:
Rivers, floods and management	Population change
Optional physical topics:	Optional human topics:
Cold environments	Food supply issues
Coastal environments	Energy issues
Hot desert environments and their margins	Health issues

Unit 2

Geographical skills

Investigative, cartographic, graphical, ICT and statistical techniques.

There is no coursework at AS Level Geography. However, it is a requirement of the course that pupils undertake fieldwork and they are examined on this in Unit 2.

Assessment Summary at AS

Unit 1	Physical and Human Geography	70% of the total AS Level marks 35% of the total A Level marks	2 hour written exam
Unit 2	Geographical Skills	30% of the total AS Level marks 15% of the total A Level marks	1 hour written exam

The A2 Examination

Concepts, themes and skills covered at AS are extended and developed at A2 in different settings with the expectation of higher levels of understanding and empathetic engagement. There is more opportunity to debate and discuss topics where a variety of views and perspectives are held within the population.

Students must select three topics; at least one from the physical options and one from the human options.

Unit 3

Contemporary Geographical Issues

Optional physical topics:	Optional human topics:
Plate tectonics and associated hazards	World cities
Weather and climate and associated hazards	Development and globalisation
Ecosystems: change and challenge	Contemporary conflicts and challenges

And EITHER

Unit 4 A

Geographical Fieldwork Investigation

Students analyse and evaluate their fieldwork in response to questions set. Students will also be assessed on fieldwork skills.

Or

Unit 4 B

Geographical Issues Evaluation

An advanced information booklet is pre-released two months prior to the exam to facilitate students' research into an area which extends from the specification content.

Assessment Summary at A2

Unit 3	Contemporary Geographical Issues	30% of the total A Level marks	2 hour 30 minute written exam
Unit 4	Either :- Geography fieldwork investigation Or :- Geographical Issue Evaluation	20% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 30 minute written exam

Teaching and Learning Methods

The subject matter for both courses is very varied in its content and lends itself to many different approaches to teaching and learning. Fieldwork, videos, satellite imagery, newspapers, slides, internet, CD-ROM, maps, graphs and tabulated information are all used to stimulate discussion and derive new information. We encourage independent learning. Students are expected to give individual and group presentations.

Skills you will develop during this course:

- o visual literacy
- o an ability to make well informed judgements
- o an understanding of current events
- o a desire to explore, enabling you to travel confidently
- o problem solving
- o enquiry and first hand investigation
- o an understanding of sustainable development
- o an ability to analyse and synthesise
- o locational knowledge and understanding of how places are connected.

Further information and advice

Students are given feedback and encouraged to improve their skills and exam techniques. We provide a structure for revision and agree targets for the teaching group and individuals. A supportive and secure learning environment is considered to be essential and we aim to provide this so that every student achieves her potential.

Recent Geography graduates from the school are now working as surveyors, retail managers, management consultants, teachers, solicitors, project managers, careers advisers and researchers in air pollution, hazard management and social policy.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Specification: AQA A level Government and Politics (2150)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/humanities/gov_politics_overview.php

For more information, please contact Mr J Kennedy

What students have said:

- *"Politics is an eye-opening subject, you'll never watch the news in the same way again"*
- *"It's great to study current events"*
- *"A Level Politics helps you to understand the world today"*
- *"I enjoy arguing my points in debates"*

Necessary background: Government and Politics is particularly suitable for anyone interested in current affairs or who may be considering a career in Law or in a related area. No previous qualifications are necessary but a very good standard of English is important. A willingness to read around topics, read the newspapers and watch relevant TV programmes and take an interest in events is essential.

Assessment Information:

Unit 1	People, Politics and Participation	1 hr 20 mins examination 50% of AS Level marks 25% of A Level marks
Unit 2	Governing Modern Britain	1 hr 20 mins examination 50% of AS Level marks 25% of A Level marks
Unit 3	The Politics of the USA	1 hr 30 mins examination 25 % of A Level marks
Unit 4	The Government of the USA	1 hr 30 mins examination 25 % of A Level marks

i) The AS Examination

Both units carry equal weighting and are assessed by a 1 hr 20 minute examination.

- **Unit 1 – People, Politics and Participation** including – participation and voting behaviour, electoral systems, political parties, pressure groups and protest movements
- **Unit 2 – Governing Modern Britain** including – the British Constitution, Parliament, the Core Executive and multi-level governance

ii) The A2 Examination

All students study Units 3 and Unit 4, which are assessed by a 1½ hour examination for each unit and are worth 50% of the A2 marks.

- **Unit 3 – The Politics of the USA** including – the electoral process and direct democracy, political parties, voting behaviour and pressure groups
- **Unit 4 – The Government of the USA** including – the constitutional framework of the US Government, US Congress, the Executive and the Supreme Court

Teaching and Learning

As this is a “living” course reflecting current circumstances, all resources are up to date and include a wide range of library material, videos, CD ROMs and magazines. There is a variety of website information which is also useful.

Activities include:

- class discussion and debate
- student and teacher presentations
- research based activities
- visits to lectures and seminars given by the Politics Association
- analysis of recent press coverage using newspapers and video
- learning about political theory and conducting case studies into practice

Skills:

The Advanced Level course in Government and Politics develops a wide range of subject-specific and transferable skills:

- analysis
- discussion and debate
- balanced argument
- judgement
- evaluation
- research

Useful web-links:

BBC News Politics website

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/default.stm

Guardian Politics website

<http://politics.guardian.co.uk/>

Times Online Politics website

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/>

History Learning Site Politics pages

http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/british_politics.htm

http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/american_politics.htm

10 Downing Street website

<http://www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page1.asp>

HISTORY

Specification: AQA A Level History (2040)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/humanities/history_overview.php

For more information, please contact Mr J Kennedy

What students have said:

- *"History shows how the past shapes the future"*
- *"A Level History is a fascinating subject - you learn about important events in the past and develop important skills"*
- *"History helps us to learn from the mistakes of the past"*
- *"You can do a lot with a History qualification, for example work in law or journalism"*
- *"I enjoy the discussions and the debates in A Level History"*

Necessary Background:

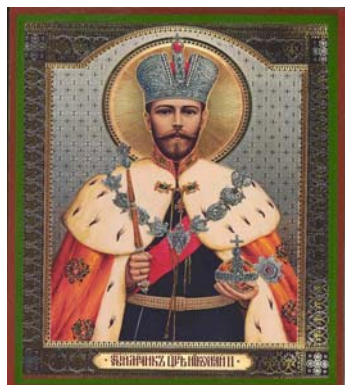
You should have a strong interest in History and should be willing to read around the content covered in class. You should have strong literacy skills including the ability to express yourself clearly and coherently in writing. Students who have taken GCSE History should have at least a Grade B in the subject. Students who have not taken GCSE History are more than welcome, however they should have comparable grades in similar subjects (for example English / English Literature). Individual cases will be considered.

Assessment Information:

Unit 1	Tsarist Russia, 1855-1917	1 hr 15 mins examination 50% of AS Level marks 25% of A Level marks
Unit 2	Britain and Appeasement, 1919-1940	1 hr 30 mins examination 50% of AS Level marks 25% of A Level marks
Unit 3	Triumph and Collapse: Russia and the USSR, 1941-1991	1 hr 30 mins examination 30 % of A Level marks
Unit 4	Historical Enquiry	Coursework 20 % of A Level marks

i) The AS Examination

Unit 1 – Tsarist Russia, 1855-1917



Tsar Nicholas II

This unit covers one of the most dramatic periods in European history. In 1855 Russia was a traditional monarchy presided over by the Romanov emperors (known as Tsars – see left) who had ruled the empire for nearly 300 years. Russia was an autocracy. This meant that power was in the hands of the few (the Tsar, his ministers and the nobility). Ordinary Russians lacked political rights such as the right to vote or to join political parties. The Tsar was seen as God's representative on earth. However, by the end of 1917 the power of the Romanovs had crumbled and three revolutions had taken place (1905, February 1917 and October 1917).

In the October Revolution of 1917 a revolutionary party, the Bolsheviks, seized power claiming to represent equality and the wishes of the ordinary Russian worker. The Bolshevik party evolved into the Communist party which governed Russia until 1991.

Unit 1 traces the attempts by the later Tsars (Alexander II, Alexander III and Nicholas II) to hold onto power in Russia, whether by repression or reform. It also traces the rise of opposition to the Tsars which often took the form of violence due to the lack of channels for legal protest. In this Unit there are parallels with modern issues, such as foreign wars and their impact upon a country (the Russo-Japanese War 1904-5) and the threat of terrorism (in 1881 a terrorist organisation called The People's Will successfully assassinated Tsar Alexander II). However, Unit 1 is not solely concerned with politics, all branches of History are represented here including social history which is developed through topics such as the study of serfs, slave-like peasants who were eventually 'freed' in 1861. An understanding of economic history is developed through the study of the attempts by various ministers to modernise Russia's backward industry and agriculture.

Unit 2 – Britain and Appeasement, 1919-1940



Hitler

Unit 2 involves a depth study into international relations in the first half of the 20th century. The First World War casts a long shadow over this period and Unit 2 allows students to investigate attempts made by the international community to prevent another major conflict breaking out. This was distilled in the policy of appeasement most famously associated with the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain. Appeasement was a response to the rise of Hitler in Germany and his desire to overthrow limits on Germany's power set at the Treaty of Versailles. The policy of appeasement adopted by Chamberlain was one of pacifying Hitler by accepting his demands rather than fighting. This was a controversial policy and was heavily criticised by Winston Churchill. In this Unit we cover some of the main crises of 1919-1940 and the international response to them.

Unit 3 – Triumph and Collapse: Russia and the USSR, 1941-1991

Unit 3 further develops some of the themes covered in Units 1 and 2. The Unit covers the Russian sacrifice in the Great Patriotic War against Nazi Germany of 1941 to 1945 in which over 20 million Russians perished. It also covers the final years of Stalin, a dictator of the Soviet Union whose personal power far outweighed that of the Tsars that the Communists replaced. The history of Russia is traced to 1991 when the Communist regime collapsed after over seventy years of dominance. Once again, this unit is about more than political history, the impact of policies upon ordinary Russians is highlighted as are other topics such as the Space Race and the continuing problem of how to modernise Russia's economy.

Unit 4 – Historical Enquiry

This is a coursework unit and is based upon the completion of an Historical Enquiry of 3,500 words centred around an historical issue. This must be based in the context of a period of one hundred years.

Teaching and Learning:

- Activities include:
- class discussion and debate
- student and teacher presentations
- internet-based research based activities
- decision-making and problem-solving activities
- analysis of documentaries and films
- individual and group work
- research visit to Leeds University in preparation for completion of Historical Enquiry

Skills:

The Advanced Level course in History develops a wide range of subject-specific skills as well as skills which are sought after in a range of careers such as journalism, the legal profession, management, education and the heritage industry, for example:

- analysis
- discussion and debate
- balanced argument
- judgement
- evaluation
- research

Useful web-links:

Spartacus Education web-pages on Russia 1860-1945

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Russia.htm>

Spartacus Education web-pages on the Russian Revolution

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Russian-Revolution.htm>

Spartacus Education web-page on Appeasement

<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/2WWappeasement.htm>

MATHEMATICS

Specification: OCR MEI A Level Mathematics (7895)

Website Address: http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gce/maths/maths_mei/index.aspx

What students have said:

- *"Useful for all science subjects"*
- *"It's really satisfying – when you have a really difficult question to do and you get the right answer, it's great!"*
- *"Universities love it!"*
- *"Never round until your final answer!"*

For more information, please contact Miss S Denby

Necessary Background: GCSE Mathematics at grade A*, A or B. A good understanding of algebra studied at GCSE is essential; students who have grade B will need extra support with algebra - this will be provided but the onus is on the student to do the extra work needed. (See also information on fast track at end).

The AS examination

- **C1 Introduction to Advanced Mathematics (non-calculator)**

This unit builds on and develops the techniques students have learnt at GCSE so that they acquire the fluency required for advanced work.

- **C2 Concepts for Advanced Mathematics**

This unit introduces students to a number of topics which are fundamental to the advanced study of mathematics.

- **S1 Statistics 1**

This unit enables students to build on and extend the data handling and sampling techniques they have learnt at GCSE. It enables students to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations using simple probability models. It gives students insight into the ideas and techniques underlying hypothesis testing.

Assessment summary:

Module 1	Core 1	33.3% of the total AS Level marks 16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam
Module 2	Core 2	33.3% of the total AS Level marks 16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam
Module 3	Statistics 1	33.3% of the total AS Level marks 16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam

The A2 examination

- **C3 Methods for Advanced Mathematics**

This unit builds on and develops the techniques students have learnt at AS Level, with particular emphasis on the calculus. This module will include coursework on numerical solution of equations and this will form 20% of the assessment, with the examination forming 80%.

- **C4 Applications of Advanced Mathematics**

This unit develops the work in *C1*, *C2* and *C3* in directions which allow it to be applied to real world problems. The 90 minute examination forms 80% of the assessment and is followed by a comprehension task which forms 20% of the assessment for this module. The aim of the comprehension task is to foster an appreciation among students that, in learning mathematics, they are acquiring skills which transcend the particular items of the specification content which have made up their course.

- **M1 Mechanics 1**

This unit introduces students to mathematical modelling and to the basic concepts in kinematics, statics and dynamics which underlie the study of mechanics. Students will be expected to formulate models, using the mechanics within the specification, and to show an appreciation of any assumptions made; they will also be expected to make simple deductions from the model and to comment on its usefulness. They will understand the particle model.

Module 4	Core 3	16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam + piece of externally-assessed coursework
Module 5	Core 4	16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam + comprehension paper 1hour
Module 6	Mechanics 1	16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam

Teaching and Learning Methods

In order to ensure that students have understood all aspects of a topic many lessons will include exposition from the teacher and class discussion. Active learning strategies are employed, in particular during periods of revision.

Students will need to practise mathematical skills and techniques. Working through exercises and problem solving are important - this will often provide opportunities for students to discuss with each other and with the teacher - both in lessons and out of lessons.

Skills you will develop during this course

Learning from your mistakes is an integral part of Mathematics. Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, actively seeking staff help if they do not fully understand. The more successful students at A-level are not necessarily those who have got A* at GCSE; the willingness to keep trying, to seek help and to discuss with staff and fellow students to clarify understanding are useful skills in their own right as well as ways to improve your potential grade in Mathematics.

Further Information and Advice

- Study of Mathematics to AS or A-level, as well as being interesting in its own right, is a useful support for other A levels - especially in Science, Geography and Psychology. It is usually a requirement for degree courses in Engineering
- The MEI (Mathematics in Education and Industry) Structured Mathematics scheme was introduced in 1990; it was adapted slightly for the new A-level specifications from 2000 but has been successfully used in many schools over a number of years
- The emphasis is on providing students with the necessary interpretive and modelling skills to be able to use their mathematics
- Further details of the modules are available from the Head of Department or on the exam board website www.ocr.org.uk

Fast Track AS Maths

For students who are very able at Maths (A or A* at GCSE), we are running a Fast Track AS course – 2.5 hours a week in Year 12 rather than five hours. This can be combined with AS Further Maths or taken as a fifth AS. You can continue maths to A2 but will need five hours a week for it in Year 13.

For further information:

<http://www.mathscareers.org.uk/16-19.cfm>

http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/wiki/Mathematics_A_Level

<http://www.mei.org.uk>

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Specification: OCR MEI A Level Further Mathematics (7896)

Website Address: http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gce/maths/maths_mei/index.aspx

For more information please contact Miss S Denby

Necessary Background - Students need to be taking A level Mathematics and enjoy Mathematics as well as being good at it.

The AS examination

- **FP1 Further Pure 1**

This unit develops an understanding of the rigour and technical accuracy needed for more advanced study of mathematics.

- **S2 Statistics 2**

This unit extends students' ability to represent data in bivariate situations, with an emphasis on linear and rank order modelling, and associated hypothesis testing. It introduces continuous probability distributions through the Normal distribution.

- **D1 Decision Maths**

This unit gives students experience of modelling and of the use of algorithms in a variety of situations. The problems presented are diverse and require flexibility of approach. Students are expected to consider the success of their modelling, and to appreciate the limitations of their solutions.

Module 1	Decision 1	33.3% of the total AS Level marks 16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam
Module 2	Further Pure 1	33.3% of the total AS Level marks 16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam
Module 3	Statistics 2	33.3% of the total AS Level marks 16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam

The A2 examination

- **FP2 Further Pure 2**

This unit builds on and extends students' knowledge of Pure Mathematics and associated techniques.

- **DE Differential Equations**

This unit extends the work in *Applications of Advanced Mathematics (C4)* on the formulation and solution of differential equations. Students are expected to have a reasonable degree of manipulative competence and to be able to handle more complicated problems. This module will include a piece of coursework and this will form 20% of the assessment, with the examination forming 80%.

- **M2 Mechanics 2**

This unit builds on the work in *Mechanics 1* by extending the range of mechanics concepts which students are able to use in modelling situations. Students will be able to use the rigid body model in simple cases involving moments.

Students will be expected to formulate models, using the mechanics within this specification and that for *Mechanics 1*, and to show an appreciation of any assumptions made; they will also be expected to make simple deductions from the model and to comment on its usefulness.

Module 1	Further Pure 2	16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam
Module 2	Differential Equations	16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam + externally marked coursework
Module 3	Mechanics 2	16.7% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam

Teaching and Learning Methods

- Due to the limited teaching time available, students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning - with appropriate guidance and provision of resources
- There will be introductory exposition lessons for most topics
- Active learning strategies are employed, in particular during periods of revision
- Students will need to practise mathematical skills and techniques so working through exercises and problem solving are important - this will often provide opportunities for students to discuss with each other and with the teacher - both in lessons and out of lessons

Skills you will develop during this course

As for A level Mathematics.

Further Information and Advice

- Students may sit AS Further Mathematics at the same time as AS Mathematics but certification will not be possible until the end of year 13 as some modules could count for either the Mathematics or the Further Mathematics qualification.
- A high proportion of the girls who study Further Mathematics go on to do Engineering Degrees; others study Mathematics, Science or Computer Science. The AS Further Mathematics would be relevant for Business Studies degrees – but many people just choose it because it's fun.
- Nearly everyone who does Further Mathematics gets grade A in Mathematics at A Level because of the extra practice they get and because some of the modules taken can be allocated to either subject and this is done to ensure the best possible grade in A-level Mathematics.
- Initially, Further Mathematics seems like quite hard work but it is also enjoyable and, with small class sizes, there is a lot of help available
- The MEI (Mathematics in Education and Industry) Structured Mathematics scheme was introduced in 1990; it was adapted slightly for the new A Level specifications from 2000 but has been successfully used in many schools over a number of years.

For further information

As for A Level plus: http://www.fmnetwork.org.uk/student_area

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH AND GERMAN)

Specifications: AQA A Level French (2650) and German (2660)

Website addresses:

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/languages/french_overview.php (for French)

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/languages/german_overview.php (for German)

What students have said:

- *"I am really glad I studied French at A Level. I'm now having a fantastic time working as an English Assistant at a school in Brittany" (Former SGHS student)*
- *"I am sure that doing my work experience in the hospital in Simbach helped to get me two interviews to study medicine next year. I am hoping to do part of my degree at a German university" (Former SGHS student)*

For more information please contact Mrs C Berry

Necessary background: A*, A or B at GCSE in the relevant language.

Unit 1 AS	Listening, Reading and Writing	70% of the total AS Level marks 35% of the total A Level marks	2 hour exam
Unit 2 AS	Speaking	30% of the total AS Level marks 15% of the total A Level marks	35 minutes (including 20 minutes preparation time)
Unit 3 A2	Listening, Reading and Writing	35% of the total A Level marks	2½ hour exam
Unit 4 A2	Speaking	15% of the total A Level marks	35 minutes (including 20 minutes preparation time)

Topics

The specification introduced in 2008 significantly reduced the number of topics to allow for more choice and depth of study.

The more challenging topics, which were formerly studied at AS, are now left until A2, to give a smoother transition from GCSE.

There is no coursework in French or German.

AS

Media (TV, Advertising, Communication Technology)

Popular Culture (Cinema, Music, Fashion Trends)

Healthy Living/Lifestyle (Sport/Exercise, Health and Well-being, Holidays)

Family/Relationships
(Relationships with Family/Friendships/Marriage and partnerships)

A2

Environment (Pollution, Energy, Protecting the Planet)

Multicultural Society (Immigration, Integration, Racism)

Contemporary Social Issues (Wealth and Poverty, Law and Order, Effects of Science and Technology)

2 Cultural Topics (e.g. A period of 20th century history, study of a region, art, film or literature)

Teaching and Learning Methods

- A variety of methods and resources are used including the use of video and audio, using the internet and other ICT resources as well as magazine and newspaper articles. All students will be issued with a textbook. The AQA textbooks for German have online resources to accompany the course. The French textbooks come with a personal CD. This enables listening work and deeper personalized learning to be done at home
- Students are expected to prepare written or audio material at home for closer study in class
- Tasks include listening and then reporting what has been heard either orally or in writing
- Work often involves students working in groups or pairs
- Students will be asked to learn vocabulary on a regular basis and write short essays on the topics covered
- Students should follow up grammar learnt in class. Grammar exercises are often set for homework. Students will be expected to research resource material using the Internet to obtain up-to-date information and background knowledge for topics
- Students will be expected to do extra listening and reading at home
- Students will normally have one lesson a week in a small group with the Language Assistant
- Students may have the opportunity to do some work experience in France or Germany in Year 13

Skills you will develop during this course

- Students will learn how to become more independent learners. They must be prepared to commit extra time to reading and listening and to broaden their understanding of the countries where the language(s) studied are spoken
- Students will deepen their understanding of grammar building on what they have learnt at GCSE and increasing their accuracy
- Students will develop their skills in note-taking, essay writing and the use of dictionaries
- They will learn to understand current issues from different perspectives, to present points of view in a clear and balanced way, and to be tolerant of the views of others
- They will learn how to manage their time and will be helped in finding the most effective ways of learning vocabulary, managing a revision schedule and tackling examination questions
- They will also deepen their language learning skills which will give them the opportunity of studying other languages at university

Careers information

A qualification in a Modern Foreign Language is an invaluable resource in the modern world. It can be combined with many other subjects at university such as Marketing, Business, Economics, Science or Engineering. Many universities take part in the Erasmus programme, which enables students in a wide variety of subjects to study for part of their degree in another EU country. The skills you have learnt through learning French or German will also enable you to go on and learn other languages much more easily. Many schools have made languages optional at GCSE. Your language qualification will be extremely scarce in the jobs market. A qualification in a modern language is viewed very highly by both employers and universities, even if you are not planning to take your language study beyond A Level.

The Nuffield Languages Enquiry argues very clearly that in our multilingual world people who are monolingual will be at a disadvantage in commercial, personal and social terms.

Have a look at the following website for ideas about jobs using your language skills.

www.languageswork.org.uk

Additional Information

As learning a Modern Language involves building on previous knowledge it is important to keep it fresh. If you are thinking of studying a Modern Language, start looking in the press for information about the countries where that language is spoken to build up your general knowledge before you start the course. Invest in a large bilingual dictionary.

MUSIC

Specification: OCR A Level Music (H542)

Website address: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gce/amlw/music/>

For more information, please contact Mrs J Wild

What students have said:

- *“Studying music at A Level is in turns inspiring, fascinating and totally involving. The practical aspect makes this subject different from all others, as does the opportunity to immerse yourself in it thoroughly at many levels – taking part in the various school ensembles, composing for them or even running them!”*
- *“You get the chance to look closely at a wide range of styles of music as well as more time for performing and composing.”*
- *“The music classes are different and more enjoyable than other subjects because there is more individual time with the students and it is more informal and fun!”*

Necessary Background: Prospective candidates must have a minimum of:
either

- (i) GCSE Music Grade B or higher **or** Grade 5 Theory
- or**
- (ii) Grade 5 or higher in a Practical Examination of the Associated Board (or similar body)

The ability to play a keyboard instrument is extremely useful. Knowledge of treble and bass clef is essential.

The AS Examination

Unit G351	Performing Music 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a solo recital lasting 5-8 minutes • an ensemble or performance on a second instrument • A short discussion about the recital programme 	40% of the total AS Level marks 20% of the total A Level marks	External assessment
Unit G352	Composing 1 portfolio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You study harmony and submit 8 of your coursework exercises • You compose a piece for between 4-10 instruments in any style 	30% of the total AS Level marks 15% of the total A Level marks	Internally assessed
Unit G353	Introduction to Historical Studies: This is an exam lasting 2 hours which tests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aural perception • A study of 6 short set works (3 classical and 3 jazz) • A contextual essay 	30% of the total AS Level marks 15% of the total A Level marks	Externally assessed

The A2 Examination

Unit G354	Performing Music 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A solo recital lasting 12-15 minutes • A <i>viva voce</i> about the recital 	20% of the total A Level marks	Externally assessed
Unit G355	Composing 2 portfolio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8-10 of coursework exercises based on Bach chorales • Either a song or a film score commissioned assignment 	15% of the total A Level marks	Internally assessed
Unit G356	Historical and Analytical Studies: This is an exam lasting 2 hours which tests: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aural perception • A study of the integration of music and drama in the 20th century with a detailed study of West Side Story • A synoptic essay 	15% of the total A Level marks	Externally assessed

Teaching and Learning Methods

Students work individually and in small groups. They perform to and with each other, help to perform each others' compositions and practise for recitals. They read, research, take notes, write essays and listen to, analyse and discuss music. Students apply time management skills for the coursework and homework. They are also encouraged to take an active role in the musical life of the school, attending and running ensembles and getting involved in school productions.

Further Information and Advice

Students are encouraged to experience music "live" in performance, use libraries and listen to Classic FM/Radio 3, use the Internet and the Finale computer programme, join choirs, orchestra and other ensembles, seek ideas, information and inspiration from other musicians, and perform regularly both in and out of school.

Students are encouraged to plan their work carefully, read and listen around each subject and practise performing and listening skills at every opportunity.

Students also need to read around the subject to broaden their subject knowledge and widen their understanding of music across the ages as well as the social and political aspects of music.

Specific skills you will develop

- Analytical skills – you will learn how to analyse new music, structurally, thematically and harmonically
- Essay writing – you will develop your essay style and independent research skills. We would expect you to make full use of the school library and music library
- Ability to work independently – it is vital that you can work independently, organise your time efficiently and prioritise your workload
- Aural skills – you will develop your aural skills, such as recognising chords, melodic dictation, awareness of texture, structure and harmonic progression
- Performance skills – you will develop your performance skills in general and on one or two instruments. You will develop your own interpretation style through listening to other performers

- Understanding of traditional western harmony – you will learn how to use traditional harmony to compose piano accompaniments and harmonisation of Bach Chorales. You will develop to a high level your understanding of harmonic progression, modulations and cadences
- Score reading – your score reading skills will develop from reading string quartets through to full scale double orchestra /choir 20th century works

Useful Music web link:

<http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/thesoundexchange/resources/dictation/> - for aural dictation practice and general background to the periods of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Specification: OCR A Level Physical Education (H554)

Website Address: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gce/blt/pe/index.aspx>

For more information, please contact: Mr I Douglas at Ermysted's Grammar School

What students have said:

- *"PE is my favourite subject, not only is the theory interesting but the practical side is always fun and a great chance to mix with a new group of friends".*

Necessary background: It will be expected that all students have a keen interest in sport and the issues surrounding it, as well as being accomplished sportswomen. You will be expected to be competing in regular fixtures/performances in at least one sporting activity from the practical activities listed, either at school or at a local club. The minimum GCSE entry requirements are a Grade B in Biology or Additional Science. You are not required to have studied GCSE PE but it will provide you with a sound foundation if you have and you will be expected to have achieved a minimum of a Grade B.

The AS Examination

The course, which is multi-disciplinary, offers students the chance to study many aspects of Physical Education and Sport. The emphasis of the specification is based on the interaction between the theory and practice of sporting principles. The course is mainly theoretical with 70% of the final mark in both the AS and A Level being exam orientated. The remaining 30% is derived from practical coursework. All students are expected to participate in at least one of their chosen activities on a regular basis either within school, if the activity is offered, or as a member of a local club. Video evidence of a student's performance will be required. Students will be expected to spend some of their 'free' time improving their practical performance as well as reading and researching around the subject.

The Examination and Assessment Requirements

AS Level – Year 12

Modules

Factors affecting Performance Anatomy & Physiology	The application of the following knowledge to analyse the response of the body to physical activity. A general overview of the skeletal system. Types of joints, movements and muscle structure linked to function and control of the cardiac, vascular and respiratory systems. Basic biomechanical principles.
Skill Acquisition	With continual links to practical examples students will develop a fundamental psychological knowledge of the characteristics of skilful performance, classification

	of movement skills/abilities and knowledge of the development of skilful performance. From this position students will increasingly link psychological knowledge to performance and learn how individuals and teams develop.
Contemporary Studies in PE	Understanding and application of the concepts of play, leisure, recreation, sport and physical education. Sport and Culture. Issues surrounding the pursuit of excellence & mass participation including: the role of the media, drugs in sport, the role of sporting agencies, ethical issues, violence and corruption.
Coursework	None – only one 2 hour exam.
Personal Performance Portfolio Demonstrations of technique and understanding in two different Activity areas	10% 20%

AS Level – Year 13

Modules

Exercise and Sports Physiology	70% - The application of the following knowledge to improve physical performance. Concepts of energy, energy production in the body, effects of exercise upon the body and the recovery process. Components of fitness and methods of fitness testing. Principles of training and methods and ethics of performance enhancement.
Synoptic Assessment	Understanding and linking of AS and A2 work through an essay style question.
Historical Studies	How did sports begin? Popular recreative activities pre 1800, 19 th century public school influences on sporting activities, rational recreative developments in competitive sport, 1870 onward. Developments in 20 th century physical education.
Sports Psychology	Moving on from AS studies students will progress further into the realms of Sports Psychology and its links to performance. You will investigate areas such as personality, attitude, motivation, group/team dynamics, leadership aggression and audience effects on performance.
Coursework	None – one 2.5 hour exam.
Observation and Analysis is one activity area	10%
Effective Performance in a competitive situation in two Activities	20%

Practical Activity Groups

Candidates follow two activities from two of the following ten different activity categories (although other activities may be added – please ask for details).

Athletic Activities	Track and Field Athletics, Triathlon, Rowing and Sculling
Combat Activities	Fencing and Judo
Dance Activities	Ballroom, Folk, Ice, Educational and Ballet

Game Activities	
Invasion Games	Football, Basketball, Hockey, Netball, Rugby League, Rugby Union and Lacrosse
Net/Wall Games	Badminton, Squash, Tennis, Volleyball and Table Tennis
Striking/Fielding Games	Cricket, Rounders and Baseball
Target Games	Golf, Archery and Flat Green Bowling
Gymnastic Activities	Gymnastics, Trampolining and Rhythmic Gymnastics

Outdoor and Adventurous Activities.	Mountain Walking, Sailing, Skiing, Canoeing, Horse Riding (Cross Country, Dressage, Eventing, Show Jumping), Orienteering, Rock Climbing and Mountain Biking.
Swimming Activities	Competitive Swimming, Diving and Life Saving

PHYSICS

Specification: OCR A Level Physics B (Advancing Physics) (H559)

Website address: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gce/physics/b/>

What students have said:

- *“Physics at A level is so much more interesting than at GCSE; you learn so much more about everything...it’s great!”*
- *“Physics can be a bit difficult but once it clicks it’s good fun”*
- *“It’s important to stay on top of all of the work because it builds up quickly. It’s an interesting subject but a good level of commitment is important”*
- *“...whether it is on a sub-atomic level or the size of the universe, physics is fantastic for everybody interested in how things work.”*

For more information, please contact Mrs K Walter

Necessary Background: Grade B or above in GCSE Physics or Additional Science and GCSE Mathematics.

The AS course is assessed as follows:

G491	Physics in Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Designer materials 	30% of total AS Level marks 15% of total A Level marks	1 hour written exam
G492	Understanding Processes and Experimentation and Data Handling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waves and quantum behaviour • Space, time and motion 	50% of total AS Level marks 25% of total A Level marks	1 hour 45 minute written exam
G493	Physics in Practice: Internal assessment of practical skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of measurement • Physics in use 	20% of total AS Level marks 10% of total A Level marks	Internal Assessment

The AS course will provide a satisfying experience for the student who chooses to take AS Physics as part of a broad Post 16 curriculum - at the end of it they will know more of what physics is about and its place in the world - as well as providing a sound foundation for those who choose to go on to the second year and take the A level examination.

Course Content

Physics in Action shows the wide variety of ways in which Physics is currently put to use:

- **Communications** is about electric circuits and sensors, waves as signals and about imaging, including some simple optics
- **Designer materials** introduces properties of materials, how these depend on the structure of the material and how they help determine the choice of material for a given purpose

During this unit, uncertainties and systematic errors of measurement are introduced, and a first approach to methods of making better measurements is met.

Understanding Processes is organised around different ways of understanding processes of change, the focus being on 'curiosity-driven' physics

- **Waves and quantum behaviour** is mainly about superposition phenomena of waves, especially electromagnetic waves with a brief account of the quantum behaviour of photons and electrons
- **Space, time and motion** develops classical mechanics, including vectors. During this unit methods of making better measurements are further developed.

Physics in Practice consists of two short coursework tasks

- i) a report of a measurement or study of a physical relationship
- ii) a presentation on the use properties and structure of a material

The A2 Examination

Course Content

The above areas of study will be assessed as follows: -

G494	Rise and Fall of the Clockwork Universe <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Models and rules• Matter in extremes	15% of the total A Level marks	1 hour 15 mins written exam
G495	Field and Particle Pictures <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fields• Fundamental particles	25% of the total A Level marks	2 hour written exam
G496	Researching Physics: Internal assessment of practical skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practical investigation• Research briefing	10% of the total A Level marks	Practical investigation; research briefing. Both centre assessed

Rise and fall of the Clockwork Universe develops the grand conception of the world as a 'mathematical machine' which transformed western culture. 'Models and Rules' contains three sections i) Creating models ii) Out into Space iii) Our place in the universe. Matter in extremes contains two sections i) matter: very simple and ii) matter: hot and cold.

Field and Particle Physics introduces the modern picture of fields and particle interactions as fundamental mechanisms of nature.

Coursework

- Practical investigation
- Research Brief

Skills you will develop during this course

Advancing Physics provides many opportunities, which are identified in detail in the course materials, for students to develop and demonstrate their skills in the application of number, communication and IT. There are also opportunities for students to develop their skills in problem-solving, working with others and improving their own learning and performance.

Each year of the course is supported by a Student's Book and a Student's CD ROM containing a course guide; activities; interactive computer and data files; questions and answers; readings; a checklist of objectives and an A-Z of Physics. This will allow students the opportunity to manage their learning and to reinforce weak areas or to further develop areas of interest. There is also a dedicated web site maintained by the Institute of Physics providing up to date material to support students.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The course, as developed, allows a variety of teaching and learning methods to be used depending on the needs and abilities of the students. Students might expect a mixture of whole class teaching; group or individual practical work; group and class discussion; working through set exercises and questions; individual projects, both research based and practical; individual and group feedback to the class.

Further Information

The A2 course leads to an A level qualification which will enable the student to go on to degree level studies but at the same time will provide an interesting and stimulating experience for the student who does not pursue the subject further. The course will appeal to, and provide for, all students, whether they anticipate a grade E or an A*.

If you are studying Physics without AS Maths you will be provided with some extra Maths tuition to assist you with the mathematical content of the subject.

Useful website:

<http://advancingphysics.iop.org/>

PSYCHOLOGY

Specification: AQA A Level Psychology B (2185)

Website address:

http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/science/psychology_b_overview.php

For more information, please contact Mrs A Clarke

What students have said:

- *“Psychology is a fun, exciting subject with interesting topics and lessons and it is easy to learn and revise in bite-size chunks”*
- *“Psychology is fun and unique. It is the only subject I’ve actually wanted to learn and know more about”*
- *“Psychology; whether you’re learning new things or revising – the subject keeps you entertained and is taught in a way everyone can understand”*

Necessary background: This is an inter-disciplinary subject and no prior knowledge of Psychology is expected. It is expected that all students will have a minimum of 5 GCSEs at Grade C or above which should include Maths and one Science.

The AS Examination

Psychology is the scientific study of behaviour and experience and involves looking at how people behave both as individuals and within groups. At AS level you will develop an understanding of the key approaches in Psychology which will be compared with biological explanations for behaviour, including gender. You will also extend your research skills such as planning research and develop an awareness of the difference between experimental and non-experimental research methods whilst also extending your use of descriptive statistics. Other topics to be studied include Remembering and Forgetting, Social Influences on Behaviour and Autism where we will look at some of the explanations for Autism together with gaining an insight into some of the treatments available to those with such disorders.

The AS course is challenging and the above areas of study will be assessed as follows:

Unit 1	Introducing Psychology	50 % of the total AS Level marks 25% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam
Unit 2	Social and Cognitive Psychology Individual Differences	50 % of the total AS Level marks 25% of the total A Level marks	1½ hours exam

Possible Progression

It is hoped that students will enjoy AS so much (and do so well!) that they will want to continue with this subject to A2 level. The AS level will provide an interesting insight into aspects of human behaviour and will be useful to anyone planning a career that involves working with people such as care, the police, social work, prison work, personnel, advertising, the media, business management. Even if you are not considering a career that involves direct contact with people, it will provide you with a valuable insight into the behaviour of yourself and others.

The A2 Examination

The A2 qualification builds on and extends work covered at AS level. There is an element of subject choice in the A2 specification that allows for some flexibility in the options selected for assessment purposes. Aspects of Psychology that will be examined will include:

- Child Development – how infants form early relationships, how friendships develop. How do children understand what is right and wrong?
- Optional topics including Cognition & Law, Mood Disorders and Schizophrenia, Stress and Stress Management, Substance Abuse and Forensic Psychology.
- An understanding of the main perspectives in Psychology and key debates including the nature-nurture debate
- The use of statistics in Psychology and research issues

The above areas of study will be assessed as follows: -

Unit 4	Child Development and Options	25% of the total A Level marks	2 hours exam
Unit 5	Perspectives, Debates and Methods	25% of the total A Level marks	2 hours exam

Teaching and Learning Methods

A wide variety of teaching and learning methods are used. Lecture, discussion, debate, group-work, and video are used regularly.

Skills you will develop during this course

Study skills, report writing skills and research are practised regularly through whole class and small group activities. Students are expected to read around using a variety of textbooks and journals, and to develop the ability to evaluate and analyse the subject content.

Further Information and Advice

Psychology enables students to apply research and theoretical explanations of behaviour to everyday situations. The subject looks for scientific evidence rather than the “common sense” explanations we may use as individuals and it will encourage you to think about your own behaviour and that of others in a more insightful and evaluative way. Apart from providing a firm foundation for HE courses in Psychology, this course will be useful for students wanting to pursue careers in medical disciplines, business and social sciences.

There are many options open for further study of Psychology. Degrees tend to be either BSc which concentrates on the scientific side of Psychology e.g. brain mapping, built environments, atypical, or BA which tends to concentrate on Applied Psychology e.g. Social Psychology. Psychology is also helpful for degrees or employment in many other areas e.g. physiotherapy, criminology, social work, police, marketing etc.

Useful Psychology websites:

<http://www.bps.org.uk/> – excellent for advice on careers

www.psychology.org/ - general information on Psychology with useful links to other sites

<http://www.a-levelpsychology.co.uk/online> – information more specific to A Level, though not necessarily AQA B

RELIGIOUS STUDIES (Philosophy and Ethics)

Specification: OCR Religious Studies (H572)

Website: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gce/hss/rs/>

For more information contact Mrs Priory

What students have said....

"Philosophy and ethics gives you the chance to explore different ideas about the world around you"

"I find RS a fun and enjoyable subject, what we learn helps us to understand different people's views and opinions"

"Thought provoking"

"It is different from other subjects as it deals with massive issues that can never be ultimately solved"

"Interesting and challenging"

"I enjoy philosophy and ethics as we have debates and are free to express our opinions. It is also refreshing that there is no right or wrong answer"

Background: It is not necessary to have studied the subject at GCSE level. The most important requirements for a potential A Level student are enthusiasm for the subject and a willingness to engage with philosophical and ethical issues. Religious Studies is a broad and multi skilled subject. It sits comfortably with both arts and science subjects, and provides an opportunity to study contemporary events which students are able to relate to the everyday world in which they live.

What is required is a sound ability to express oneself on paper in a reasoned and informed manner.

A Grade B or above at GCSE English Language indicates that you will cope with the essay-based nature of the course.

Students will need to demonstrate the capacity for independent study and reading.

AS Level Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics

The Course is divided into two sections:

Philosophy of Religion

- Traditional arguments for the existence of God: ontological, cosmological etc.
- The challenges posed to religious belief
- The problem of evil
- Religion and science
- The thinking of Plato and Aristotle
- The nature of God in Judaeo-Christian thought

Religious Ethics

Ethical Theories

- Natural Law
- Utilitarianism
- Kantian ethics
- Relativism
- Religious Ethics

Applied Ethics

- Abortion and the right to a child
- Euthanasia
- Genetic Engineering
- War and peace

Assessment will be by two 1.5 hour examinations consisting of two essay questions.

A2 Level Religious Studies: Philosophy and Ethics

At A2, the demands of the course increase because of the levels of analysis required and an awareness of modern scholarship. As candidates progress from AS to A2, they are expected to tackle more demanding essay-style questions where they have to demonstrate higher-level skills of selecting, comparing and ordering the material.

The Course

Philosophy of Religion 2

- Life and Death; the Soul
- The nature of God
- Miracles
- Religious experience
- Religious language

Religious Ethics 2

- Meta-Ethics
- Free will and Determinism
- The nature and role of conscience
- Aristotle and Virtue Ethics

These will be applied to:

- Business and the Environment
- Sexual ethics (homosexuality, pre-marital sex etc)

Assessment will be by two 1.5 hour examinations consisting of two essay questions.

Students are given feedback and encouraged to improve their skills and examination techniques. Staff provide a structure for revision and agree targets for the teaching group and individuals. A supportive and secure learning environment is considered to be essential and we aim to provide this so that every student achieves her potential.

Teaching and Learning

As this is a “living” course reflecting current circumstances, all resources are up to date and include a wide range of library material, videos, CD ROMs and magazines. There is a variety of website information which is also useful.

Activities include:

- class discussion and debate
- student and teacher presentations
- research based activities
- analysis of recent advances in medical ethics using newspapers and video
- learning about ethical theories and examining case studies

Skills:

The Advanced Level course in Religious Studies develops a wide range of subject-specific and transferable skills:

- analysis
- discussion and debate
- balanced argument
- judgement
- evaluation
- research

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics have been taught for millennia and have a strong academic background. The course will cover a wide range of current issues. There are no standard answers for many of these, and each student must think them through for herself. Such skills of reasoning and the appreciation of the breadth of opinion are relevant to many jobs and areas of further study. The course lends itself well to journalism, teaching, law, and much more. Those wishing to pursue a career in medicine have found the medical ethics sections useful and advantageous.

Those with an enquiring mind into the fundamental questions and issues that are raised should find the twin approaches of ethics and philosophy a fascinating and taxing combination.

THEATRE STUDIES

Specification: AQA A Level Drama and Theatre Studies (2240)

Website address: http://web.aqa.org.uk/qual/gce/arts/drama_overview.php

For more information, please contact Mrs C McKinnell

What students have said:

- *"It's hard work but very rewarding"*
- *"The girls were very welcoming and as well as being great fun, it's been an extraordinary boost to my confidence, communication and life skills."*
Ermysted's student
- *"Although it can require you to give up a lot of free time and to rely on working with others, the coursework is extremely fun and fulfilling when it is finished."*

Subject Content

At both AS and A2, candidates are required to show knowledge and understanding of:

- how performers, designers and directors communicate meaning to an audience
- theatre practice through their own engagement with the medium as both participant and informed audience member
- the appropriate vocabulary and specialist terminology for the subject

At AS, candidates are required to show knowledge and understanding of:

- one published play, in relation to the ways in which style, form, dramatic structure and characterisation can be interpreted and realised in performance. The candidate is required to understand how the play relates to its historical, social and cultural context
- the work of several influential directors, designers, theatre companies or other practitioners who have made a significant contribution to theatre practice
- How others use the dramatic form in performance to create character, atmosphere and style

At A Level, candidates are required to show knowledge and understanding of:

- two more published plays, one of which is pre-twentieth century and one of which is twentieth century or contemporary
- the connections between theory and practice demonstrated through a range of forms, genres and performance styles
- the directorial overview required in the interpretation and realisation of a theatrical performance
- how relevant research supports practical work

At both AS and A2, candidates are required to develop:

- the ability to form judgements about live theatre based on their understanding of drama and theatre
- skills in use of subject-specific terminology in a range of contexts
- performance and/or production skills appropriate to the creation and realisation of drama and theatre
- the ability to work creatively and collaboratively to achieve shared dramatic intentions

- the ability to respond to plays imaginatively, conveying ideas clearly and coherently

In addition, for A Level, candidates are required to develop:

- a more advanced level of performance and/or production skills
- the ability to think independently, make judgements and refine their work in the light of research
- the ability to analyse the ways in which different performance and production elements are brought together to create theatre

AS examinations:

Unit 1	Live Theatre Production Seen and Prescribed Play	60% of AS Level marks, 30% A Level marks	1½ hours written exam
Unit 2	Presentation of an Extract from a Play	40% of AS Level marks, 20% of A Level marks	Practical performance

A2 examinations:

Unit 3	Further prescribed plays including pre-Twentieth Century	30% A Level marks	2 hour written paper
Unit 4	Presentation of Devised Drama	20% of A marks	Practical performance

Teaching and Learning Methods

- this is both a practical and theoretical course. Candidates will explicitly synthesise experience from theoretical and practical elements of the course
- class/group discussions
- personal performance including preparation and review
- visits to theatre productions - it will be necessary to visit some performances in school time and some in the evenings. **The cost of productions and travel will usually have to be paid by the student. Every attempt will be made to minimise costs.** Candidates will usually attend at least six performances
- group performance of both scripted and devised material
- essay writing - preparation and review

Skills developed during this course

- development of sophisticated and rehearsed presentations – this is a very useful skill for both scientific and arts based careers
- use theoretical understanding to discuss practical interpretations of text and performance
- problem solving for specific and demonstrable ‘end-results’ assessed by audience
- focussed and assessed group interaction – an important life skill

A Level Results 2009

This table shows the results obtained by Skipton Girls' High School students in each subject in 2009.

Subject	Number obtaining grade					
	A	B	C	D	E	U
Art	8	2	0	1	0	0
Biology	9	2	0	4	1	0
Business (Applied)	11	5	8	1	0	0
Chemistry	8	7	3	4	2	0
Classical Civilisation*	1	1	2	0	0	0
English Language	9	13	4	2	0	0
English Literature	15	8	4	0	0	0
French	1	2	2	0	0	0
General Studies	20	15	23	12	10	2
Geography	11	4	0	0	0	0
German	1	1	1	0	0	0
History	1	6	3	0	0	0
Mathematics	16	5	3	2	1	0
Mathematics (Further)	2	1	3	1	0	0
Music	1	0	1	0	0	0
PE*	1	0	2	1	0	0
Physics	7	7	3	1	1	0
Politics	3	0	2	2	0	0
Product Design	1	2	4	0	0	0
Psychology	9	12	11	4	2	0
Theatre Studies	0	1	5	1	0	0

*These subjects were studied at Ermysted's Grammar School as part of the Sixth Form collaboration between the two schools.