



Sydenham
High School

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST



Sixth Form

GUIDE

For entry September 2024

"I couldn't have asked for a better atmosphere and environment.

It served both the healthy pressure we needed but also a place where we could take a break and clear our minds. It had the perfect balance."

- Alumna

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Welcome

The Sixth Form experience is rightly described as the best that education has to offer, and at Sydenham High School this is absolutely the case. You will enjoy greater academic freedom and study subjects which genuinely interest you, in small, dynamic classes, enabling you to intellectually flourish and build a strong rapport with teachers. You will also undergo significant personal development during this time, with great opportunity for academic enrichment, independent thought and the soft skills which will better prepare you for your future pathways and careers. In our Sixth Form, academic excellence goes hand in hand with pastoral excellence so that we empower you to reach your fullest potential in whatever you do.

In keeping with our school motto, we want you to be fearless in the pursuit of your ambitions. We put girls first in all that we do and ensure that you are fully equipped with the requisite skills and, importantly, the self-

confidence to succeed and thrive in your future lives. The Sixth Form is a challenging, yet hugely rewarding and exciting, next phase of your educational journey and forms an essential bridge to university life and the pathways beyond. It is a time when you will be encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities, to challenge yourself and to broaden your horizons through getting involved in the rich co-curricular life of our school.

Our Sixth Form is a warm and welcoming space where every individual is celebrated. We wholeheartedly encourage you to immerse yourself fully in the Sixth Form experience at Sydenham High so that you work hard, play hard, make long-term friendships, and gain invaluable life-skills. Come and see for yourself.

Ms Antonia Geldeard
Head



Sixth Form Life



Sixth Form life at Sydenham High is unique, packed with exciting opportunities and new experiences with which to challenge yourself: from leadership and community service opportunities to rowing, student mentoring and the GDST Lead enterprise programme.

Life in the Sixth Form is busy, varied and rewarding. Alongside the main focus of A Level study and the Extended Project Qualification, there is also a rich selection of co-curricular activities on offer. We encourage you to pursue your own individual interests and participate actively in the wider life of the school. This may mean attending cultural activities, or volunteering at a local primary school during your study periods, or simply running a lunch time club for younger pupils.

There are dedicated study areas and private study periods, as well as a catering provision solely for Sixth Formers. Although there is no uniform, there is a dress code on our website which must be adhered to. Tutor groups are small and offer you personalised teacher mentoring and support. Our Sixth Form offering is separated into three strands: Personal Development, Academic Expertise and Future Pathways, which ensure that you leave Sixth Form motivated and well-rounded with an enquiring and independent mind, ready to flourish at university and beyond. You will create a host of happy memories to take away with you.

[Miss Rebecca Parrish](#)
Assistant Head - Head of Sixth Form

Own Your Future

Years 12 and 13 are the most challenging and rewarding years of your school career. You will study your chosen subjects in much greater detail giving you a comprehensive understanding at the end of the course.

Utilising study periods and managing your time is essential for you to achieve the best grades you can at the end of Year 13. The rapport you have with your teachers helps ensure a more intimate and personalised experience and teachers here genuinely go the extra mile. It's one of the best aspects of studying at Sydenham High School.

Our dedicated Sixth Form Centre provides Sixth Formers with the perfect working environment. You have a well-equipped kitchen and your own study room, along with other spaces for learning and relaxing.

There are lots of opportunities to network with other Sixth Formers at GDST events, and insight days to gain work experience in a variety of fields. You will make friends for life when you are in the Sixth Form.

Make sure you take advantage of every opportunity offered to you, from developing key skills to learning new things and embracing exciting experiences. All of these will make your time rich and varied as well as help you complete your UCAS application for university or future pathways with confidence.

Personal Development

Professional Skills & Employability

Leadership & Enterprise

Partnerships & Volunteering

Body, Mind & Soul



Academic Expertise

Personalised A Level Choices & Teaching

Independent Study & EPQ

Academic Enrichment & Electives

Cognitive acceleration
through small class sizes

Future Pathways

Career Advice & Guidance

Tailored Higher Education Support

Industry Networking & Mentoring

Oxbridge, MDV & Competitive Courses



My daughter has been here for seven years, loves the school and continues to excel. I have been so impressed by how much staff care about each individual pupil – not just their results, but their all-round wellbeing. She has made life-long friends and has strong relationships with all her teachers. She has been genuinely happy and I can only thank the teachers and staff for their support, would recommend wholeheartedly.

- Parent



Personal Development

- Professional Skills & Employability
- Leadership & Enterprise
- Partnerships & Volunteering
- Body, Mind & Soul

Academic study lies at the heart of Sixth Form life but there is a huge amount on offer beyond this. It is the balance of the co-curricular enrichment that makes Sydenham High School such an inspiring place to grow during your Sixth Form years. There are greater responsibilities on offer, as well as freedoms to develop self-motivation and independence.

When you start in Year 12 there is a bespoke induction programme to aid the transition to Sixth Form including welcome events, team building activities, and personalised curriculum meetings.

There are a wide range of educational visits on offer as part of the curriculum. In previous years our students have visited New York, and to our sister school in Nepal, a school that we helped to rebuild after the earthquake in 2015 alongside the charity In Your Hands.

The Power Skills Programme is a bespoke and unique aspect of Sixth Form timetabled provision and aims to equip you with relevant and transferable skills for life beyond school. You are also actively encouraged to get involved with some of the many other activities that are

on offer to Sixth Form students, including:

- GDST LEAD Enterprise Challenge
- Dulwich College Saturday School
- Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award
- School societies such as Literary Society, AfroCaribbean Society and BioMedSoc

Volunteering within the local community is an opportunity for you to give back to the people and area around you, whilst also developing key skills in communication, empathy and teamwork.

The Young Leadership Team play an important role in the school. The leadership skills gained from these roles are invaluable, and give you the opportunity to engage with the rest of the school community.

Sport is also an important part of Sixth Form life with rowing and netball being two of our most popular sports in the Sixth Form. All Sixth Formers have a timetabled lesson of PE fortnightly.





Academic Expertise

- Personalised A Level Choices & Teaching
- Independent Study & EPQ
- Academic Enrichment & Electives
- Cognitive acceleration through small class sizes

We pride ourselves on our academic success within the Sixth Form. Our girls aim high and achieve excellent results. The wide range of 27 subject choices, taught by dedicated subject specialists, ensures that we support your interests and your potential career path. You will experience a greater freedom and enjoy studying subjects that genuinely interest you, in smaller classes, while forming more mature relationships with your teachers who will support you every step of the way.

However, we aren't just focused on academic success. We also want you to learn how to think, to be inquisitive so that we set you up for a lifetime of thinking critically to help your future career path. Seminar style lessons and independent learning not only help prepare you for university, but also create motivated learners.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a Level 3 stand alone academic qualification, equating to half an A Level. It is highly regarded by both universities and employers. Many Russell Group universities take the EPQ into account as part of their holistic assessment of a student's UCAS application. The EPQ is an independent research project and enables students to develop skills in the areas of problem-solving, critical thinking, analysis, synthesis evaluation and public speaking. The EPQ is a fantastic opportunity to explore in depth an aspect of a subject that is currently being studied at A Level or to investigate a topic of great personal interest. It is a piece of independent research that can be submitted in the form of an academic report, but you could also choose to create an artefact or product. Recent submissions include a video documentary, a play or a visual record of a creative endeavour. Students can choose what they want to research and, under the guidance of an experienced supervisor, the research is conducted. Students who do the EPQ also find that the skills are transferable to their other

subjects and recent research has shown that students who complete the EPQ enhance their chances of achieving an A*-B in their other A Levels by 29%.

Developing interests outside of the A Level curriculum is vital in helping to shape curious young people. Our enrichment programme offers a variety of courses that allow you to learn new skills or try an activity that challenges you physically or mentally. There is a wealth of courses available to you including political awareness, photography, first aid, rock climbing and sign language to name a few.

We operate an Advanced Electives Series in partnership with Dulwich College and JAGS. Electives run at Dulwich College and Sydenham High School and there are a plethora of options to choose from such as Anatomical Studies, Debunking medical myths: from stem cells to superheros and Architectural History.



Future Pathways

- Career Advice & Guidance
- Tailored Higher Education Support
- Industry Networking & Mentoring
- Oxbridge, MDV & Competitive Courses

University preparation is a key focus throughout the Sixth Form, to ensure that students are well informed about the different options available to them. We want you to feel empowered to apply to the very best universities in the world and we have a strong tradition in preparing students for UK and overseas universities, as well as for Drama and Art Foundation courses. University and potential career advice is an integral part of the PSHE and Professional Skills Programme, alongside dedicated university preparation sessions.

Entrance to Cambridge and Oxford, as well as applications for Medicine, Veterinary Science and Law, have become increasingly competitive. These universities and courses not only interview rigorously but also involve sitting stringent entrance tests. We aim to prepare you as thoroughly as possible so that you can make strong and competitive applications. We offer interview practice with former Oxbridge graduates and medics and support you with additional test preparation as well. Our University and Careers events help guide you further with choices and decision-making and in Year 12 you will benefit from dedicated University Preparation Days when we advise on UCAS, personal statements and university choices. You are actively encouraged to attend university open days and taster courses to ensure you are fully informed about all your choices.

Our Oxbridge, Medical & Competitive Courses Preparation Programmes ensure that our students receive tailored support and guidance throughout the whole application process.

Students are also prepared for applications for apprenticeship schemes, most recently including an apprenticeship degree place in Accounting at Ernst & Young and a Finance apprenticeship degree at Jacob's engineering.

The GDST also provides invaluable support,

organising various preparation events including an Oxbridge conference at the end of Year 12 which many of our students attend in order to gain a greater depth and understanding of what is required when applying for Oxbridge. Students can apply for a number of GDST scholarships and prizes targeted at Sixth Formers across the Trust, such as the Minerva Prize for all round achievement, or the Johnston Memorial Scholarship for those intending to study law at university.

As a GDST Sixth Form, Sydenham High School is able to offer students fantastic experiences such as the Young Leaders and Inspire South conferences, as well as a bespoke app, Rungway, which unites over 70,000 alumnae with current pupils across the GDST family. Sixth Formers also benefit from the GDST Positive Programme, Higher Education Preparation courses, insight days across a range of industries and a network of alumnae based in the UK and overseas to make connections, share news, pass on careers and university expertise, host professional and social events – from their old schools and from other sister schools.

[92% of Year 13 students achieved a place at their first or second choice of destination in 2023;](#)

Almost the entire Year 13 cohort were accepted at their first or second choice of destination in the summer of 2023. This included two students going to Cambridge to study History of Art; one going to the Royal Veterinary College to study Veterinary Medicine; and another to study Medicine at Brighton and Sussex Medical School. Other destinations of choice included UCL, Birmingham, Leeds, Loughborough, Edinburgh, and the Leeds Conservatoire.

Joining us

We offer a broad range of subjects at Sydenham High School and students choose one of the pathways below:

Pathway 1: Three A Levels + Extended Project Qualification.

Pathway 2: Four A Levels.

Pathway 3: Four A Levels + Extended Project Qualification.

Our Sixth Form offering is separated into three strands: Personal Development, Academic Expertise and Future Pathways, which includes Professional Skills, Volunteering and our Advanced Electives Series in partnership with Dulwich College and JAGS.

A Levels allow you to focus on the subjects you wish to understand in greater depth. Smaller class sizes allow for more seminar style learning which challenges your understanding, alongside providing a platform for more independent study.

Other qualifications also count toward UCAS points such as Grade 8 Music or a LAMDA discipline, a gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award as well as the gold Crest Science Award.



Sydenham Sixth Form provides us with a very personal learning environment and therefore good relationships with teachers meaning you feel comfortable asking questions and making mistakes.

- Year 13 student

Sixth Form candidates should expect to achieve a minimum of seven GCSE passes at grades 9 to 5 in the summer before entry, including a minimum of a grade 5 in both English Language and Mathematics.

We will consider equivalent international qualifications for external candidates.

Subject	Required GCSE results
Art	Minimum of 6 in Art
Biology	Minimum of 7 in Biology or 77 in Double Science
Chemistry	Minimum of 7 in Chemistry or 77 in Double Science and a minimum 7 in Maths
Classical Civilisation	Minimum of 6 in an equivalent humanity if not previously studied
Computer Science	Minimum of 6 in Computer Science
Design Technology: Product Design	Minimum of 6 in Design Technology
Drama & Theatre Studies	Minimum of 6 in Drama
Economics	Minimum of 6 in Maths and English at GCSE
English Literature	Minimum of 6 in English Literature
French	Minimum of 6 in French
Geography	Minimum of 6 in Geography
German	Minimum of 6 in German
History	Minimum of 6 in History
History of Art	Minimum of 6 in an equivalent humanity if not previously studied
Italian	Minimum of 6 in Italian
Latin	Minimum of 6 in Latin
Maths & Further Maths	Minimum of 7 in Maths to study Maths A Level and a minimum of an 8 for Further Maths
Music	Minimum of 6 in Music
Philosophy	Minimum of 6 in an equivalent humanity if not previously studied
Politics	Minimum of 6 in an equivalent humanity if not previously studied
Physics	Minimum of 7 in Physics or 77 in Double Science and a minimum 7 in Maths
Physical Education	Minimum of 6 in PE
Psychology	Minimum of 6 in Biology or 66 in Double Science
Religious Studies	Minimum of 6 in RS
Sociology	Minimum of 6 in an equivalent humanity if not previously studied
Spanish	Minimum of 6 in Spanish



Scholarships & Bursaries

Scholarships and Bursaries

A number of scholarships are awarded on entry to the Sixth Form and both internal and external candidates are welcome to apply. The scholarship examination will be held on Friday 10 November 2023. Students who are new to the school must also submit an online application form before they can complete a scholarship application form. The scholarship examination is not subject-specific and requires no special preparation. All applicants for Sixth Form Scholarships will also be interviewed by the Head of Sixth Form and, for external candidates, a reference with predicted grades is required.

Candidates who wish to apply for a bursary in Sixth Form must indicate this on the application form and submit the bursary application. Scholarship and bursary offers will be made in December.

In our Admissions Handbook there are full details of the available Sixth Form Scholarships:

- Academic
- Art
- Drama
- Music
- Rowing
- Sport

Sixth Form Application process for external candidates

Alongside students progressing from our year 11, we welcome new students to our Sixth Form and have a long and successful tradition of students joining us in Year 12. External applicants will need to complete the online application form. Admission is on the basis of an interview with the Head or the Head of Sixth Form and a good reference (with predicted GCSE grades) from the candidate's current school. Occasionally, we may ask a student to sit a short test in a particular subject or subjects. The Registrar and the Head of Sixth Form can give students further information on the application process and arrange for a visit to the school. We can be contacted at admissions@syd.gdst.net or by calling 020 8557 7004.

Key Dates for 2024 entry

Sixth Form Scholarship Application Deadline:
Friday 3 November 2023

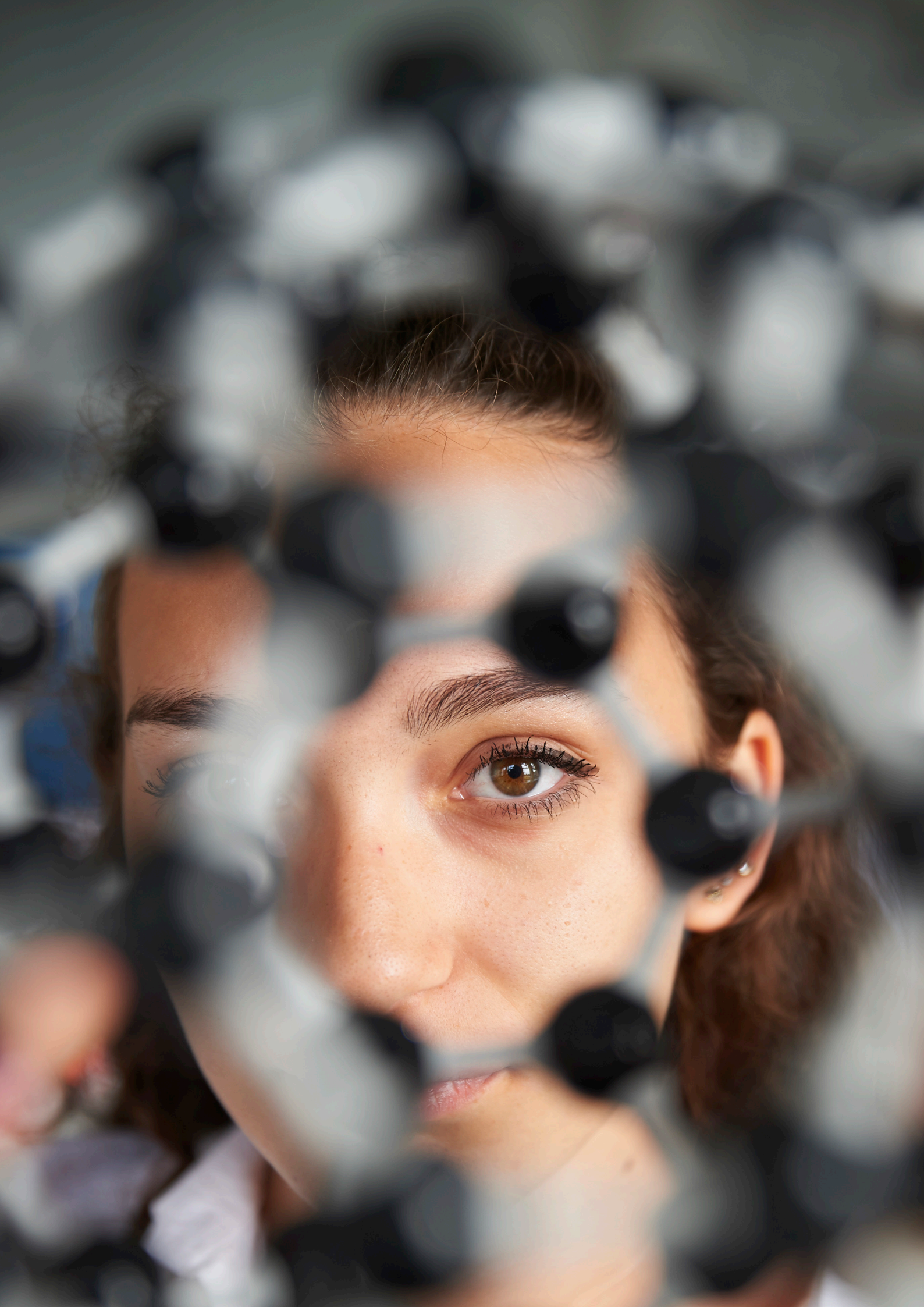
Sixth Form Scholarship Examination: Friday 10
November 2023

Submission of A Level choices Deadline:
Wednesday 7 February 2024



Visiting our sister school in Nepal made me appreciate my school and the things I have because it made me realise that you don't need the new iPhone, the newest clothes or the best WiFi to be happy. These children just wanted to go to school and get an education. The biggest lesson that I learned, that it is easy to forget, is that when you can go to school and get an education take it and do your best because you might not have a better chance.

- Year 13 student



SUBJECT GUIDE

Art

Head of Art and Design: Mr A Dunne

We explore materials, techniques and concepts, drawing inspiration from both contemporary and historical artists. Observational drawing is the basis from which all our projects develop; however, all students are encouraged to find an area of art in which they excel.

Students are challenged to create personal and exploratory projects which will develop their creative potential and lead to increasingly sophisticated and innovative pieces of work. As well as Fine Art media (drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture), students will be introduced to photography, mixed media techniques and 3D making processes. At the start of the course, students will undertake a series of creative, teacher-led workshops. The students will then complete one comprehensive and in-depth project before embarking on their examination project in the Spring Term of Year 13. The Fine Art approach provides students with a sound foundation of skills, alongside a high quality portfolio for further study in a wide range of art and design disciplines.

We also run a short life drawing course which develops direct observational skills and contributes to student portfolios.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

Coursework Project One

- Practical workshops
- Independent development

Coursework Project Two

- Recording and experimenting
- Independent development
- Written personal study completed (1000 - 3000 words)

External Examination project

- Recording and experimenting
- Independent development
- Final outcome in 15 hour examination

Sketchbooks, personal study and final pieces are marked together.

All work is exhibited in school for moderation by the examination board on site. The final examination grade is made up of 60% coursework and 40% examination work.

Co-curricular

We run portfolio classes after school for art college applicants, and have extra studio sessions for A Level students every week. Staff keep students informed of a range of art courses and opportunities at galleries, museums and art colleges across London.

We undertake study visits to fascinating locations such as Chatham's Historic Dockyards, The Hunterian Museum and Hastings. We also visit the studios of artists practising within London to gain an insight into the life of a professional Artist. Students are also offered the opportunity to explore life drawing at a local gallery through a series of expert-led sessions.

University and beyond

The creative industries are now the second largest sector in London's economy. A degree in Art and Design can lead to many interesting careers, including advertising, fashion, interior design, architecture, production design in film, television or theatre, art therapy and museum or art gallery work.

Most students who wish to study Art at university go on to complete the one-year Foundation Diploma in Art & Design before applying for specialist degree courses. The school has an excellent record of gaining places at the Royal Drawing School, London College of Communication, Camberwell College, City and Guilds, Kingston and Central St Martin's.

Biology

Head of Biology: Dr G Hill

We study Biology to understand life; from the effects of the smallest genetic mutation to population changing evolutionary events.

At A Level, we take a context based approach and ideas are introduced within relevant and interesting settings. There are many important links made with clinical sciences throughout the course such as blood donation, CPR, IVF, blood doping, genetic counselling and the effect of ageing on the nervous system. Practical skills are incorporated into the course and examined as a written paper.

Course content

Examination board: SNAB (Salters Nuffield A Level Biology)

SNAB uses real-life contexts to engage students and make learning relevant. Biological principles are introduced as required in each situation, with the whole course carefully designed to develop ideas across contexts, building on ideas to consolidate and extend learning to provide a thorough understanding of the concepts that underpin Biology today. Revisiting ideas in this way allows connections to be made between them, and supports a synoptic approach particularly valuable to a linear qualification and examinations at the end of the two year course.

Topics:

1. Lifestyle, health and risk (cardiovascular disease)
2. Genes and Health (Cystic Fibrosis)
3. Voice of the genome
4. Biodiversity and natural resources
5. On the wild side
6. Immunity, infection and forensics
7. Run for your life
8. Grey matter

The course is assessed through three written examinations in the summer of Year 13.

Co-curricular

The Biology Department runs a variety of trips for the Sixth Form throughout the year to enhance the students' experience of studying Biology at A Level:

- Residential field trip to a field studies centre
- A Level lecture trips

The department also helps run BioMedSoc, where students engage in discussions and activities designed to broaden their academic reach and inspire them to study these subjects at university.

University and beyond

Studying Biology at A Level provides students with highly desirable analytical and observational skills. This subject will enhance any university application and enable students to access a wide variety of both BSc and BA courses. The majority of our students go on to study one of the many and varied life science based degrees available at university and this A Level course is excellent preparation for the rigours of a more context-led undergraduate approach. We also see students go forward to vocational clinical degrees such as Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science. As a numerate student, those with an A Level in Biology will be sought after by financial institutions and large companies. They will also be well placed for graduate schemes and summer internships.

Chemistry

Head of Chemistry: Mr X Tan

Chemistry is the study of every substance composed of matter and so it will challenge the way you think about everything. It will develop your analytical skills and help you use logic and reasoning to problem solve, not only in Chemistry, but in all areas of life.

Studying at A Level will cover a wide range of topics, with many aspects involving practical work which will often require teamwork and a strong ability to communicate effectively. You will also need to be able to work independently using your own initiative and have a real drive for attention to detail - all key skills that will evolve whilst studying Chemistry.

Course Content

We follow the OCR A level Chemistry course. This is a two year course with no written coursework. Assessment takes place in the form of three written examinations taken at the end of Year 13 with a continuous assessment of practical skills which form the basis of the Practical Endorsement.

The three main topics are Physical, Inorganic and Organic Chemistry and they are covered across six modules.

Module	Content
1	Development of Practical Skills in Chemistry
2	Foundations in Chemistry
3	The Periodic Table and Energy
4	Core Organic Chemistry
5	Physical Chemistry and Transition Elements
6	Organic Chemistry and Analysis

Paper	Content	Total A Level
1	Periodic Table, Elements and Physical Chemistry Modules 1, 2, 3 & 5 100 marks	37% 2 hours 15 minutes
2	Synthesis and Analytical Techniques Modules 1, 2, 4 & 6 100 marks	37% 2 hours 15 minutes
3	Unified Chemistry Modules 1-6 70 marks	26% 1 hour 30 minutes

Many combinations of subjects can be enhanced by studying Chemistry. Complementary subjects include but are not limited to Mathematics, Biology and Physics.

Co-curricular

BioMedSoc, is open to all students but its specific goal is to provide an in-depth programme organised to support students in maximising their chances of achieving a place on courses such as Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary Science. There are also a variety of lectures and conferences at higher education establishments as well as by alumnae on offer and many opportunities to visit exhibitions where students are encouraged to network with scientists and engineers. Students can take part in the RSC Chemistry Olympiad, RSC Schools' Analyst Competition, Cambridge Challenge and can enter into the annual #700STEMChallenge.

University and Beyond

Chemistry opens many pathways for students and the skills learnt through study are valued by all employers. Examples of careers include Chemistry itself, Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science, Biochemistry, Pharmacology, Chemical Engineering, Environmental Sciences, Forensics, Food Science, Teaching, Research and even Law.

Classical Civilisation

Head of Classics: Mrs M Frankland

Choose Classical Civilisation if you are interested in learning about the classical world - its personalities, events, literature, drama, art, architecture, history, politics, philosophy and mythology. The course shows how modern culture has developed from the classical past, how the civilisation of classical Rome and Greece has helped in shaping modern Europe and how classical influences are still important in understanding today's world. The breadth and depth of classics as a subject is vast and it is this variation that makes the subject so interesting, enjoyable and compelling to study and explore.

Course content

Examination board: OCR

Beliefs and Ideas

Students must study one component in this group, chosen from:

- Greek Religion (H408/31)
- Love and Relationships (H408/32)
- Politics of the Late Republic (H408/33)
- Democracy and the Athenians (H408/34)

Components in this group involve an area of classical thought in combination with either the study of literature in translation or visual/material culture.

30% of total A Level

Written paper ~ 75 marks ~ 1 hour 45 minutes

The World of the Hero

This is a compulsory component consisting of an in-depth study of:

- one of Homer's Iliad or Odyssey
- and Virgil's Aeneid

This component is solely focused on the study of literature in translation.

40% of total A Level

Written paper ~ 100 marks ~ 2 hours 20 minutes

Culture and the Arts

Students must study one component in this group, chosen from:

- Greek Theatre (H408/21)
- Imperial Image (H408/22)
- Invention of the Barbarian (H408/23)
- Greek Art (H408/24)

Components in this group involve the study of visual and material culture. In all except Greek Art this is combined with the study of literature in translation.

30% of total A Level

Written paper ~ 75 marks ~ 1 hour 45 minutes

Co-curricular

The Classics Department runs a variety of trips for the Sixth Form throughout the year to enhance the students' experience of the classics curriculum at A Level:

- Study Day with Cambridge University to explore the university and analyse classical texts with world experts.
- GDST Classics Conference.
- Theatre trip(s) to broaden appreciation of the impact of classical literature today.
- Biannual trip abroad. Past trips have included the Bay of Naples and Sicily.

University and beyond

Choosing Classical Civilisation prepares students for the world of business, politics, journalism and teaching by sharpening their ability to read and analyse information, by improving the clarity and persuasiveness of their speech and writing, and by making students interesting, flexible, cultured people.

Computer Science

Head of Computer Science: Ms K Diallo

A Level Computer Science helps students understand the core academic principles of Computer Science. Classroom learning is transferred into real-world systems through the creation of an independent programming project. Our A Level will develop students' technical understanding and their ability to analyse and solve problems using computational thinking. Computer Science has strong connections to many other disciplines. Mathematics, Further Mathematics, Physics, and Economics combine well with Computer Science.

Course content

Examination board: OCR

Unit 1: Computer Systems

- The characteristics of contemporary processors, input, output and storage devices
- Software and software development
- Exchanging data and computer Networks
- Data types, data structures and algorithms
- Legal, moral, cultural and ethical issues

Unit 2 Algorithms and programming

- Elements of computational thinking
- Problem solving and programming
- Algorithms to solve problems and standard algorithms

Unit 3 Programming project

The learner will choose a computing problem to work through according to the guidance in the specification.

- Analysis of the problem
- Design of the solution
- Developing the solution
- Evaluation

Assessment

Unit 1 Computer System: 2 hours and 30 minutes. Written paper. No calculator allowed. 40% of total A Level.

Unit 2 Algorithm and Programming: 2 hours

and 30 minutes. Written paper. No calculator allowed. 40% of total A Level.

Unit 3 Programming Project: Non exam assessment 20% of total A Level.

The non-examination assessment

The non-examination assessment assesses a student's ability to use the knowledge and skills gained through the course to solve or investigate a practical problem. Students will be expected to follow a systematic approach to problem solving.

Co-curricular

In the Sixth Form students are given the opportunity to go beyond the A Level Computer Science curriculum. They learn and practise how to develop encryption, AI programmes, programming with Raspberry Pi, and computer games. Students enjoy a variety of trips from Thorpe Park, to investigate technologies used on rides, at bookings, security and ride simulations, Bletchley Park code breaker trip and Silicon Valley, San Francisco.

University and beyond

Computer Science is the industry of the future and students who study Computer Science at A Level have to be logical and resilient. The people with these skills are in great demand by universities and employers alike.

There is a shortage of qualified graduates available to the industry and students that go on to study Computer Science at degree level will be employable in a huge range of industries.

Computer Science at A level is valued by universities and employers since it requires the development of analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. This course also lays an appropriate foundation for further study or careers based on many subjects including, but not exclusive to Computer Science, Mathematics, Biomedical Engineering, Cyber Security & Digital Forensics, Law/ Legal Technology, Engineering and Physics.

Product Design (D&T)

Head of Design and Technology: Mrs P Curran

Our fascination with design goes back to flint arrow heads and earthenware pots.

As a designer you need creativity and resilience, in order to imagine and realise the shape and function of the object. Students will need to understand industrial manufacturing processes, materials and marketing. Design and Technology A Level enables students to participate successfully and with confidence in an increasingly technological world.

We want students to explore new ideas of originality and value, to question and challenge old ideas, to consider the environmental, social and moral aspects of life in the 21st Century. We need thinkers and problem solvers, students who can communicate their ideas and look outside of their comfort zone.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

Portfolio of Creative Skills

- Design methods and processes
- Design Theory
- How technology and cultural changes can impact on the work of designers
- Product life cycle
- Design processes
- Critical analysis and evaluation

Technical Principles

- Materials, their properties and applications
- Modern industrial and commercial practice
- Efficient use of materials
- Digital design and manufacture
- Health and Safety
- Enterprise and marketing in the development of products

Iterative Design Process

Students should be aware of, and able to explain and demonstrate the skills, in a range of communication and presentation techniques for conveying proposals and intentions to clients, potential users and manufacturers. In Year 13, students will be required to undertake a small-scale design-and-make task and produce a final prototype based on a context and design brief developed by the student.

Designing and Making Principles

Students should be aware of, and able to explain, different approaches to user centred design. That in approaching a design challenge there is not a single process, but that good design always addresses many issues.

Co-curricular

We work alongside the Art department to showcase the GCSE and A Level final pieces in our annual Summer Exhibition showcase at the end of the academic year.

University and beyond

Many students who take A Level Design and Technology go on to study Architecture, Design, Product Design, Automotive Design, Engineering, Industrial Product Design at university, and Art Foundation courses. It is a fantastic career for those that enjoy expressing themselves through their hands, and genuinely enjoy solving problems and making the world a better and easier place to live for everyone, with minimal impact on the environment.

Drama & Theatre

Director of Drama: Ms F Eastaugh

Through engagement in Drama, students develop imagination and creativity. They explore the world of theatre and draw on their own experiences, as well as the work and ideas of other practitioners.

Students gain a working knowledge of theatre, considering texts from the point of view of a performer, director and designer. The specification focuses on the practical exploration of performance texts, including exploring them in light of the work of theatre practitioners. The performance texts that will be studied for the exam will require students to articulate how they would perform in certain roles, design for certain scenes and interpret a text for performance, putting practical work at the heart of the specification.

Students will analyse live theatre, seeing different styles and plays, on regular theatre visits. There are obvious links with History, English and Classics, and students are encouraged to transfer skills. The course is academic and rigorous. Our productions are challenging and standards are high. Whether a performer or a member of the backstage team, working alongside specialist staff, our students develop confidence, resilience and emotional intelligence.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

Component 1: Devising (40% of the total qualification)

1. Interpreting, creating and developing a devised piece.
2. A group performance/design realisation of the devised piece.
3. Analysing and evaluating the creative process and devised performance.

Students may complete this component either as a performer or as a designer.

Component 2: Text in Performance (20% of the total qualification)

1. A monologue or a duologue performance/design realisation from one key extract from one performance text.
2. A group performance/design realisation of one key extract from a different performance text.

Students may complete this component either as a performer or as a designer or combine these roles.

Component 3: Theatre Makers in Practice (40% of the total qualification)

There are three areas to be covered.

1. A live theatre evaluation.
2. Page to stage: realisation of a complete performance text.
3. Interpreting one complete performance text, in light of one practitioner for a contemporary audience.

Co-Curricular

We have a rich co-curricular programme of theatre visits, LAMDA, workshops and masterclasses with industry professionals. We perform a major Senior Production a year, as well as offering opportunities to lead clubs and direct younger students in productions. We also perform at the Edinburgh Festival every summer.

University and Beyond

Students who have taken A Level Drama and Theatre have gone on to study at top universities to study a wide range of courses. Many also go on to specialist drama schools, including RADA, The Brit School, The Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Economics

Head of Economics: Mrs S Murphy

Economics is a dynamic subject that helps us to understand how the world works... and how to make it better. Economics is the study of human behavior. It looks at how individuals, businesses and Governments make choices about the limited resources on our planet. We consider the impact of these choices on the world around us from a social, financial and cultural perspective.

Economics is at the heart of understanding the major social problems of our time, including inequality, poverty, health care, climate change, an ageing population, obesity and globalisation. Effective solutions to these problems require economic insight.

Current affairs form a large part of our discussions and students report a real satisfaction at feeling able to understand what they hear and read in the news. Alongside keeping up to date with the news students develop their independent learning and research skills by becoming experts in an industry and a developing economy of their choice.

Economics is a highly regarded academic field of study where students will also gain an appreciation of a wide range of other disciplines including politics, law, business, finance, geography, history, psychology and much more.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

Paper 1 (35%) - Markets and Business Behaviour

This paper focuses on how markets work and how they fail. Students will critically consider the value of Government intervention in markets. Students will consider the impact businesses/markets have on society.

Paper 2 (35%) - The national and global economy

This paper focuses on understanding the factors that influence growth and development of emerging and developed economies. This includes understanding the problems of global poverty and inequality and taking a critical view of government policies.

Paper 3 (30%) - Synoptic themes - covering macroeconomics and microeconomics

Co-curricular

To stretch students beyond the curriculum the department runs a popular Economics, Sociology and Politics ThinkTank. Students can also take part in the IFS student investor challenge and enter national economics essay competitions. We will also look out for opportunities to welcome a range of speakers.

Students enjoy an annual trip to the City to visit various institutions, including the Bank of England. Students will also attend a national Economics conference in Year 12 as well as revision support seminars before their examinations.

University and beyond

A number of our students go on to study economics either on its own or alongside other subjects. Economics is a highly regarded subject with employers attracted by students that are up to date with current affairs and able to think critically about the ever changing world around them.

Economics graduates are valued by a diverse range of industries including; the financial sector, technology companies, media and journalism, business management and consultancy, the government, accountancy firms, charities, NGO's and research institutes.

English Literature

Head of English: Ms S Elliott

Studying English Literature A Level encourages students to explore the world of literature whilst developing the skills they need to approach any text with sophisticated understanding and an enquiring mind. We support students in becoming confident, articulate and able to enjoy a critical appreciation of literature through studying contemporary and pre-1914 poetry, plays and novels in context.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

- Component 1: Drama examination (30%) – Shakespearean drama and one other drama text
- Component 2: Prose examination (20%) – a study of two texts, including one pre-1900 text, linked by genre or movement
- Component 3: Poetry examination (30%) – a selection of post-2000 poetry and a specified range of poetry from a literary period
- Component 4: Coursework (20%) – a study of two texts linked by genre, movement, author or period

William Shakespeare, Tennessee Williams, Geoffrey Chaucer and the post-2000 anthology Poems of the Decade are assessed for the drama and poetry examinations, respectively. Students explore prose by Mary Shelley and Margaret Atwood, considering the influence of science on literature across different time periods. Work by Alice Walker and Carol Ann Duffy is compared in a 3000 word essay on modern feminist literature for the coursework unit. In class, students take part in lively discussions and engage in creative writing to supplement and extend analytical work. Critical theory is an integral part of the course and provides opportunity for students to make wider political, social, and historical subject links. This is supported by a robust series of lectures at Sydenham High School's Literary Society, which Sixth Form English Literature students attend to broaden their understanding of the literary world.

Co-curricular

We frequently enjoy trips to the theatre, where A Level students are able to analyse productions of their examination texts. We organise study days for A Level students to access university style lectures to gain insight into the texts studied for their assessments.

Lit Soc

Our Literary Society is the department's flagship club and encourages students to discover a range of texts outside of the A Level syllabus in a less formal environment, encouraging both literary discussion and creative writing. Students participate in both GDST and national competitions. Students are also encouraged to try their hand at journalism through the Young Reporter Scheme. In addition, we are pleased to welcome visiting authors to school to run workshops and inspire students.

University and beyond

Studying English Literature develops a wide variety of skills, from close reading to arguing a range of interpretations. Analysing texts using critical approaches enables students to discuss universal themes, intricate plots and complex characters. English Literature courses at A Level and university appeal to students who are intrigued by the ways in which language is used to communicate, how language has evolved and how language is influenced by society. English acts as the basis for a whole spectrum of career options where communication and creativity is vital. Publishing and journalism, media and advertising, as well as law and business are just some of the possibilities a degree in English Literature opens up.

French

Head of Modern Languages: Mrs H Parker

Being able to converse in a foreign language is a valuable asset; it opens up international study and work opportunities, signals a well-educated person and makes life, including holidays, very enjoyable too. The A Level course aims to develop high level practical language skills as well as knowledge and understanding of French culture. Studying a language also fosters a range of transferable skills such as communication skills, critical thinking, resourcefulness and creativity, as well as linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility. At A Level, students will improve their language skills, develop their understanding of French culture, and study at least one book and either a second book or a film. They will also complete an independent research project for which they will choose an aspect of France or French culture which interests them. By the end of the A Level course, students will be able to have a conversation and write about a range of topics. Throughout the Sixth Form they will have a weekly lesson with the French Language Assistant to develop their speaking skills.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

- Themes relating to French society and culture, including social and political topics and intellectual and artistic culture
- Either two set texts or one book and one film, enabling students to give an analytical appreciation of the plot, themes and characters as well as technical or stylistic features
- Advanced language skills, enabling them to respond to authentic written and spoken texts, translate and communicate their views in speaking and writing
- Independent research project relating to France or French-speaking countries

The final examinations will include listening and reading comprehensions, translation into and out of French, essays in French about the book(s) and film studied and a speaking test.

Co-curricular

We look for opportunities to take students to exhibitions, plays and films to broaden their knowledge of French culture. Competitions and debates with other schools make the languages come to life to an even greater extent. We also encourage students to find out about other possibilities. Film Club in school also gives a chance to see foreign films. Students are encouraged to arrange visits to France and are given details of work experience possibilities.

University and beyond

A number of our students go on to study a language at university, either on its own or in combination with another language or a different subject. Combinations can include a language and business, a language and history, a language and law and many more. Language degree courses also vary widely from traditional courses involving serious study of literature to courses which are more language-based. The evidence is that employers value graduates with language skills and employment rates among recent Language graduates are high. Sydenham High students are well prepared in the Sixth Form to take on the challenge of a degree course, and we offer additional preparation sessions for those interested in applying to Oxford or Cambridge.

Geography

Head of Geography: Mrs C Buckler

A Level Geography provides a valuable and comprehensive insight into the dynamic nature of our world and complex interactions between the physical and human environment. It promotes both independence and collaboration. Students will study a range of contemporary issues and ideas, alongside the key theories and concepts that will equip them to understand and evaluate such issues.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

Paper 1 - Physical Geography

- Tectonic Processes and Hazards
- The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity
- The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security
- Landscape Systems, Processes and Change: Glaciated Landscapes and Change
- Written examination (30% of the qualification)

Paper 2 - Human Geography

- Globalisation
- Shaping Places: Diverse Places
- Superpowers
- Global Development and Connections: Health, Human Rights and Intervention
- Written examination (30% of the qualification)

Paper 3 - Synoptic Themes

- Players
- Attitudes and actions
- Futures and uncertainties
- Written examination (20% of qualification)

Paper 4 - Independent Investigation

- 3000-4000 words
- Student defined question or issue
- To incorporate fieldwork and secondary data
- Can be based on any element of the course
- Non-examination (20% of the qualification)

Co-curricular

There is a residential field trip in year 12, where there is the opportunity to collect data for the independent investigation as well as learn relevant data collection and analysis techniques. There are opportunities to attend lectures and day trips.

University and beyond

Choosing Geography prepares you for the world of work and helps to develop many transferable skills. Geographers go on to be successful in a wide range of fields, both directly (meteorology, environmental management) and indirectly (charity sector, finance, project management, politics) linked to the subject. Employers recognise that geographers master a range of skills and are excellent at applying these skills in diverse contexts. Research has shown that students who have studied Geography at university are some of the most employable graduates in the job market.

German

Head of Modern Languages: Mrs H Parker

Being able to converse in a foreign language is a valuable asset; it opens up international study and work opportunities, signals a well-educated person and makes life, including holidays, very enjoyable too. The A Level course aims to develop high level practical language skills as well as knowledge and understanding of German culture. Studying a language also fosters a range of transferable skills such as communication skills, critical thinking, resourcefulness and creativity, as well as linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility. At A Level, students will improve their language skills, develop their understanding of life in Germany, and study at least one book and either a second book or a film. They will also complete an independent research project for which they will choose an aspect of Germany or German culture which interests them. By the end of the A Level course, students will be able to have a conversation and write about a range of topics.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

- Themes relating to German society and culture, including social and political topics and intellectual and artistic culture
- Either two set texts or one book and one film, enabling students to give an analytical appreciation of the plot, themes and characters as well as technical or stylistic features
- Advanced language skills, enabling them to respond to authentic written and spoken texts, translate and communicate their views in speaking and writing
- Independent research project relating to Germany or German-speaking countries

The final examinations will include listening and reading comprehensions, translation into and out of German, essays in German about the book(s) and film studied and a speaking test.

Co-curricular

We look for opportunities to take students to exhibitions, plays and films to broaden their knowledge of German culture. Competitions and debates with other schools make the languages come to life to an even greater extent. We also encourage students to find out about other possibilities, such as translation and poetry competitions, and events at the Goethe Institut. Film Club in school also provides a chance to see foreign films. Students are encouraged to arrange visits to Germany and are given details of work experience possibilities.

University and beyond

A number of our students go on to study a language at university, either on its own or in combination with another language or a different subject. Combinations can include a language and business, a language and history, a language and law and many more. Language degree courses also vary widely from traditional courses involving serious study of literature to courses which are more language-based. The evidence is that employers value graduates with language skills, and employment rates among recent languages graduates are high. German is particularly sought after by employers: Germany has the highest number of native speakers of all languages in Europe and, as Germany is Britain's number one trading partner in Europe, speakers of English and German are in high demand by firms. The number of German specialists in the UK is declining, so proficiency in German will make you stand out.

History

Head of History: Dr S Wallace

The study of History teaches students to be concerned with differences of historical opinion, to critically analyse human behaviour, to be able to detect bias and falsehood and to present reasoned arguments.

By teaching students to have an interest in the past, we encourage them to be creative, independent thinkers and be prepared to challenge accepted ideas – skills which are essential in the modern world.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

In Search of the American Dream: the USA
c.1917-96

Students explore themes in modern American history which include: the changing role of the President, the quest for Civil Rights and sexual equality, the impact of popular culture and the changing quality of life.

Examination - 30% of overall grade

India, c.1914-48: the Road to Independence
Students study in depth the impact of both the First and Second World War on India as a British colony, the development of nationalism and the role of Mohandas Gandhi in India gaining independence in 1947.

Examination - 20% of overall grade

Rebellion and Disorder under the Tudors:
1485-1603

In this unit students study the various rebellions during the Tudor period and the way in which these challenges were met. The unit enables the students to explore the way in which, despite a shaky start, the Tudors were able to establish their dynasty as one of the most powerful England has ever seen.

Examination - 30% of overall grade

Historical Enquiry

This is an internally-assessed personal study which will be based on an area of controversy within the America unit: historians' views of the effectiveness of Roosevelt's New Deal or Johnson's Great Society.

Coursework - 20% of overall grade.

Co-curricular

The History Department provides the Sixth Form with opportunities to broaden their historical understanding and hone their leadership skills:

- Biannual trip to Washington or India which complements both the History and Government and Politics year 12 curriculum.
- Biannual trip to Berlin which complements the History and RS curriculum.
- Students in the Sixth Form have the opportunity to become History prefects and help organise and run Black History Month at Sydenham High School.

University and beyond

Studying History beyond A Level is a popular choice for our students. Employers and universities appreciate the academic rigour and the variety of transferable skills provided through the study of History. Historical skills provide a great basis for many careers but especially careers in law, teaching, journalism and politics.

History of Art

Head of History of Art: Dr S Wallace

The study of the History Art develops students' understanding of the relationship between society and art. Students will acquire the core skills of visual literacy and understanding which are essential in today's visual world.

There is a global scope in the syllabus which is appropriate for the modern world. History of Art develops the skills and understanding to enjoy a lifetime of access to, and appreciation of, the culture, heritage and ideas of the world around us.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

Visual Analysis and Themes

Students focus on analysis of identity in art and architecture, for example in the work of Yinka Shonibare; and war in art and architecture.

Examination – 50% of overall grade

Periods

Students study two time periods: the Renaissance in Italy (1420-1520) and the British and French Avant-Garde (1848-99). For each time period students must consider the impact of different styles, materials and techniques as well as exploring and evaluating the impact of regional historical events.

Examination – 50% of overall grade

Co-curricular

There are opportunities to visit galleries in London including the Dulwich Picture Gallery, Tate Britain and the National Gallery amongst others.

University and beyond

History of Art is an amazing bridge between the study of history, Philosophy, Art, Religious Studies, Classics and English. The skill of visual analysis is key to careers in the ever-expanding creative industries.

Italian

Head of Modern Languages: Mrs H Parker

Being able to converse in a foreign language is a valuable asset; it opens up international study and work opportunities, signals a well-educated person and makes life, including holidays, very enjoyable too. Studying a language also fosters a range of transferable skills such as communication skills, critical thinking, resourcefulness and creativity, as well as linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility. The A Level course aims to develop high level practical language skills as well as knowledge and understanding of Italian culture.

At A Level, students will improve their language skills, develop their understanding of life in Italy, and study at least one book and a film. They will also complete independent research for which they will choose an aspect of Italy or Italian culture, which interests them. By the end of the A Level course, students will be able to speak fluently and write a critical analysis of a film or a book.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

- Themes relating to Italian society and culture, including social and political topics and intellectual and artistic culture
- Either two set texts or one book and one film, enabling students to give an analytical appreciation of the plot, themes and characters as well as technical or stylistic features
- Advanced language skills, enabling them to respond to authentic written and spoken texts, translate and communicate their views in speaking and writing
- Independent research project relating to Italy or Italian-speaking countries

The final examinations will include listening and reading comprehension, translation into and out of Italian, essays in Italian about the book(s) and film studied and a speaking test.

Co-curricular

We look for opportunities to take students to exhibitions, plays and films to broaden their knowledge of Italian culture. Competitions and debates with other schools make the languages come to life to an even greater extent. We also encourage students to find out about other possibilities, such as translation and poetry competitions, and events at the Istituto Italiano. Film Club in school also gives a chance to see foreign films. Students are encouraged to arrange visits to Italy and are given details of work experience possibilities.

University and beyond

A number of our students go on to study a language at university, either on its own or in combination with another language or a different subject. Combinations can include a language and business, a language and history, a language and law and many more. Language degree courses also vary widely from traditional courses involving serious study of literature to courses which are more language-based. The evidence is that employers value graduates with language skills, and employment rates among recent Language graduates are high. If you are interested in Art, Music or History of Art, Italian makes an ideal accompanying subject either at A Level or at university.

Latin

Head of Classics: Mrs M Frankland

We study the classical past to understand the origins of western civilisation and to engage with the people who appear both so familiar and so alien. At A Level, students develop their knowledge of the Latin language further and engage with works by influential Roman authors. The texts chosen give students the opportunity to explore and debate key cultural topics that are still relevant today. Indeed, Tacitus and Cicero write, in very different styles, about the impact on the populace of corruption charges within the political sphere; Ovid writes about the physical and mental effects of unrequited love, and in so doing subverts the genre of love elegy; while Virgil raises the question of what it is to be a dutiful father, husband and son.

Course content

Examination board: OCR

Prose (unseen) Comprehension:

Comprehension, translation and questions on syntax and accidence will be taken from Pliny's Letters.

17% of total A Level

Written paper ~ 50 marks ~ 1 hour 15 minute paper

Prose Literature:

Linguistic and literary analysis of two Latin Literature set prose texts.

25% of total A Level

Written paper ~ 75 marks ~ 2 hour paper

Verse (unseen) Translation:

Analysis of linguistic structures and accurate translation of unseen material into English. The unseen verse passage for translation and scansion will be taken from Ovid.

33% of total A Level

Written paper ~ 100 marks ~ 1 hour 45 minute paper

Verse Literature:

Linguistic and literary analysis of two Latin Literature verse set texts.

25% of total A Level

Written paper ~ 75 marks ~ 2 hour paper

Co-curricular

The Classics Department runs a variety of trips for the Sixth Form throughout the year to enhance the students' experience of the classics curriculum at A Level:

- Study Day with Cambridge University to explore the university and analyse Latin Literature with world experts.
- GDST Classics conferences.
- Theatre trip(s) to broaden appreciation of the impact of classical literature today.
- Trip abroad every other year. Past trips have included the Bay of Naples and Sicily.

University and beyond

Choosing Latin prepares students for the world of business, law or medicine by sharpening their ability to read and analyse information, by improving the clarity and persuasiveness of speech and writing, and by making students interesting, flexible, cultured people.

If you are interested in studying Greek please speak to Mrs Frankland.

Maths & Further Maths

Head of Maths: Mrs J Black

Mathematics at A level offers students a chance to get to grips with ideas familiar from their GCSE course, and explore them in a more elegant and rich way. Students will also study areas of Mathematics that are completely new to them, and grapple with mathematical ideas that they have not looked at before.

This prepares students very well for any degree that has mathematical content, but the logical thinking and reasoning skills practised here helps students to solve challenging problems and encourages systematic thinking – all of which means it is excellent preparation for virtually any degree.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

- Pure Maths 1: Proof, Algebra and functions; coordinate geometry in the (x, y) plane; sequences and series; differentiation; integration; trigonometry; exponentials and logarithms; vectors.
- Pure Maths 2: Further proof; further algebra and functions; advanced trigonometry; numerical methods; coordinate geometry in the (x, y) plane; sequences and series; further calculus; numerical methods; vectors.
- Mechanics and Statistics: Sampling; presentation and interpretation of data; probability; distributions; hypothesis testing; kinematics; forces and Newton's Laws; moments.

There are 3 examinations at the end of Year 13; one for each of the three sections. Each examination assesses one third of the course and calculators are allowed in all.

Co-curricular

The Maths Department runs a variety of trips for the Sixth Form to enhance the students' experience of the maths curriculum at A Level. In the past we have run trips to the theatre, to lectures, courses and Team Challenge competitions, and to art exhibitions and building sites where interesting mathematics has been used in practice. We also have a Problem Solving Club which is very popular with A Level students.

University and beyond

Maths A Level is a highly regarded qualification in many varied fields including medicine, engineering, sciences, computing, the social sciences and economics. The mathematical techniques studied at A Level will be used in such courses; students' work in the Sixth Form will be used in the degree courses. Maths graduates are in great demand for their ability to think with clarity, and logic and their reasoning when solving problems.

Further Maths

The Further Maths course is a distinct qualification that both broadens and deepens the Maths covered in A Level Maths. For someone who enjoys Maths, it provides a challenge and a chance to explore new and more sophisticated mathematical concepts. It is a very highly regarded qualification that enables students to distinguish themselves as talented mathematicians in applications for university and employment. Students who opt for Further Maths must have gained a minimum of a grade 8 (A) at GCSE and must be studying Maths A Level.

Music

Director of Music: Mrs J Phillips

We hear music every day of our lives and the inner instinct to respond to music is almost universal. The opportunity to study music in greater detail opens an appreciation that catapults a level of accessibility and understanding on to a different plane. Music allows the expression of personality and emotions through the performance of music and the composition of music.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

Performance: 30% - 60 marks

Students must perform one or more pieces in a public performance for a minimum of 8 minutes. Performance can be solo, ensemble, improvising or realising music through music technology; or indeed a combination. The recital can include multiple pieces of music.

Composition: 30% - 60 marks

Students must compose one piece of music either to be composed in response to a set brief from the exam board, or a 'free' composition. This composition is worth 40 marks.

The second composition must be in response to a list of briefs exploring compositional techniques, this composition must be at least one minute in length unless otherwise specified. This composition is worth 20 marks.

Total time across both compositions must be 6 minutes minimum.

Appraising: 40% 100 marks

Students must sit a 2 hour exam exploring their in depth knowledge of musical elements, contexts and language. Application of knowledge through six areas of study, each with three set works:

- Vocal Music
- Instrumental Music

- Music for Film
- Popular Music and Jazz
- Fusions
- New Directions

Each student has a personal copy of the exam listening material in order to complete the examination.

The examination includes, set works, short rhythmic and melodic dictation, comparison of a set work to an unfamiliar piece of music and a second essay question relating to the evaluation of one of the set works.

Co-curricular

The music department organises a wide variety of trips throughout the year inclusive of performance opportunities both nationally and internationally. There are a number of ensembles for students to immerse themselves in, orchestra, chamber choir, jazz band, soul band, string ensemble, guitar club and many more. There is an impressive annual performance calendar and a musical production every other year.

University and beyond

Music A Level broadens creative and expressive minds in a way that no other qualification can. It brings listening, performance and composition to life, engaging analytical investigation, personal expression and creative discovery. The music industry is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world and encompasses a vast range of activities in the UK. Colleges, universities and conservatoires serve a wide pool of students who learn skills in performance, composition, technology, recording, production, music management and administration, the academic study of music, analysis and music therapy to name a few. Music A Level is a well respected qualification in all professional sectors and evidences breadth of experience, skills and knowledge when coupled with subjects outside of the creative and expressive arts.

Philosophy

Head of Philosophy, Religion and Ethics:
Mrs R Vaughan

Philosophy (meaning 'love of wisdom' in Greek) investigates critically, rationally and systematically, the assumptions which most of us make about such things as 'knowledge', 'truth' and 'goodness'.

A good philosopher is someone who doesn't believe anything without a good reason and who is not prepared to automatically accept something as true or right just because it is widely accepted. It is a subject chosen by students who want the chance to develop a clear, logical mind that can bring light to any discussion. It is an activity as much as it is an academic discipline, and demands precision and clarity of thought.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

Epistemology (the study of knowledge)

Moral Philosophy

Paper 1 - 50%

Written Examination 3 Hrs - 100 Marks

Metaphysics of God

Metaphysics of Mind

Paper 2 - 50%

Written Examination 3 Hrs - 100 Marks

Co-curricular

We provide opportunities for students to attend relevant subject conferences in London during their study.

University and beyond

Studying Philosophy is first and foremost about challenging your own beliefs about the world. However, studying Philosophy at university can have many advantages and lead to a whole range of careers or professions in later life.

Philosophy as a discipline helps to develop:

- Critical thinking
- Evaluation and analysis of complex ideas
- Problem solving
- Logical thinking and expression
- The ability to tease out implications from complex writing
- An enquiring mind and a desire to look beneath the surface

Careers or professions that could be pursued with a Philosophy degree include:

- Schools, colleges and universities - for teaching and research positions.
- Government agencies, advisory bodies and Think Tanks.
- Journalism and other creative industries such as advertising
- Finance, business and technology
- Medicine
- Law

Physics

Head of Physics: Miss A Inchenko

Have you ever wondered . . .

- Why the universe behaves the way it does?
- How ultrasound can create a picture?
- What are CERN looking for?

Physics A Level is one of the most universally accepted qualifications for progression to university. The course content covers the basis of how things work, from the constituent parts of atoms out to the extent of the universe. Students will integrate the concepts studied with a range of practical experiments throughout each topic giving the course both an academic and practical focus. Students will learn to apply their knowledge of the key concepts to solve problems in a range of different contexts and applications. Physics is one of the top three A Levels in terms of eligibility for degree entry.

Course content

Examination board: OCR

Module 1 Development of practical skills in Physics

Practical skills are assessed in a written examination as well as the practical endorsement

Module 2 Foundations of Physics

Physical quantities and units, making measurements and analysing data, nature of quantities

Module 3 Forces and motion

Motion, forces in action, work, energy and power, materials, momentum

Module 4 Electrons, waves and photons

Charge and current, energy, power and resistance, electrical circuits, waves, quantum physics

Module 5 Newtonian world and astrophysics

Thermal physics, circular motion, oscillations, gravitational fields, astrophysics and cosmology

Module 6 Particles and medical physics

Capacitors, electric fields, electromagnetism, nuclear and particle physics, medical imaging

There are three written examination papers.

There is a separate Practical Endorsement (non examination assessment) which takes place during practical lessons.

Co-curricular

Students have the opportunity to attend a variety of lectures and conferences at higher education establishments including Gresham College, UCL and Imperial College. There are many opportunities to visit exhibitions, workshops as well as industry and scientific laboratories where students are encouraged to network with scientists and engineers.

University and beyond

This A Level is essential for access to Physics and Engineering courses. It is highly regarded for other subjects such as Earth Science, Chemistry, Architecture, Materials Science, Medicine, Computer Science, Law and Economics because of the thinking skills and problem solving involved.

Physical Education

Director of Sport: Miss J Matthews

Sport and physical activity play a huge part in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. We hope all students develop a love of sport and exercise as well as a full appreciation of all the physical, mental and social benefits they bring. Sport is a huge part of university life and we encourage students to join the various clubs and teams at university once they leave school.

At A level, students will approach sport from many different angles such as the reason we feel nervous before a race or performance, the best way to throw a discus for maximum distance as well as the reason sport is now more commercial through the release of programmes such as 'Drive to Survive' which go behind the scenes of sport, making athletes household names which transcend sport.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

The course consists of both examination and non-examined assessment. The examination papers will be made up of a variety of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

Paper 1 - 105 marks (2 hours) - 35% of final grade

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

Paper 2 - 105 marks (2 hours) - 35% of final grade

- Exercise physiology and biomechanics
- Sport psychology
- Sport and society and technology in sport

Non-examined assessment - 30% of final grade

- Practical performance in one activity (15%)
- Verbal or written assessment of performance (15%)

Co-curricular

We encourage Sixth Form students to maintain their attendance at extra-curricular activities and organise fixtures in a variety of activities throughout the year. This enables them to maintain their fitness and skill levels and provides much needed stress relief and relaxation during these busy examination years. Sixth Form students are also encouraged to run extra-curricular clubs for younger students so they can develop their leadership and communication skills further. This coupled with a commitment to PE clubs and a history of representing the school in sport and physical activity can strengthen university and job applications for Sixth Form students.

University and beyond

With the skills, knowledge and confidence the students acquire in Physical Education along with their excellent qualifications, there are many opportunities for a career in the sporting world. There is an array of university courses related to sport; Sport and Exercise Science; Sports Coaching; Sport Management; Sport Psychology; Sports Technology; Sports Rehabilitation; Sport Nutrition; Sport Marketing; Performing Arts and Physiotherapy.

Politics

Head of Politics: Mrs J Ellison

Politics is about what kind of society we wish to live in. Politics is a fast moving contemporary subject and students are expected to keep up to date with current affairs. Politics is taught in a fun and engaging way. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions and debates and give presentations. Students develop their independent learning and research skills which is excellent preparation for university.

The department uses a range of teaching strategies to enable all students to reach their potential. The department has a wide range of teaching materials at its disposal, including several online resources. We seek to promote 'anytime, anywhere learning'. For example we use a website called Pre Chewed Politics which gives students the opportunity to widen their knowledge and understanding through the use of mini video clips and more in depth articles and news reviews.

Course content

Examination board: Edexcel

Unit 1: UK Politics

This unit focuses on democracy and participation, political parties, electoral systems, voting behaviour and the media

Unit 2: UK Government

This unit focuses on the constitution, parliament, Prime Minister and executive and relationships between the branches

Unit 3: Comparative Politics

This unit focuses on the US Constitution and federalism, US Congress, US presidency, US Supreme Court and civil rights, democracy and participation, and comparative theories

This course is examined through three written examinations.

Co-curricular

Students take part in a wide range of visits and conferences. Students have the opportunity to visit the Houses of Parliament, take part in seminars with other schools and they are also able to attend a range of conferences to extend their political understanding. Students also have the opportunity to partake in the biannual History trip.

The department also runs a popular Politics, Sociology and Economics ThinkTank. Open to all years, the society explores societal topics through debate and discussion.

University and beyond

A number of students have gone on to study Politics, International Relations and Social Policy at a variety of different universities such as Edinburgh, Warwick, Sheffield, Birmingham, Reading and Swansea. Politics is a valued subject by employers as independent critical thinking is essential in many career fields such as law, marketing, media, journalism and business and enterprise.

Psychology

Head of Psychology: Mr M Angel

Psychology is the scientific study of people: how they think, how they act, react and interact. Psychology is concerned with all aspects of behaviour and the thoughts, feelings and motivations behind it. Psychologists and psychological research have a big impact on all aspects of public life, particularly in areas such as education, health, the economy, industry, the media and government.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

- Social influence
- Memory
- Attachment
- Psychopathology
- Approaches in Psychology
- Biopsychology
- Research methods
- Issues and debates in psychology
- Relationships
- Schizophrenia
- Aggression

Students will be assessed by 3 written examinations.

Co-curricular

Students have the opportunity to attend Psychology conferences and lectures. They have attended joint Sydenham High and Goldsmiths University Psychology conferences hosted every other year either at school or at Goldsmiths University. Students have also had the chance to attend specialist lectures on Forensic Psychology and a guest lecture from Elizabeth Loftus, world renowned academic specialist in Eyewitness Testimony and False Memory Syndrome. Year 12 students also attended the Us and Them Symposium at Dulwich College. In addition speakers come into school, the most recent being Mark Hancock from the Wave Project.

University and beyond

Interest in studying Psychology has grown enormously in recent years. Not only is Psychology a fascinating subject to study, but it also prepares graduates for a very wide range of careers. Some of these have obvious connections with Psychology but Psychology also provides a useful training for a much wider range of career options. These include: market research; social work; teaching; nursing; advertising; sales; media and broadcasting; personnel management and even the Police and the Armed Forces.

Religious Studies

Head of Philosophy, Religion and Ethics:

Mrs R Vaughan

It is essential for everyone to understand what it means to be religious and particularly how beliefs affect a person's lifestyle. Without this kind of understanding, a person cannot function effectively in a world where religious ideas underpin and influence the lives of so many through culture and politics. In fact, faith and belief in a whole range of ideas, religious and non-religious, permeate everyone's life and it is vitally important that our students are given the opportunity to become skilled at dealing effectively and rationally with this area of life. We subscribe to the Socratic view that the unexamined life is not worth living and aim to ensure that, by the end of their course in Religious Studies, all our students are able to take control of their own spiritual and moral development and are fully-equipped to continue their unique journey towards a good life.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

Philosophy of Religion and Ethics

This will include:

Section A: Philosophy of Religion

- Arguments for the existence of God
- Evil and suffering
- Religious experience
- Religious language
- Miracles
- Self and life after death.

Section B: Ethics and Religion

- Ethical theories
- Issues of human life and death
- Issues of animal life and death
- Introduction to meta ethics
- Free will and moral responsibility
- Conscience
- Bentham and Kant.

Paper 1 - 50%

Written Examination 3 Hrs - 100 Marks

Study of Religion and Dialogues

This will include:

Section A: Study of Religion – for each faith

option (2A–2E) the following topics are covered:

- Sources of wisdom and authority
- God/gods/ultimate reality
- Self, death and the afterlife
- Good conduct and key moral principles
- Expression of religious identity
- Religion, gender and sexuality
- Religion and science
- Religion and secularisation
- Religion and religious pluralism.

Section B: The dialogue between Philosophy

of Religion and Religion. How religion is influenced by, and has an influence on philosophy of religion in relation to the issues studied.

Section C: The dialogue between Ethical Studies

and Religion. How religion is influenced by, and has an influence on ethical studies in relation to the issues studied.

Paper 2 - 50%

Written Examination 3 Hrs - 100 Marks

Co-curricular

We provide opportunities for students to attend relevant subject conferences in London during their study.

University and beyond

Religious Studies graduates work in a variety of roles. Typical employers include schools, colleges and universities - for teaching and research positions, and public and private sector organisations such as the National Health Service, financial and legal firms and government agencies for administration, financial and general management positions.

Sociology

Head of Sociology: Mrs J Ellison

Sociology is a popular and thriving A Level. If you are fascinated by the world around you then Sociology is for you. Sociology is the systematic study of human relations and society with a focus on areas such as power, identity, culture and gender. It is an exciting subject that investigates the effect that society has on individuals and groups and in turn how they too shape and mould society. The subject engages in the world around us and looks at how people living in society interact with each other on a daily basis. It equips students to look at life in an empowered way and deals with facts and issues that are crucial to the lives of all of us. Sociology allows students to draw on their own experiences in attempting to understand the features of human life in a modern and rapidly changing society. Sociology is therefore a dynamic and contemporary subject which will challenge students' intellect and force them to reconsider their views. Sociology is taught through a variety of methods, including, lectures, seminars, student presentation, guest speakers, trips and the media. The course will develop students' awareness of society and culture and their place in it together with an understanding of key Sociological theory.

Course content

Examination board: OCR

Unit 1:

A) Socialisation, Culture and Identity

B) Youth Culture

Examination: 1hr 30 mins (30% of overall grade)

Unit 2:

A) Sociological Research Methods

B) Understanding Social Inequalities

Examination: 2hr 15mins (35% of overall grade)

Unit 3:

A) Globalisation and the Digital World

B) Crime and deviance

Examination: 2hr 15 mins (35% of overall grade)

Co-curricular

Sociology is a subject that is all around us in the every day. Students are therefore encouraged to read newspapers and magazines and the Sociology Review to develop their awareness of current affairs.

Sociology trips are an integral part of the A Level and we have conducted trips to The Crime Museum, taken part in a Karl Marx walking Tour of London and attended valuable A Level academic conferences.

The department also runs a popular Sociology, Economics & Politics ThinkTank. Open to all years, the society explores societal topics through debate and discussion. We also have Hot Topics Club to provide discussion and debate for all year groups.

University and beyond

Sociology is a recognised passport for university entrance and provides a range of indispensable skills in an increasingly changing and competitive market. Sociology trains students to answer the 'what', 'how' and 'why' questions on human societies giving them a significant edge in the job market and providing a strong intellectual background for students considering careers in the professions or business.

The skills learnt in Sociology are marketable and having it on your CV shows that you understand the world around you. The subject will certainly develop your skills of synthesis, reflexivity, evaluation, communication, analysis and empathy. Sociology will enrich you personally whatever career aspirations and is good preparation for journalism, business, education, public relations and the health and welfare service. Many of our students have gone on to read Sociology at university level or embark on a wide variety of degrees.

Spanish

Head of Modern Languages: Mrs H Parker

Our aim is to provide students with not only linguistic proficiency but also with an understanding of the Hispanic culture through exposure to art, literature, history and current affairs; in an environment, where communication, critical thinking, creativity and interaction are promoted. A Level students will study one film in Year 12 and one book in Year 13. They will also complete an independent research project for which they will choose an aspect of Spanish or Hispanic culture which interests them. By the end of the course, students will master the sophisticated linguistic skills which will allow them to understand oral and written Spanish to a high standard, including translating, interpreting, writing and speaking. Throughout the Sixth Form they will have a weekly lesson with the Spanish Language Assistant to develop their speaking skills.

Course content

Examination board: AQA

- Different aspects of Hispanic society and culture
- One book and one film, enabling them to give an analytical appreciation of the plot, themes and characters as well as technical or stylistic features
- Advanced language skills, enabling them to respond to authentic written and spoken texts, translate and communicate their views in speaking and writing
- Independent research project relating to Spain or Hispanic -speaking countries

The final examinations will include listening and reading comprehensions, translation into and out of Spanish, essays in Spanish about the book and film studied and a speaking test.

Co-curricular

We look for opportunities to take students to seminars, exhibitions, plays and films to broaden their knowledge of Hispanic culture. Sixth Form students attend a workshop on Almodóvar to help prepare them with studying his film, *Volver*, as part of the course. We organise a cultural trip to Barcelona that also brings the language alive and gives students a better insight into Spanish and Catalan society and culture. Students attend language lessons and explore the gothic architecture, as well as visiting some of the many art galleries.

University and beyond

Proficiency in languages improves your academic skills and enhances your career opportunities, both at home and abroad. Spanish is often taken as part of a joint honours degree, in combination either with another language or with other subjects ranging from English Literature to Maths and combining very well with subjects such as Law, Tourism, Business Studies, Accountancy or Marketing. Spanish is the most sought-after foreign language in the world of business and international trade in general, not only given the importance of the Latin American market but also for its growing presence in the USA.

"We thoroughly appreciated the opportunity to study History of Art as an A Level subject within a supportive and small class environment. The excellent teaching and passion of our teachers enthused our love of History of Art, which led to our desire to study the subject further at university and our applications for Cambridge."

– Maddie and Astrid, Class of 2022



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