Aylesbury High School

A- LEVEL
SUBJECT BOOKLET

ENTRY 2027

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#AHSWalksTall



Art and Design

Biology

Business

Chemistry

Computer Science

Drama

Economics

English Language

English Literature

Geography

History

Maths & Further Maths

Modern Languages

Music

Physics

Politics

Psychology

Religious Studies

Sociology

A LEVEL CHOICES

Destinations for AHS students who studied this subject are on display outside the subject classrooms.

AHS students can use Unifrog to explore how this subject might be used in life after A Levels.

Why study Art and Design?

The main purpose of any course in Art and Design is to develop your ability to appreciate the visual world, and respond in a personal and creative way. We want to encourage self-expression and creativity and build confidence as well as a sense of individual identity. The creative industries are now Britain's greatest export; studying Art and Design can help with developing skills and ways of working that will benefit you in the future in whatever career you choose. Employers value people who can think creatively and innovatively; studying Art facilitates this as well as improving your time management skills. Studying the arts teaches determination and resilience - qualities useful to any career. The Art Department is committed to providing a diverse, rigorous and exciting course which will provide a rewarding and exciting element to your A Level choices.



The A Level is made up of 2 units over 2 years:
Coursework 60%
Externally Set Assignment 40%

Art and Design

You will develop:

- A working knowledge of materials, practices and technology within art
- The skills to interpret and convey your ideas and feelings using art and design
- Your imaginative and creative skills and your ability to be experimental, analytical and critical, developing your creative and critical thinking
- The knowledge and understanding of the place of art and design in history and in contemporary society.

We run a number of visits to galleries in London and a residential visit abroad. We have been to Paris, Amsterdam and recently Barcelona to develop critical and creative thinking. We have a number of visiting artists developing creative workshops and work with the community on projects such as the Waddesdon Christmas trail. This course is suitable for students who:

- wish to undertake further studies in art or design such as a Foundation Diploma, BTEC Diploma and Undergraduate Degree.
- will study subjects or take up careers for which an art background is relevant (these might include Architecture, Advertising, Jewellery, Product Design / Design Engineering, Film, Fashion Marketing/Promotion, Fine Art, Illustrator, Textiles, Fashion, Theatre Design, Costume Design, Special Effects, Journalism, Fashion Journalism, Retail Management, Interior Design, Lighting, Fashion Buying, Visual Merchandising, Fashion Forecasting)
- have an interest in and aptitude for the subject, but who do not intend to take the subject beyond A Level (this course will extend the breadth of the curriculum for these students and develop skills that will compliment other subjects)



Art and Design

Entry Requirements

The individual creative developments which appear at GCSE form the basis for A Level study. It is therefore essential that a potential A Level Art student should have a genuine interest in the subject, and have achieved at least a grade 6 for Art or Textiles GCSE. If you have an aptitude for the subject, if you are creative and are prepared to work hard at developing your abilities, you will have the skills to succeed. Above all, you should have an interest in creating and understanding art and want to develop that interest through a range of art and design disciplines showing expressive, individual and risk taking work.

Special features of the course

The opportunity for you to develop your own particular strength, style and way of working is what makes this course unique. In Year 12 you have the opportunity to explore, expand and consolidate your technical skills and grasp of the assessment objectives by using the whole of the first year as an exploratory and investigative year, learning and honing skills, and gradually developing a sense of your own strengths in the subject. In Year 13 you are able to use the time to fully consolidate your expertise and hone in on selected skills and disciplines, taking risks and developing your work on your area of focus for the Contextual Study and produce work relating to that theme.

How is the course organised?

Autumn Term Year 12: eg Objects, People and Place - you will start A Level with a foundation project working initially on loose sheets developing your skills.

Spring Term Year 12: You will start your first self-directed component. This could be further developed from your first project or a new one. You could use a past exam theme to generate your ideas.

Summer Term Year 12 and Autumn Term Year 13: Continuation of the personal investigation and continued piece of writing

Spring Term Year 13: ESA set by the exam board.

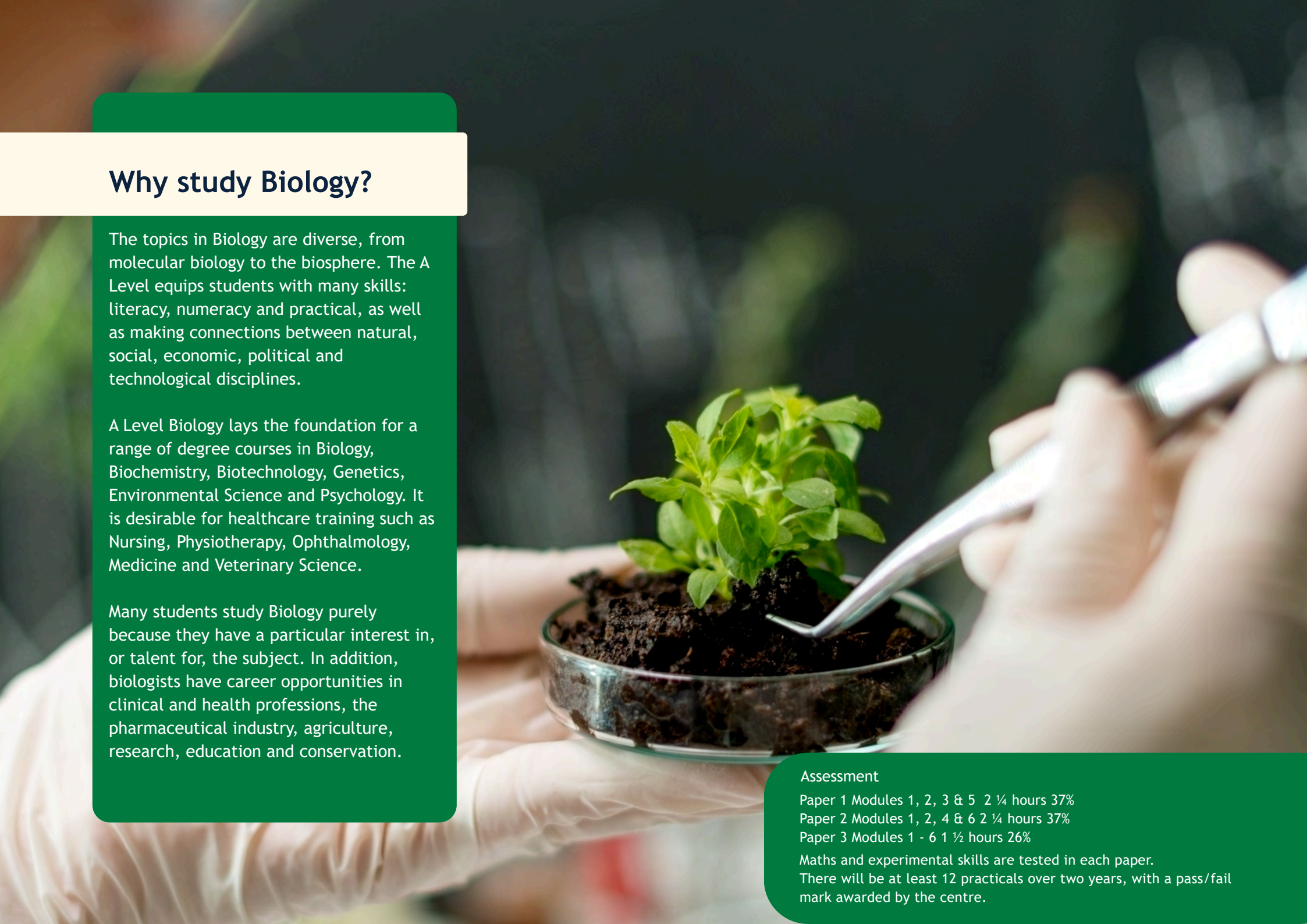


Why study Biology?

The topics in Biology are diverse, from molecular biology to the biosphere. The A Level equips students with many skills: literacy, numeracy and practical, as well as making connections between natural, social, economic, political and technological disciplines.

A Level Biology lays the foundation for a range of degree courses in Biology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Genetics, Environmental Science and Psychology. It is desirable for healthcare training such as Nursing, Physiotherapy, Ophthalmology, Medicine and Veterinary Science.

Many students study Biology purely because they have a particular interest in, or talent for, the subject. In addition, biologists have career opportunities in clinical and health professions, the pharmaceutical industry, agriculture, research, education and conservation.



Assessment

Paper 1 Modules 1, 2, 3 & 5 2 ¼ hours 37%
Paper 2 Modules 1, 2, 4 & 6 2 ¼ hours 37%
Paper 3 Modules 1 - 6 1 ½ hours 26%

Maths and experimental skills are tested in each paper.
There will be at least 12 practicals over two years, with a pass/fail mark awarded by the centre.

Biology

Entry Requirements

You need a minimum of grade 7 in GCSE Biology or two Grade 7s in Double Science. If you have a grade 7 or lower in GCSE Mathematics you are required to take Maths in Context or Core Maths as your Extension Study (if not taking A Level Mathematics).

You should have both an interest and an aptitude for Biology. A high Chemistry grade is beneficial. Successful students of A Level Biology have the following skills; problem-solving, application of knowledge, evaluation and an ability to learn content.

Special features of the course

The course is a broad, balanced, content-led course which contains a variety of practical work, including microbiology, dissection, DNA manipulation and biochemistry. Knowledge of the course content and a deep understanding of the concepts is required in order to apply them to questions and in novel contexts. Sound mathematical skills are needed to access the higher grades, hence the need for continued study of Mathematics, alongside Biology.

How is the course organised?

There are 6 modules:
Module 1: Development of practical skills
Module 2: Foundations in Biology
Module 3: Exchange and transport
Module 4: Biodiversity, evolution and disease
Module 5: Communication, homeostasis and energy
Module 6: Genetics, evolution and ecosystems



Why study Business?

Are you amused and entertained by adverts, but wonder about their impact and target market? Do you want to learn about how your favourite products are made and sold? Or why brands like Apple, Tiffany's or Ferrari can charge a premium price for their products? Maybe you enjoy watching Dragon's Den and the Apprentice, or have your own ideas for a new product or service?

No matter what your vision, it's all here in Business A Level, giving you an incredibly powerful start to launch your career with transferable skills and knowledge that will apply to and complement any subjects or career choice. Regardless of whether you'd like to become an entrepreneur or work for any organisation, the Business course will be relevant. You'll learn about money and develop skills in budgeting and financial awareness. Studying people management helps you build leadership skills, while looking at recruitment allows you to develop an eye for what prospective employers are looking for.

Business A Level gives an overview to what the businesses all around us are doing, studying their management, finance, marketing and operations.



Assessment

Paper 1 written exam 2 hours 33%
Paper 2 written exam 2 hours 33%
Paper 3 written exam 2 hours 33%

Business

Entry Requirements

You do not need to have studied Business before.
If you have studied GCSE Business, you will need at least a grade 6. If not, you will need at least a grade 6 in Economics or another Humanity subject (History, Geography or RS).

You will need at least a grade 6 in GCSE Maths or English.

You should have an interest in Business and be prepared to research and discuss business news and issues in class.

Special features of the course

The course starts with the practical issues of starting a business. You will often be put in the position of a manager and asked to use your knowledge and skills to suggest solutions to problems, or how best to take advantage of opportunities.

There are lots of discussions in lessons and plenty of opportunities for working in small groups and presenting your ideas to the class.

How is the course organised?

Year 1
3.1 Unit: What is business? Managing marketing and finance
- 3.1.1 Business and objectives
- 3.1.2 Forms of business and stakeholders
- 3.1.3 Marketing management
- 3.1.4 Financial management

3.2 Unit: Managing people and operations
- 3.2.1 People management
- 3.2.2 Operations management

Year 2
- 3.2.3 Managing business culture

3.3 Unit: Business and society, business and the external environment, and business strategy
- 3.3.1 Business and society
- 3.3.2 Business and the external environment
- 3.3.3 Strategy
- 3.3.4 Change




Language Develop
SIXTH FORM

Why study Chemistry?

Chemistry is the science that sits firmly at the cross-roads where the purity and rigour of the scientific method meet creativity and imagination and it therefore has its own demands and rewards. Chemistry gives you an extremely flexible set of skills that are highly valued in the academic world and which are essential for the ever-changing demands of the modern workplace.

A Level Chemistry is a valued qualification and many scientific, clinical and commercial courses either specifically require or prefer their candidates to have gained a post-16 qualification in Chemistry. You might even want to study Chemistry just for the pure enjoyment that such a fusion of creativity and pure science can bring.

Through studying A Level Chemistry you develop an understanding of how the very fabric of the Universe is 'bolted together', whilst at the same time gaining perhaps the most highly-valued grounding in creative thinking available at this level. Perhaps the question should be: can you afford not to study Chemistry?

Assessment

Paper 1	Modules 1, 2, 3 & 5	2 ¼ hours	37%
Paper 2	Modules 1, 2, 4 & 6	2 ¼ hours	37%
Paper 3	Modules 1 - 6	1 ½ hours	26%

In addition to written papers there will be at least 12 practicals over two years with a pass/fail mark assessed by the centre. Maths and experimental skills are tested in each paper.

Chemistry

Entry Requirements

You need a minimum of grade 7 in GCSE Chemistry or achieved the equivalent of at least two Grade 7s in the Chemistry components of the qualification if you have taken a double science qualification. If you have a grade 7 or lower in GCSE Mathematics, you are also required to take either AS Mathematics or the Maths for Physical Sciences course as your Extension Study, if you are not taking A Level Mathematics.

To succeed in Chemistry you need to think logically, be analytical and have a creative streak. We have found that tenacity, mathematical ability and a real desire to push their understanding further have been the common qualities woven into the most successful Chemistry students.

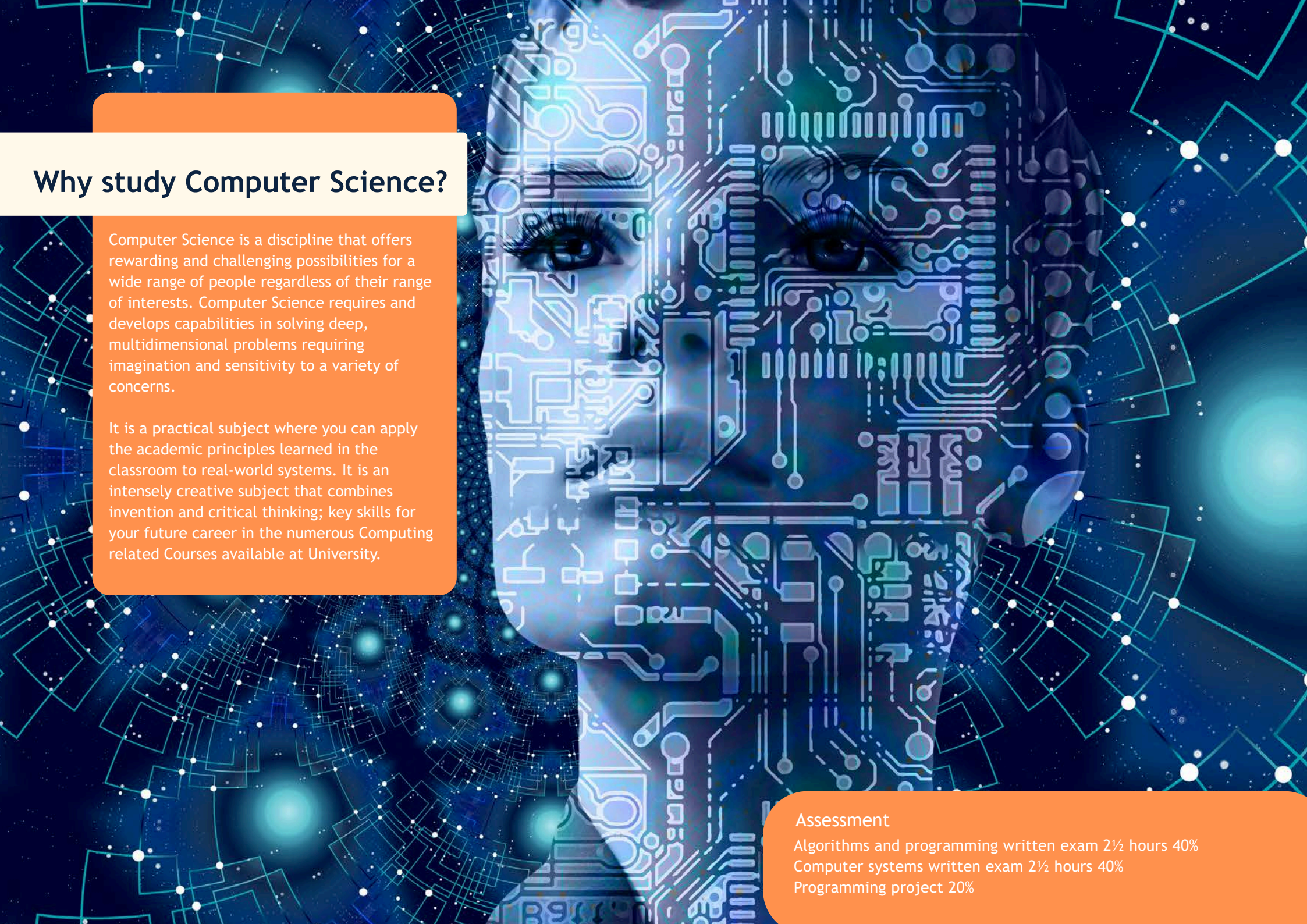
Special features of the course

The emphasis is on the understanding of patterns and ideas and developing skills that allow you to effectively apply this understanding to creative problem-solving exercises. You will also have to learn quite a lot of facts to act as a basis upon which to construct your understanding of this subject. Sound mathematical skills are also needed to access the higher grades, hence the need for a grade 8 or 9 in GCSE Mathematics or to study AS Mathematics, alongside Chemistry.

How is the course organised?

There are 6 modules:
Module 1 Development of practical skills in Chemistry
Module 2 Foundations in Chemistry
Module 3 Periodic table and energy
Module 4 Core Organic Chemistry
Module 5 Physical Chemistry and transition elements
Module 6 Organic Chemistry and analysis





Why study Computer Science?

Computer Science is a discipline that offers rewarding and challenging possibilities for a wide range of people regardless of their range of interests. Computer Science requires and develops capabilities in solving deep, multidimensional problems requiring imagination and sensitivity to a variety of concerns.

It is a practical subject where you can apply the academic principles learned in the classroom to real-world systems. It is an intensely creative subject that combines invention and critical thinking; key skills for your future career in the numerous Computing related Courses available at University.

Assessment

Algorithms and programming written exam 2½ hours 40%
Computer systems written exam 2½ hours 40%
Programming project 20%

Computer Science

Entry Requirements

You need a minimum of grade 6 in GCSE Computing if you have taken it. If you have not taken GCSE Computing, you will need a grade 7 in Maths and a coding portfolio that you can share and discuss with the Head of Department, Mrs Bourne, before being accepted onto the course.

Special features of the course

The key features of this specification emphasise Problem Solving using computers; computer programming and algorithms and the mathematical skills used to express computational laws and processes, e.g. Boolean algebra/logic and algorithm comparison. You will develop your ability to analyse problems in computational terms through practical experience of solving such problems, including writing programs to do so. You will increase your capacity to think creatively, innovatively, analytically, logically and critically.

How is the course organised?

The content of this course is divided into three areas:
Algorithms and programming
Algorithms and programming develops problem solving skills needed by learners to apply the fundamentals of programming, data structures and algorithms and the theory of computation.

Computer systems

Computer systems covers data representation, computer organisation and architecture, communication and networking, and databases. You will learn to apply your knowledge and understanding to analyse problems in computational terms.

Non Exam Assessment - Programming project

You 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



Why study Drama and Theatre?

This course is an exciting and inspiring programme which prepares you for further study in Higher Education whether in Drama and Theatre or any other subject area. The transferable skills on offer range from developing your confidence, teamwork and public speaking abilities, as well as practising your research skills and creative thinking. You are given the opportunity to work as either performers and/or designers on three different performances. In Component 1 you will reinterpret a text to create a piece of theatre which is a combination of the selected text and original ideas. In Component 2 you will use a stimulus to create two pieces of theatre; similar to work completed at GCSE. In both components you are encouraged to make connections between dramatic theory and your own practice including a continued focus on voice, movement and interaction skills. Component 1 is completed in the summer term of Y12 and Component 2 in the Spring Term of Y13 leaving ample time for revision of Component 3 ahead of exams.



Assessment

Component 1
Theatre Workshop (20%) - Performance and supporting written Creative Log
Component 2
Text in action (40%) - Two performances and supporting written Process
Component 3
Written Exam (40%) - Students study two full texts and an extract from a third text

Drama

Entry Requirements

A grade 6 in Drama or in a related subject (eg English or Dance) if you have not taken it at GCSE. It is advised that students wishing to enrol without having taken GCSE Drama have significant experience in performance and speak to Mrs Hughes before selecting this option. A genuine interest in all forms of drama and theatre, plus the ability to work with others, be adaptable, and cope with performance to an audience and examiners.

Special features of the course

You will be expected to go to the theatre on organised visits and take part in theatre workshops with expert practitioners. Lessons are co-taught with Aylesbury Grammar School.

How is the course organised?

Year 12
Practitioner Study (Including: Stanislavski, Brecht, Artaud, Berkoff, Katie Mitchell, Frantic Assembly and Emma Rice)
Exploring set text 1
Exploring set text 3
Component 1 NEA. Devising, rehearsal and exam

Year 13
Exploring set text 2
Component 2 devising, rehearsal and exam
Component 3 written exam





Why study Economics?

Are you curious about how the world works? Economics has the answer. It is the study of how we can satisfy our infinite wants, with the scarce resources available on earth.

Why are there such contrasts between wealth and poverty in our world? How can we keep consuming goods and services while minimising the impact on the environment? What does the government do to improve living standards, reduce prices and reduce unemployment? How have globalisation and trade contributed to the Brexit vote and Trump's election win?

Economics is about choice and the impact of our choices on each other. It relates to every aspect of our lives, from the decisions we make as individuals and families to the structures created by governments and firms. The economic way of thinking can help us make better choices.



Assessment

There are 3 papers each worth 33%
Paper 1: Markets and market failure 2 hours. Data response and essay questions
Paper 2: National and international economy 2 hours. Data response and essay questions
Paper 3: Economic principles and issues 2 hours. Multiple choice and case study questions

Economics

Entry Requirements

You do not need to have studied Economics or Business before. If you have studied GCSE Economics, you will need at least a grade 6.

If you have not studied Economics, you will need at least a grade 6 in Business or another Humanity subject (History, Geography or RS).
You will need at least a grade 6 in GCSE Maths.
You will need at least a grade 6 in English (language or literature).

You will be expected to keep up to date by reading a newspaper or following news in the media.

Special features of the course

Economics is a subject which will be new to most students who take it. You will be introduced to new ways of looking at the world and new techniques of analysing what you see; a new form of language. The task of an economist is then to use this language and perspective to interpret the world around them and contemplate big questions.

How is the course organised?

Individuals, firms, markets and market failure
Economic methodology
Individual economic decisions
Prices in a competitive market
Production, costs and revenue
Competition and monopoly
The labour market
The distribution of income
The market mechanism

The national and international economy
Macroeconomic performance
How the macroeconomy works
Economic performance
Financial markets and monetary policy
Fiscal policy and supply-side policies
The international economy



Why study English Language?

Language is woven into every aspect of our lives; it is the colour through which we see the world.

On this course you will learn about the development of the English language, how it changes over time and still contains shards of the past like layers of history in an archaeological dig. You will discover the magical process of how children learn to speak, from gurgles and babbles to the tongue-trippingly difficult “hippopotamus”. Just ask a two-year old. You will see how much of who you are is what you say – often what you don’t – and how language is about power and control, about gender, identity, culture and politics, and everything in between. It’s really quite marvellous.

From speech therapists to forensic linguists to voice activated machines (hey Alexa), studying English Language opens up a world beyond the traditional. But if you are interested in History, Law, Psychology, the Classics, as well as any Modern Foreign Language, A Level English Language is a perfect complement.

And don’t forget, if you are considering a degree or joint honours degree in English, you will certainly need to study A Level English Literature. However there’s no reason why you can’t study both.

Assessment

Paper 1 2¼ hours 35%
Paper 2 1¼ hours 20%
Paper 3 1¾ hours 25%
Coursework 20%

English Language

Entry Requirements

You will need an average grade 6 or higher in GCSE English Language and English Literature to take this course.

Special features of the course

Opportunity for creative writing, with a particular focus on journalism (as part of the coursework).

How is the course organised?

Component 1: Language Variation

Students study how language varies depending on different factors, how language choices can create personal identities and the variation in English from c1550 to the present day.

Component 2: Child Language

In this component of the course, students explore how spoken language is acquired and how children learn to write between the ages of 0 and 8.

Component 3: Language and Gender

Developing their research and investigation skills, students will explore social attitudes and how the forms and conventions of written, spoken and multimodal language can construct or reflect gender and sexual identities.

Coursework: Crafting Language

Students are able to pursue their own interests to produce two pieces of original writing from the same genre. This is followed by a commentary reflecting on the two pieces of original writing.




SIXTH FORM

English Literature

A lot of the people we love do not exist. Some aren't even people. Some are impossible. We've even been known to form some serious attachments to unusual objects. But there they are, on the page, realised inside our heads - or on stage, in film - and sometimes they become so important that they form a part of us, stay with us, familiar, reliable, like an old friend that we can turn to again and again. Even if they're a monster.

And it's why we study English Literature: to explore the magical ways in which the simple act of stringing word after word can create entire countries out of thin air.

Studying English Literature will involve thinking. Thinking about thinking, thinking about everything in the world and out of this world (for there are no limits to what literature might be about). Studying literature will involve analysing and interpreting and discussing and debating. Your essays will be informed and coherent but above all opinionated. Studying literature will be rigorous, exacting, disciplined, difficult - and fun.

As a highly respected A Level, English Literature can be instrumental in helping students gain university places in a variety of subjects, even if you chose not to study the subject further.



Assessment

Paper 1 2 ¼ hours 30%
Paper 2 1 ¼ hours 20%
Paper 3 2 ¼ hours 30%
Coursework 20%

English Literature

Entry Requirements

You will need an average grade 6 or higher in GCSE English Language and English Literature to take this course.

Special features of the course

- Opportunity to explore contemporary texts from the Booker Prize list
- Theatre trips
- Breadth of texts studied

How is the course organised?

Component 1: Drama
Students study one Shakespeare play and one other drama text from either tragedy or comedy.
Component 2: Prose
A study of two prose texts from a chosen theme. At least one of the texts must be pre-1900.
Component 3: Poetry and unseen
Students prepare for a question on an unseen text and study a range of poetry from a literary period.
Coursework
Students write one extended comparative essay exploring two texts. This is a great opportunity to study a text of your own choosing.
Please note, the texts studied will cover a range of themes and topics so do make sure that they are suitable for you.



Why study Geography?

Geography is a 'facilitating' subject that develops the transferable, key skills that employers are looking for; and can lead to a very wide range of employment opportunities. According to the Royal Geographical Society and Institute for Fiscal Studies '5 years after graduation, geography graduates have an above average likelihood of gaining employment' and for Geography graduate earnings 'women earn 10% more than average graduate salaries.'

You will investigate the forces influencing our natural environment; the issues affecting people and the places where we live; consider how people affect the environment; the forces that drive the world economy and the decisions being made about the use and management of resources. You will gain a deeper appreciation of current events and world problems during what is an exciting and intrinsically contemporary course.

Assessment

Component 1
Physical Geography 2½ hours 40%
Component 2
Human Geography 2½ hours 40%
Component 3
Geographical Investigation Non exam assessment 20%

Geography

Entry Requirements

A 6 in Geography GCSE is a requirement if you have taken it. Alternatively, a 6 in another humanity GCSE.

Special features of the course

Geography A Level supports applications for almost any science-based university course, including Engineering, Medicine, Psychology and Environmental Studies. It supports an equally wide range of humanities courses such as Business, Law, Politics and Philosophy. A Level Geographers are required to undertake 4 days of fieldwork and we do this through a residential course in Yorkshire and day trips to Aylesbury and Kings Cross during Year 12. This will provide skills for students to build on when they carry out their own fieldwork investigation, later in the A Level course.

How is the course organised?

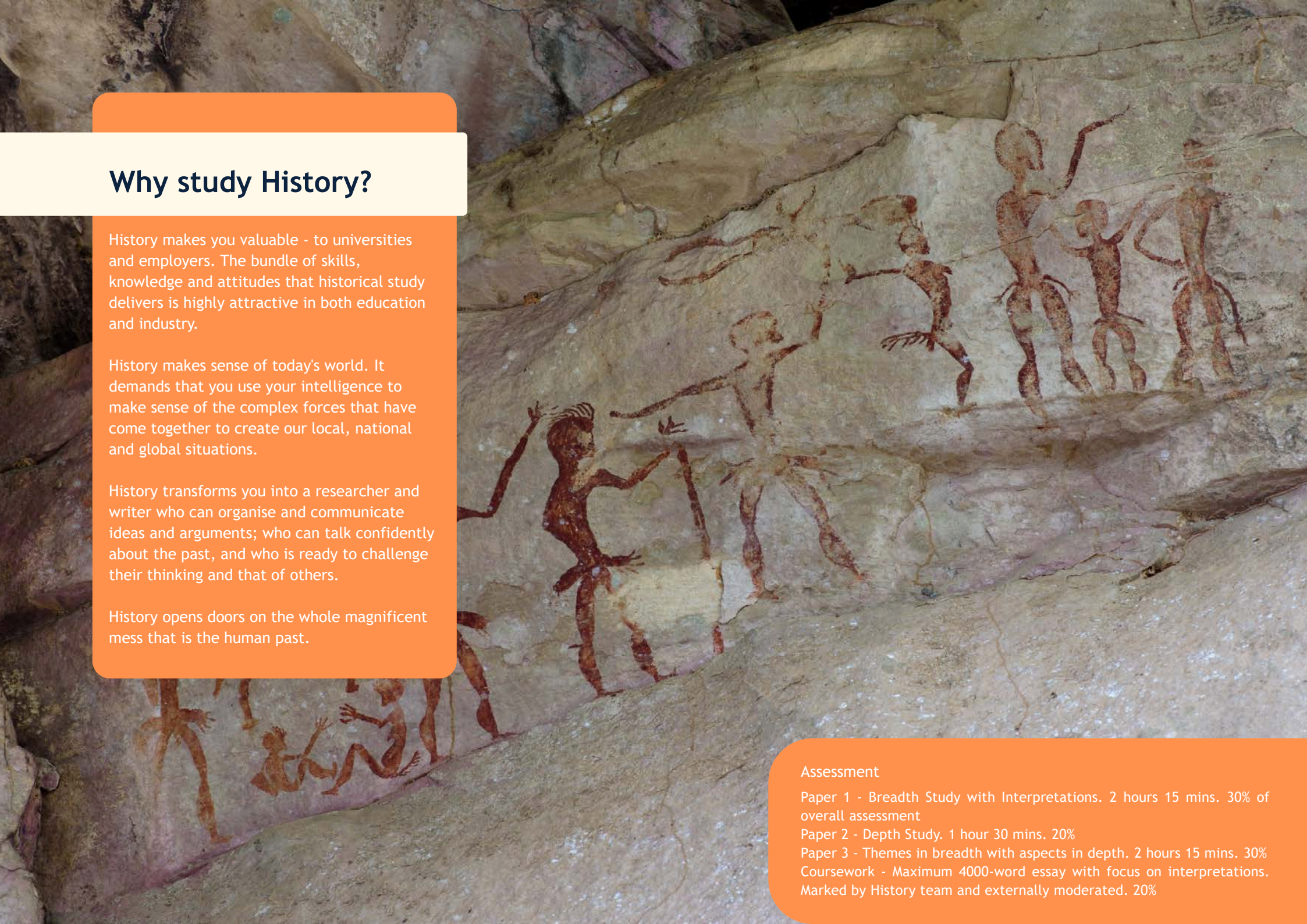
In **Y12 you study**
Coasts
Population and the environment
Changing places
Water and carbon cycles

In Y13 you study
NEA
Global systems and global governance
Natural Hazards

Throughout the course you will develop your geographical skills, including ICT, graphical, cartographical and statistical skills, and you will become competent in collecting, analysing and interpreting a range of data, as well as critically questioning data sources.

You will also complete an independent investigation (NEA) of 3-4,000 words based on a question or issue that you have defined, using data you have collected.





Why study History?

History makes you valuable - to universities and employers. The bundle of skills, knowledge and attitudes that historical study delivers is highly attractive in both education and industry.

History makes sense of today's world. It demands that you use your intelligence to make sense of the complex forces that have come together to create our local, national and global situations.

History transforms you into a researcher and writer who can organise and communicate ideas and arguments; who can talk confidently about the past, and who is ready to challenge their thinking and that of others.

History opens doors on the whole magnificent mess that is the human past.

Assessment

Paper 1 - Breadth Study with Interpretations. 2 hours 15 mins. 30% of overall assessment
Paper 2 - Depth Study. 1 hour 30 mins. 20%
Paper 3 - Themes in breadth with aspects in depth. 2 hours 15 mins. 30%
Coursework - Maximum 4000-word essay with focus on interpretations. Marked by History team and externally moderated. 20%

History

Entry Requirements

To study History at A Level, it is usual, but not essential, to have studied the subject at GCSE and have achieved a grade 6 or higher. If you have not studied History, a 6 in another Humanity subject is required.

Special features of the course

Specialist teachers provide in-depth and up-to-date learning through seminars based on critical reading and discussion. Our materials are carefully selected to help you access some complex historical debates. History lessons contain source analysis, essay planning, presentations, role-play and empathy work, close textual analysis, discussion and debate, pair-work, quizzes, problem-solving, research, question analysis, documentary and film, simulations, and many other learning opportunities.

Until Covid interrupted everything, we took an A Level History and Politics trip to Washington DC every two years. American history is integral to this A Level and we will look for opportunities to run this trip in the future, subject to practical constraints and realistically affordable costs.

How is the course organised?

We follow the Pearson Edexcel specification.
Democracies in Change: Britain and the USA in the Twentieth Century:
Paper 1: Britain Transformed, 1918-1997
Paper 2: The USA 1955-92: Conformity and Challenge
Paper 3: The Witch Craze in Britain, Europe and North America, c1580 - c1750
Coursework: independently researched assignment on topic of student's choice (with approval of Head of Dept). Can overlap with taught units.





Sixth Form Study Centre

Why study Maths or Further Maths?

Mathematics is a very satisfying subject, challenging and enjoyable for its own sake. An understanding of Mathematics is at the heart of every modern industry and science. Mathematical competence is an essential component in physical sciences, technology, business and Medicine. In today's world, Mathematics has an important role in providing the key skills needed in many different careers. It provides a logical approach and intellectual rigour that contribute to an ability to solve a wide variety of problems.

For able students who have an enthusiasm for Mathematics and enjoy its challenge, there is the opportunity to study for another A Level in Further Mathematics. This involves studying a further 4 modules and statistics show that doing Further Mathematics boosts your A Level Mathematics grade.

Assessment

Mathematics A Level:3 x 2 hour papers
Further Mathematics A Level:4 x 1½ hour papers

Maths & Further Maths

Entry Requirements

Grade 7 in GCSE Mathematics.
Grade 8 in GCSE and 56 points from your best 8 GCSEs to study Further Mathematics

Special features of the course

All students are given the chance to participate in the Senior Maths Challenge.

How is the course organised?

Mathematics: In Year 12, students will study elements of three key areas of Mathematics: Pure Mathematics, Probability and Statistics, and Mechanics.

In Year 13, students will develop a broader and deeper appreciation of the three key areas of Mathematics studied in Year 12.

Further Mathematics: In Year 12, we will accelerate through the A level Maths content and begin some Further Maths core modules, developing students' understanding of Pure Mathematics as well as starting one of the Further Maths option modules (Decision Maths).

In Year 13, the topics from Year 12 will be explored in greater depth and new concepts introduced as well as the possibility of delving even deeper in the mysterious world of advanced pure mathematics.

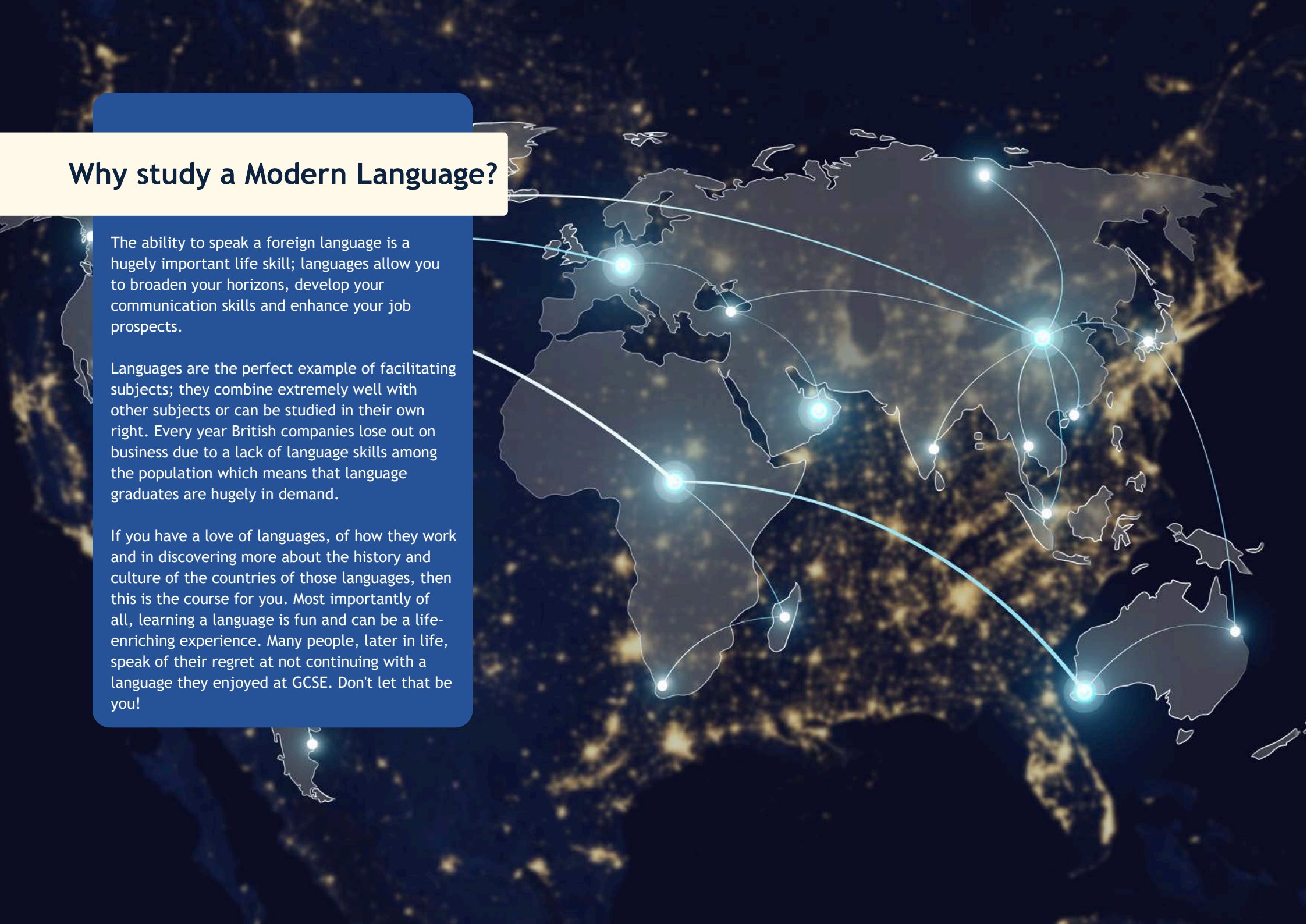


Why study a Modern Language?

The ability to speak a foreign language is a hugely important life skill; languages allow you to broaden your horizons, develop your communication skills and enhance your job prospects.

Languages are the perfect example of facilitating subjects; they combine extremely well with other subjects or can be studied in their own right. Every year British companies lose out on business due to a lack of language skills among the population which means that language graduates are hugely in demand.

If you have a love of languages, of how they work and in discovering more about the history and culture of the countries of those languages, then this is the course for you. Most importantly of all, learning a language is fun and can be a life-enriching experience. Many people, later in life, speak of their regret at not continuing with a language they enjoyed at GCSE. Don't let that be you!



Modern Languages

Entry Requirements

You need to have achieved at least a grade 7 in the language at GCSE.

Special features of the course

We run exchanges every year to France, Germany and Spain for Year 12s, and strongly recommend that you take part as there is no better way to improve your language skills than in the country. The German exchange runs jointly with Aylesbury Grammar School.

In Year 13 we run trips to Paris, Berlin and Madrid too.

In addition to lessons with your subject teachers, you will have extra sessions in small groups with the Foreign Language Assistants, designed to allow you to practise your speaking skills.

How is the course organised?

Over the two years of the course, you study 4 main themes, each of which is subdivided into 3 smaller topic areas. At the end of the two years you will be tested on all of them through Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking assessments.

There is also an independent research project for the oral in Y13. This is where you get to focus on an element of the country that you find particularly interesting, from Monet to the Brothers Grimm to the history of the Catalan Independence movement, the choice is yours.

See the subpages for further details as the topics are different for each language.



French

Year 12 Topic 1
Aspects of French-speaking society
The changing nature of family
The 'cyber-society'
The place of voluntary work

Year 12 Topic 2
Artistic culture in the French-speaking world
Cinema: the 7th art form
Contemporary francophone music
A culture proud of its heritage

Book: Bonjour Tristesse
Film: La Haine
Year 13 Topic 1
Aspects of French-speaking society – current issues
Positive features of a diverse society
Life for the marginalised
How criminals are treated
Year 13 Topic 2
Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world
Teenagers, the right to vote and political commitment
Politics and immigration
Demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power?

Literature text - £7 approx.
French exchange trip - £450 approx.
Paris trip - £500 approx.
Please note that trips are optional

Paper 1
Listening and Reading on the 4 topic areas, translation into English and French. 2½ hours. 50%

Paper 2
2 essays on book/film. 2 hours. 20%

Paper 3
Discussion of a sub-topic from one of the 4 areas followed by a 2 minute presentation and an 8-10 minute discussion of a topic of your own choice.
21-23 minutes. 30%

German

Year 12 Topic 1
Aspects of German-speaking society
The changing nature of family
The digital world
Youth culture: fashion and trends, music and television
Year 12 Topic 2
Artistic culture in the German-speaking world
Festivals and traditions
Art and architecture
Cultural life in Berlin, past and present

Book: Der Besuch der alten Dame
Film: Das Leben der Anderen
Year 13 Topic 1
Multiculturalism in German-speaking society
Immigration
Integration
Racism
Year 13 Topic 2
Aspects of political life in the German-speaking world
Germany and the European Union
Politics and youth
German re-unification and its consequences

Literature text - £20 approx.
German exchange trip - £550 approx.
Berlin trip - £600 approx.
Please note that trips are optional

Paper 1
Listening and Reading on the 4 topic areas, translation into English and German. 2½ hours. 50%

Paper 2
2 essays on book/film. 2 hours. 20%

Paper 3
Discussion of a sub-topic from one of the 4 areas followed by a 2 minute presentation and an 8-10 minute discussion of a topic of your own choice.
21-23 minutes. 30%

Spanish

Topic 1
Aspects of Hispanic-speaking society
Modern and traditional values
Cyberspace
Equal rights

Topic 2
Artistic culture in the Hispanic-speaking world
Modern day idols
Spanish regional identity
Cultural heritage

Book:"La casa de Bernarda Alba"
Film:"El laberinto del fauno"
Topic 3
Multiculturalism in Hispanic-speaking society
Immigration
Integration
Racism
Topic 4
Aspects of political life in the Hispanic-speaking world
Today's youth, tomorrow's citizens
Monarchies, republics and dictatorships
Popular movements

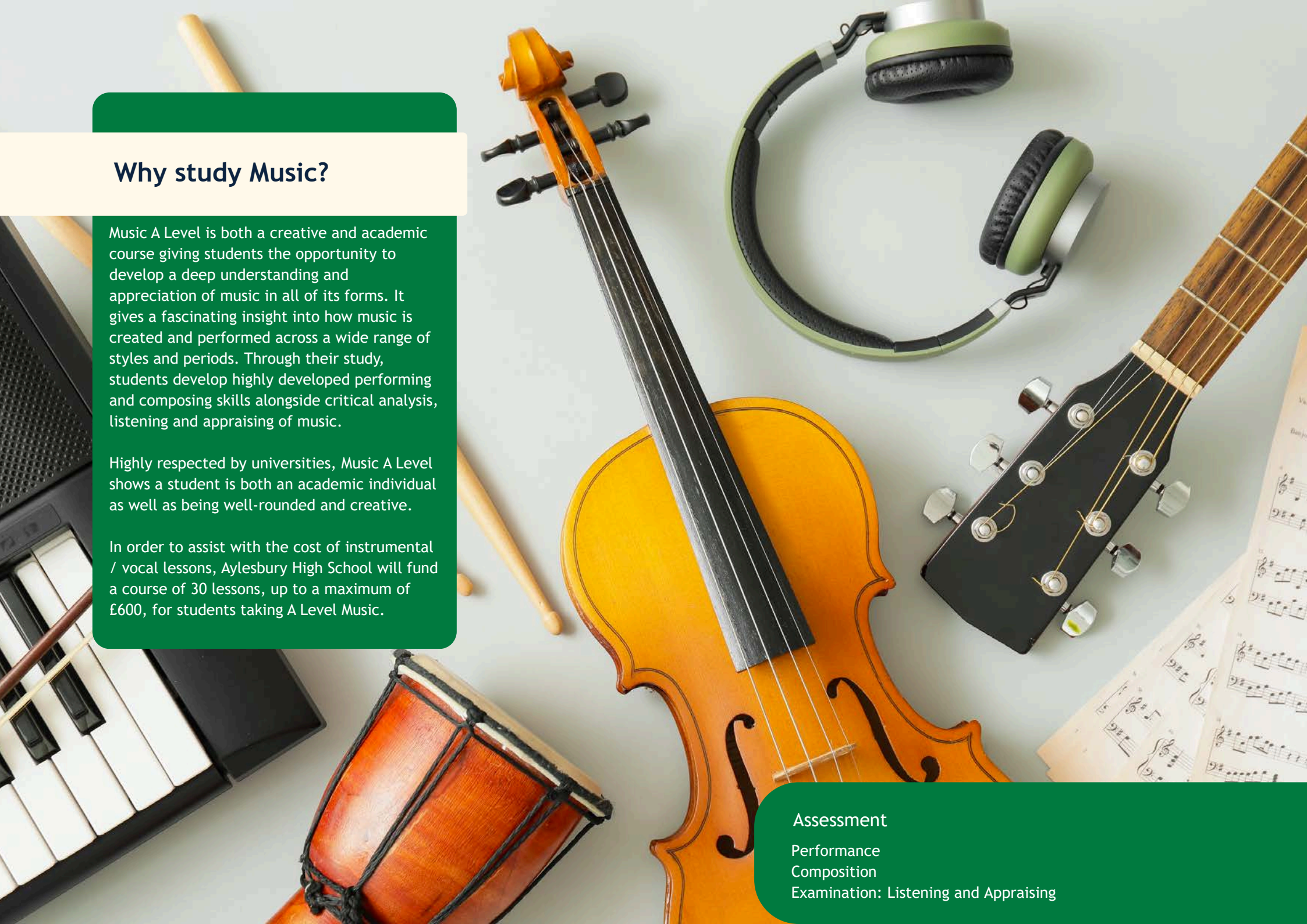
Year 12 work experience trip to Seville (optional) approx. £790
Year 13 cultural trip to Madrid (optional) approx. £800
Set text £10
Film (DVD or Netflix) £3-£5

Paper 1
Listening and Reading on the 4 topic areas, translation into English and Spanish. 2½ hours. 50%

Paper 2
2 essays: one on book, one on film. 2 hours. 20%

Paper 3
Discussion of a sub-topic from one of the 4 areas followed by a 2 minute presentation and an 8-10 minute discussion of a topic of your own choice. 21-23 minutes. 30%





Why study Music?

Music A Level is both a creative and academic course giving students the opportunity to develop a deep understanding and appreciation of music in all of its forms. It gives a fascinating insight into how music is created and performed across a wide range of styles and periods. Through their study, students develop highly developed performing and composing skills alongside critical analysis, listening and appraising of music.

Highly respected by universities, Music A Level shows a student is both an academic individual as well as being well-rounded and creative.

In order to assist with the cost of instrumental / vocal lessons, Aylesbury High School will fund a course of 30 lessons, up to a maximum of £600, for students taking A Level Music.

Assessment

Performance
Composition
Examination: Listening and Appraising

Music

Entry Requirements

Grade 6 in GCSE Music is desirable, but not essential, with a good understanding of Grade 5 theory requirements. Students should have the potential to be Grade 6 standard on your instrument / voice by the end of the course. What is important is an enthusiasm for performing and / or composition and a genuine interest in exploring all styles of music.

Special features of the course

The course is split into three areas: performance, composition and listening/appraising. There are 3 areas of study: The Western Classical Tradition with the development of the symphony, Musical Theatre, and 20th century music. Students study set works and composers associated with these areas of study.

How is the course organised?

Performance

One recital of 10-12 minutes performed in front of a visiting examiner.

Composition

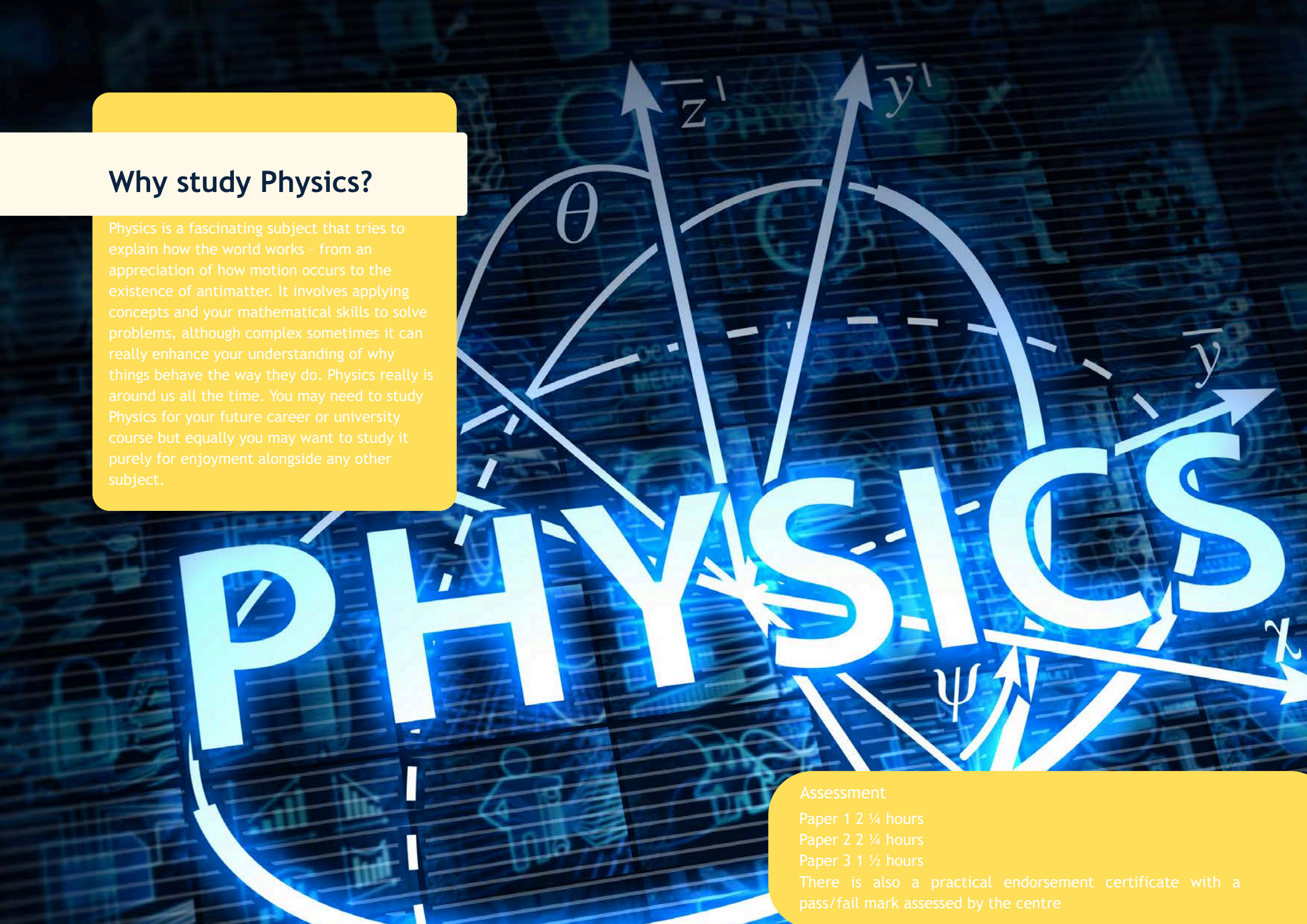
A folio of 2 pieces of composition: 1 free and the other to a brief set by the exam board.

Listening & Appraising

One examination at the end of the course
Study of set works and related music throughout the course
This includes listening, aural, dictation, analysis and extended writing tasks

A level music (Eduqas) study guide is available to buy for £30 or to borrow from the music department.





Why study Physics?

Physics is a fascinating subject that tries to explain how the world works – from an appreciation of how motion occurs to the existence of antimatter. It involves applying concepts and your mathematical skills to solve problems, although complex sometimes it can really enhance your understanding of why things behave the way they do. Physics really is around us all the time. You may need to study Physics for your future career or university course but equally you may want to study it purely for enjoyment alongside any other subject.

Assessment

Paper 1 2 ¼ hours
Paper 2 2 ¼ hours
Paper 3 1 ½ hours
There is also a practical endorsement certificate with a pass/fail mark assessed by the centre

Physics

Entry Requirements

You need a minimum of grade 7 in GCSE Physics or two Grade 7s if you have taken a double science qualification. You need a minimum of a grade 7 in GCSE Maths.

Special features of the course

A sound background in mathematical methods is desirable, being confident in the use of algebra, angles and trigonometry, and the equation of a straight line is especially important.

ICT is used significantly for analysis, modelling and research. You will need to work methodically and think logically.

Please DO note, if you intend on studying Physics or Engineering beyond school, most universities will expect you to have studied both Physics and Maths at A level.

How is the course organised?

There are 6 modules:
Module 1 Development of practical skills in Physics
Module 2 Electrons, waves and photons
Module 3 Foundations of Physics
Module 4 Newtonian world and astrophysics
Module 5 Forces and motion
Module 6 Particles and medical physics
In addition to normal timetabled lessons, students are expected to spend time outside lessons completing set homework, recording and analysing experimental work, studying appropriate sections of the textbook, expanding on notes taken in lessons and following up individual research.
Practical skills will be taught alongside the theoretical content.



Why study Politics?

"Politics is too important to be left to politicians" - so why not choose to study it in the Sixth Form?

If you want to understand how politics works and where power lies, what parties stand for and how countries are governed, Politics might be for you. It is a valuable qualification for Law, Journalism, History, International Relations and Politics and any other potential career that requires an awareness of the world, the ability to think critically and to write clearly. Politics combines well with all other subjects, especially Arts subjects like History and Economics, but it is open to all who wish to preserve a broad balance. For those who wish to go on to university, there are many courses available; from straight Politics or International Relations to joint degrees with History, Languages, Economics or English.



Assessment

Three written papers each of 2 hours duration, taken in the summer of Year 13.

Politics

Entry Requirements

You need a grade 6 or higher in a GCSE Humanities subject, or a 6 in English. You should enjoy reading, discussion, research and essay writing. You will need to have an interest in reading different newspapers and following current affairs programmes on radio and television, so that the ideas and issues which you put forward are informed and up-to-date.

Special features of the course

If you're interested in the world around you, passionate about the potential for political change, this is the A Level for you. Students are encouraged to attend lectures and conferences in London, where academics and leading political figures are the main speakers. Students sometimes arrange to work-shadow an MP. We try to take our Year 12 students to the Houses of Parliament and the Supreme Court every year, and to a special A-Level conference in Y13.

How is the course organised?

Component 1: UK Politics and Core Political Ideas. This means engaging with ideas like democracy, participation, electoral system, voting behaviour and the human side of politics.
Component 2: UK Government and Non-core Political Ideas. This side of the UK course looks at the UK's political institutions - Parliament, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, the Judiciary and the Supreme Court.
Component 3: Comparative Politics - This involves a study of the politics and institutions of the United States, mirroring the structure of the first two components. Students answer exam questions about the US but also questions that compare the politics and government of the UK and the US.
Political Ideas:The course requires students to critically engage with political ideas and ideologies, and our students study Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism, and Feminism.
The course specification HERE contains detailed information about the organisation, structure and assessment of the taught content. There is no coursework or NEA.



Why study Psychology?

Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour. It is a fascinating subject, providing insight into mental processes and behaviours from the everyday to the extraordinary.

A diverse range of topics are covered on the AQA A Level Psychology course, including the study of mental health issues, social psychology, forensic psychology, biological psychology, infant attachment, memory and gender. Students will find out about key psychological experiments that have been conducted to try to understand human behaviour. They also explore the theories and treatments that have evolved from these experiments. For example, in the 'Clinical Psychology and Mental Health' unit, students consider the possible biological and psychological causes of mental health conditions including phobias, depression and OCD, critically evaluating the evidence offered to support each theory. They go on to consider the most effective treatments for these conditions, from talking therapies such as CBT to drug therapies, such as antidepressants.

Students also learn the practical tools for conducting psychological research and how to analyse and interpret research findings. These research methods form a core part of the A Level course and provide students with an evidence-based approach which is invaluable to a variety of future careers. Further transferable skills developed on the A Level Psychology course include, essay writing, computer-literacy, independent research, collaborative group work, numeracy and critical thinking skills.



Assessment

There are three 2 hour exams at the end of Year 13.
Each exam paper is out of 96 marks and worth one third of your final mark.
Paper One: Social Influence, Memory, Attachment, Clinical Psychology & Mental Health
Paper Two: Approaches in Psychology, Biopsychology, Research Methods
Paper Three: Issues & Debates in Psychology, Gender, Schizophrenia, Forensic Psychology

Psychology

Entry Requirements

Psychology is part of the science curriculum area and you will need at least a 6 in GCSE Biology or a 6, 6 in Science if you have taken a double science qualification. At least a 6 in GCSE English and Maths are also required as the written content for this course is significant and the course involves the analysis and application of statistical data.

Special features of the course

Around a quarter of our A Level students go on to study Psychology or related subjects at university; our strong academic results (42-58% A*-A average for the past 8 years) ensure that they are very well-prepared for this next step. In addition to this, the mental health components of the course help to prepare students for careers in Medicine and Health/Social Care, whilst other aspects of the course are relevant to students keen to pursue a career in Law: e.g. exploring the validity of eye-witness testimony in the Memory unit or exploring various ways of dealing with offenders in the Forensic Psychology unit. Students going on to do research in a variety of fields, including Business, Marketing and of course, Psychology, will also find the Research Methods units of the course invaluable.

How is the course organised?

In Year 12 students study Paper 1 topics, plus Approaches and Research Methods from Paper 2.

In Year 13 students study Paper 3 topics, plus Biopsychology from Paper 2.

Psychology is a popular subject and there are typically three or four classes in each year group.





Why study Religion, Philosphy & Ethics?

This A Level encourages students to:

- Develop an interest and enthusiasm for a rigorous study of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics
- Treat the subject as an academic discipline by developing knowledge and understanding
- Evaluate the ideas studied and apply them to their own experience and the wider world
- Use an enquiring, critical and empathetic approach to the study of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics.
- Develop skills that are transferable to many other disciplines and attractive to universities; analysis, evaluation, presenting ideas in clear and coherent ways, organising arguments and independent learning.

Assessment

Two papers: written exams, 3 hours each consisting of all essay style questions

Religious Studies

Entry Requirements

A 6 in Religious Studies GCSE is a requirement if you have taken it. Alternatively a 6 in another Humanities GCSE or English Literature GCSE. A lively interest in the study of ideas and human motivation and a willingness to enquire into and analyse concepts and ideas which differ from your own. Also a willingness to discuss your own and others' ideas.

Special features of the course

This course is stimulating, challenging and thought-provoking. You will acquire skills that will aid you in a wide range of Higher Education courses and throughout life. The focus on ethics throughout the course makes it valuable for those applying for Medicine or Law degrees, as well as many others. There are plenty of opportunities to discuss and debate, question ideas and critique responses.

How is the course organised?

There are 4 modules of study, all assessed by written papers. There is a greater emphasis being placed on evaluation rather than on the learning of a large amount of facts.

Philosophy: Arguments for the existence of God; Evil and suffering; Religious experience; Religious language; Miracles; Self, death and the afterlife.
Ethics: 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.
Christianity: God; Sources of wisdom and authority; Self, death and the afterlife; Good conduct and key moral principles; Expressions of religious identity; Christianity, religion and Science; Christianity, religion, gender and sexuality; Christianity, religion, migration and religious pluralism; Christianity, religion and the challenge of secularisation.
Dialogues: the relationship between Philosophy, Ethics and Christianity



Why study Sociology?

The study of A Level Sociology focuses on an understanding of contemporary society. Studying Sociology fosters the development of critical and reflective thinking with a respect for social diversity. It also provides an awareness of the importance of social structure and social action in explaining social issues. Students are encouraged to develop their own sociological awareness through active engagement with the contemporary social world.

The Eduqas A Level in Sociology encourages students to:

- Acquire knowledge and a critical understanding of contemporary social processes and social changes.
- Appreciate the significance of theoretical and conceptual issues in sociological debate.
- Understand and evaluate sociological methodology and a range of research methods through active involvement in the research process.
- Develop skills that enable individuals to focus on their personal identity, roles and responsibilities within society.
- Develop a lifelong interest in social issues.

Studying sociology at A Level will give you an awareness of the social, political and economic issues that shape society. It will help you develop greater empathy towards communities that differ from your own and open your mind to a diverse range of ideas and beliefs.



Assessment

For more information, see the exam board subject page Eduqas - HERE

Sociology

Entry Requirements

You will need a grade 6 or higher in a GCSE Humanities subject, or a 6 in English. You should enjoy reading, discussion, research and essay writing. You will need to have an interest in current affairs and staying up to date with a range of social and political issues.

Special features of the course

Students will develop a deeper understanding of social structures and issues. By the end of the course, students will be able to understand, recall and evaluate a range of sociological perspectives and concepts. The course will teach students how to think critically and reflectively. It will strengthen students' skills of communication, evaluation and analysis. The study of sociology develops academic and interpersonal skills necessary for a range of different roles and future careers. Sociology enhances students' writing ability. It develops students' cultural competence and self-awareness and helps them to understand other people's cultural context and diverse beliefs.

How is the course organised?

The Sociology A Level course comprises three papers taken at the end of the two-year course.

Paper 1 - Socialisation and Culture - 2 hours 30 minutes (120 marks)
Socialisation and culture
Family and households
Education

Paper 2 - Methods of Sociological Enquiry - 1 hour 45 minutes (60 marks)
Question based on stimulus material
Design, justify and evaluate a piece of sociological research

Paper 3 - Power and Stratification - 2 hours 30 minutes (120 marks)
Social differentiation and stratification (Inequality)
Crime and deviance



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