

Course Guide 2026-27



**WHICKHAM
SCHOOL**





CONTENTS

Sixth Form Prospectus and Courses

INTRODUCTION	4
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	5
SUBJECT INFORMATION BY FACULTY	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE	6
ENGLISH LITERATURE	7
MEDIA STUDIES	8
MATHEMATICS	9
FURTHER MATHEMATICS	10
APPLIED SCIENCE	11
BIOLOGY	12
AAQ APPLIED SCIENCE	13
PHYSICS	14
GEOGRAPHY	15
HISTORY	16
RELIGIOUS STUDIES, ETHICS AND PHILOSOPHY	17
ART, CRAFT & DESIGN	18
BTEC MUSIC	19
BTEC PERFORMING ARTS - ACTING SPECIALISM	20
BTEC PERFORMING ARTS - DANCE SPECIALISM	21
AAQ HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE	22
BTEC HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE	23
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	24
BTEC SPORT	25
FRENCH	26
GERMAN	27
PSYCHOLOGY	28
SOCIOLOGY	29
BTEC BUSINESS	30
BUSINESS STUDIES	31
COMPUTER SCIENCE	32
DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: PRODUCT DESIGN	33
ECONOMICS	34
FOOD AND NUTRITION	35
AAQ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	36
ADDITIONAL STUDIES PROGRAMME	
ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME	38
HOW TO JOIN THE SIXTH FORM	39
NOTES	40

INTRODUCTION

Sixth Form Prospectus and Courses

Whickham Sixth Form offers an extensive curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. Over thirty subjects are available, offering both progression from GCSE and Level 2 BTEC courses as well as presenting opportunities to study new subject areas. Students are expected to study the equivalent of three or four level 3 courses.

Courses available in Sixth Form

Five different types of course are offered:

- A-level courses
- BTEC courses
- Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQ's)
- GCSE resit courses (English and Mathematics only)
- Level 3 Diploma Course (Food & Nutrition)

A-levels

A-levels are linear qualifications. All exams are taken in year 13 after completing two years of study. Students do not sit external AS qualifications at the end of year 12 except Further Maths. Student progress will be monitored through internally set examinations.

BTEC National Courses

These courses are vocational in nature and allow students to specialise, to varying degrees, in a particular subject. The levels on offer are:

- BTEC Extended Certificate – equivalent to 1 A-level
- BTEC Diploma – equivalent to 2 A-levels
- BTEC Extended Diploma – equivalent to 3 A-levels

These courses are assessed using a Pass, Merit, Distinction criterion that are equivalents to E, C and A grades in A-levels. If the student achieves a distinction in enough units they will achieve a Distinction* which is equivalent to an A-level A* grade.

The reformed BTEC courses now have some externally examined content. The number of units which are externally examined varies with the course. Students will have two attempts to achieve a pass or higher grade in the exams. Students cannot pass the overall qualification without passing the externally examined component.

Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQ's)

These qualifications are new Level 3 qualifications, equivalent to A-levels, and are often taken alongside or in place of A-levels, offering a more vocational approach to academic learning.

Methods of assessment include internal assessments and external assessments and will use a grading scale of Pass, Merit, and Distinction, similar to Level 3 BTEC qualifications.

Level 3 Diploma

These courses are equivalent to one A-Level and assessed using a Pass, Merit, Distinction criterion that are equivalents to E, C and A grades in A-levels. If the student achieves a distinction in enough units they will achieve a Distinction* which is equivalent to an A-level A* grade.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Sixth Form Prospectus and Courses

A-levels

- All A-level subjects require students to have achieved 5 grades at or above Grade 4
- Some subjects have additional subject specific requirements which are listed below
- Please note that the GCSE English requirements can be met either from GCSE English Language or GCSE English Literature subjects

Subject	Minimum Entry Requirements
Art & Design	Grade 4 in an artistic GCSE or evidence of artistic ability
Biology	Grade 6 in GCSE Biology / 6-6 in GCSE Combined Science and Grade 6 in GCSE Maths. Grade 6 is strongly recommended in GCSE English.
Business	Grade 4 in English GCSE
Chemistry	Grade 6 in GCSE Chemistry / 6-6 in GCSE Combined Science and Grade 6 in GCSE Maths. Grade 6 is strongly recommended in GCSE English.
Computer Science	Grade 6 or better in GCSE Computer Science (or 5 or better in a Science GCSE) and a 5 or better in GCSE Maths
Design Technology	Grade 5 in Maths and 4 in English
Economics	Grade 5 in GCSE English and Maths
English Language	Grade 5 in English Language
English Literature	Grade 5 in English Literature
French	Grade 6 in GCSE French
Food and Nutrition	Grade 5 in GCSE English Language and 4 in Maths
Geography	Grade 5 in GCSE Geography or in GCSE English Literature
German	Grade 6 in GCSE German
History	Grade 5 in GCSE History or grade 5 in GCSE English
Mathematics	Grade 7 in GCSE Maths
Further Maths	Grade 7 in GCSE Maths
Media Studies	Grade 4 in GCSE Media or grade 4 in GCSE English
Physics	Grade 6 in GCSE Physics / 6-6 in GCSE Combined Science and Grade 6 in GCSE Maths. Grade 6 is strongly recommended in GCSE English.
Psychology	Grade 5 in English, Maths and Science
RE/Philosophy	Grade 4 in GCSE RE or grade 4 in GCSE English
Physical Education	Grade 4 in GCSE PE and grade 5 and above in 2 Science GCSEs Plus evidence of ability.
Sociology	Grade 5 in GCSE English

Vocational Courses

Subject	Entry Requirement
AAQ Applied Science	5 Grade 4s including a Grade 6 in Science
BTEC Business	5 Grade 4s
AAQ Health and Social Care	5 Grade 4s
BTEC Health & Social Care	5 Grade 4s
BTEC IT	5 Grade 4s
BTEC Performing Arts (Acting)	5 Grade 4s plus evidence of ability
BTEC Performing Arts (Dance)	5 Grade 4s plus evidence of ability
BTEC Sport	5 Grade 4s plus evidence of ability
BTEC Music	5 Grade 4s plus evidence of ability

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs J James

COURSE:

English Language A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE ENGLISH LANGUAGE?

Do you want to learn how a child, within just a few years, progresses from being unable to speak or understand to acquiring the ability to communicate and comprehend? Are you interested in discovering the real differences in the speech styles of men and women? Do you want to learn about the rich variety of accents and dialects, exploring attitudes to social class and regional variation? Do you want to learn about the history of English and how it has evolved into a world language? Do you enjoy creative writing, experimenting with different genres, editing and re-drafting to a publishable standard? English Language A-Level can offer you a chance to tackle these central questions about the way in which human beings communicate and represent themselves and each other.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Language is rich and colourful and fascinating to explore. Naturally, you will learn about its technical linguistic features, including grammar and semantics, but you will also study key language theories. You will analyse a range of texts and explore how language functions in society. For coursework, you will produce a research project and a folder of your own writing. You will develop editorial, journalistic skills and learn how to construct high quality academic essays.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Teaching methods on this course vary, but there is a strong emphasis on group discussion. You must be prepared to work hard, think for yourself and be independent and resilient. You should have a keen interest in language because you already enjoy both reading and writing. You must be able to meet deadlines and be self-disciplined enough to organise your own time and work.

Independent coursework is an important part of the course and you must take the initiative to pursue your own writing and research interests.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Paper 1: Language, the individual & society

What's assessed?

- Textual variations & representations
- Children's language development
- Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities

How it's assessed?

- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- 100 marks - 40% of A-level

Paper 2: Language diversity & change

What's assessed?

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

How it's assessed?

- Written exam: 2 hours 30 minutes
- 100 marks - 40% of A-level

Non-exam assessment (coursework): Language in action

What's assessed?

- Language investigation
- Original writing
- Methods of language analysis are integrated into the activities

How it's assessed

- Word count: 3,500
- 100 marks
- 20% of A-level
- Assessed by teachers
- Moderated by AQA

Tasks

Students produce:

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

ENGLISH LITERATURE

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs J James

COURSE:

English Literature A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE ENGLISH LITERATURE?

How would you react if you found yourself in a world where women had to wear colour-coded uniforms to represent their status? What would you do if, as a child, you had told a lie which in later life, would destroy those you love most of all? How did a young woman who survived a shipwreck manage to convince everyone that she was, in fact, a man? All of these fantastical sounding scenarios derive from texts you will study during your A-Level English Literature course. English Literature is the stuff of life: it deals with tragedy, comedy, crime and politics, codified in the safe world of words. It deals with real issues in fictional worlds. It deals with the thing we stay alive for: love. English Literature offers the opportunity to read a range of varied and complex fiction. It is a subject which values thinking, talking and writing. It is a subject highly regarded by higher education providers and employers alike and is accepted for entry to a wide range of degree courses. English Literature at Whickham has an excellent reputation and has led students down many and varied paths such as law, journalism, teaching, speech therapy, sociology, education, business and advertising.

The course is structured around the study of genre. In the first year, you will read four texts by different writers and judge them against Comedic conventions. Possible text choices include *Twelfth Night*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and a selection of comic poetry. In the second year you will read either fiction, with choices from *Hamlet*, *Atonement*, *Brighton Rock* and a selection of crime poetry. The NEA element also offers the opportunity for you to choose your own texts to write about which is always very popular with students.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The course is structured around the study of genre. In the first year, you will read four texts by different writers and judge them against either comedic or tragic convention.

Possible text choices include *Othello*, *Twelfth Night*, *Small Island*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Educating Rita*, *John Betjeman poems* and *Wise Children*. In the second year you will read either crime or political fiction, with choices from *Hamlet*, *Atonement*, *The Kite Runner*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* and *Henry IV part 1*. The second also offers the opportunity for you to choose your own texts for coursework, a part of the course which is always very popular with students.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Teaching methods on this course vary, but there is a strong emphasis on group discussion. You must be prepared to work hard, think for yourself and be independent and resilient. You should have a keen interest in reading. You are expected to read widely beyond the course texts. You must be able to meet deadlines and be self-disciplined enough to organise your own time and work.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Year 12 students studying the AQA GCE English Literature course will commence the study of component 1. This will be assessed at the end of year 13 in a terminal examination:

Component 1 – Aspects of Comedy:

This is a written examination on the study of three texts through the lens of comedy.

This component tests analytical and essay writing skills linked to whole texts and an extract. In year 13, students will commence the study of component 2 and undertake **Non-exam assessment**.

Component 2 – Elements of Crime Writing:

This is a written examination on the study of three texts through the lens of crime writing.

NEA – Theory and independence:

Two essays of 1,250-1,550 each in which a prose text and a poetry collection are written about through various critical approaches.

Both exam components test analytical and essay writing skills linked to whole texts, an extract and an unseen text. Both exam components will be assessed at the end of year 13 in a terminal examination.

Assessment objectives foreground the importance of debate, written fluency, authorial method, genre and other contexts. Marking is holistic.

MEDIA STUDIES

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs J James

COURSE:

Media Studies A-level

AWARDING BODY:

Eduqas

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE MEDIA STUDIES?

Are you interested in films? Would you like to become a TV presenter, cameraman, journalist or web-designer? Would you like to understand how a TV programme is made? Would you like to produce your own media text? Media Studies provides the opportunity to study a range of media texts and industries as well as developing practical skills. You can improve your communication skills and will be given the opportunity to use advanced modern technology such as digital video cameras and editing equipment. This qualification will prove useful in our world of global communications and will give you a greater understanding of the technology available to us today. It is an essential course to study if you are interested in a career in journalism, performing, marketing or radio and TV broadcasting - both in front of and behind the camera.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

This new and exciting course aims to develop and widen students' understanding of the role of the media and its social, cultural and economic impact on our daily lives through critical analysis of a range of contemporary and historical media products. You will have the opportunity to study media products such as: film, online social media platforms, newspapers and music videos holistically and engage with the dynamic relationship between products, industries and audiences.

You will also be able to explore and peruse your own media interests through the practical element of the course which will allow you to apply your knowledge and planning skills to your own media product creation.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Due to the nature of this course, teaching style varies between academic study and coursework support. Academic study lessons will consist of seminar style lessons, group discussions and independent work in order to equip students with the knowledge that they need to develop their understanding of media products and apply theoretical framework effectively.

The coursework element of the course will require students to be disciplined with their time management, think independently and use initiative to further their knowledge through appropriate reading and research, in order to meet the strict deadlines assigned to the course.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

This course will be assessed over a two year period; A level units include:

Component 1: 35%

Section A: Media Language and Representation (45 marks)

Section B: Audiences, Industries and Contexts. (45 marks)

Component 2: 35%

You will be assessed on 3 media platforms: TV, magazines and online media. All questions are worth 30 marks and require continuous prose/ academic voice/ evaluation.

Component 3: 30%

NEA- Non Examined Assessment.

You will write a statement of aims, then complete a print-based and audio-visual piece of media, totalling 60 marks.

MATHEMATICS

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs C Harrison

COURSE:

Mathematics A-level

AWARDING BODY:

OCR B

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE MATHEMATICS?

Mathematics is a powerful, concise and unambiguous means of communication, which crosses language barriers. It helps develop logical thought and accuracy. As a “service subject” it is invaluable, being essential to the study of many subjects. It is a major qualification in the eyes of higher education and employers. Students who intend to study mathematics at advanced level must have achieved at least a 7 in GCSE in year 11.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Students will study a linear course over two years in Pure Mathematics, Mechanics and Statistics.

The broad areas of study are:

PURE:

Algebra, Trigonometry, Co-ordinate Geometry, Calculus, Proof, Functions, Indices and Logarithms, Sequences, Numerical Methods, Vectors and Parametric Equations.

STATISTICS:

Data Analysis, Probability, Sampling, the Binomial Distribution and Hypothesis Testing.

MECHANICS:

Kinematics, statics and forces, Newton’s laws of motion, momentum and projectiles.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Students in year 12 will be taught by two teachers. Lessons will mainly be teacher led and students will be expected to do follow up work after each lesson in addition to homework. Consistent work outside lessons for independent study is essential. This will be directed by class teachers. The ability of students to reinforce ideas and techniques developed in lessons by way of individual work is very important. Homework assignments are usually exam style and problem solving exercises.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Progress is closely monitored through homework assignments, where necessary support sessions will be allocated to help students make progress.

There will be 2 mock examinations in Year 12 to assess and aid progress.

External examinations at the end of Year 13 consist of three 2 hour papers, assessing all the taught content.

FURTHER MATHEMATICS

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs C Harrison

COURSE:

Further Mathematics
A-level or Further
Mathematics AS Level (1
year)

AWARDING BODY:

OCR B

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE FURTHER MATHEMATICS?

When combined with A-level mathematics, further mathematics allows students to investigate the subject in greater depth and breadth. Most students find that A-level further mathematics provides a valuable basis for the first year of a degree in mathematics. Students must have achieved at least a grade 7 in GCSE to progress onto this course.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Pure mathematics is taken beyond the 'service subject' core, with modules in Statistics and Modelling with Algorithms. In addition to the mathematics course, students will study a linear course over two years, parallel to maths.

The broad areas of study are: complex numbers; curve sketching; matrices; polar co-ordinates; hyperbolic functions; work; energy and power; impulse and momentum; centre of mass; the Poisson distribution; the normal distribution; bivariate data; numerical methods; decision analysis, logic and the simplex method.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

The subject is taught separately from mathematics. Students will be taught by two teachers. The majority of lessons will involve notes, examples and discussion, with students expected to undertake independent study work in addition to homework. You will acquire problem solving skills and develop your interest in the subject beyond the syllabus.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Progress is closely monitored by the homework assignments.

There will be mock exams throughout years 12 and 13 to monitor progress and support where needed.

In year 12, students will sit external AS examinations: Pure (1hr 15mins), Statistics minor (1hr 15mins) and Modelling with Algorithms (1hr 15mins).

For the A-level qualification, students will sit 3 exams in year 13: Pure (2hr 40mins), Statistics Major (2hr 15mins) and Modelling with Algorithms (1hr 15mins). This will replace the AS qualification, not add to it.

APPLIED SCIENCE

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs T Beaumont

COURSE:

AAQ in Applied Science
(1 A-Level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

OCR

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE APPLIED SCIENCE?

An AAQ in Applied Science will support progression to higher education or into the world of work. Studying applied science can lead to careers in biological sciences, nursing and health, life sciences and forensic sciences.

You might be interested in this qualification if you want to build applied or practical skills, to take alongside and enhance your A Levels or other Level 3 qualifications. You will have the opportunity to apply what you learn to real-life contexts, such as:

- Researching the fundamentals of science.
- Planning and performing laboratory investigations.

You will develop the following transferable skills that can be used in both higher education and other life and work situations:

- Communicating effectively with individuals or groups.
- Researching topic areas and recording research sources, then using them to interpret findings and present evidence.
- Presenting information, this will involve managing time and identifying aims, purpose, resources, methods.
- Problem solving when matching and analysing data.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The mandatory units are outlined below – you must take all these units:

Unit F180: Fundamentals of science (90 guided learning hours). This unit is assessed by an exam.

In this unit you will learn about the key topics that are important in biology, chemistry and physics. You will study two key practicals for each of those components to be assessed as part of the exam.

F181: Science in society (60 guided learning hours). This unit is assessed by an exam.

In this unit you will learn about the skills scientists use and the roles they perform in an international scientific community. You will examine different types of scientific data and learn how scientists use them to draw conclusions that can contribute to scientific advancement.

Unit F182: Investigating Science (90 guided learning hours). This unit is assessed by an assignment.

In this unit you will learn about the role of a research scientist in industry by learning how to conduct your own scientific investigation. You will develop the skills to research, plan and risk assess your investigation before safely undertaking the practical tasks.

The optional units are outlined below – you must take two of these units. Each is 60 guided learning hours. These units are all assessed by assignment.

F183: Analytical techniques in chemistry

F184: Environmental studies

F185: Forensic biology

F186: Medical physics

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

The qualification is made up of 40% examined content and 60% non examined assessment (NEA) content. The qualification has three mandatory units and four optional units.

BIOLOGY

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Miss A Ross

COURSE:

Biology A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE BIOLOGY?

The course is designed to build on attainment at GCSE and provides for the needs of students who will progress to higher education and also those who may go directly into employment. Whilst many students combine biology and other sciences, students studying different subjects including geography, sociology, economics and psychology will find it an excellent 'mixer' acting as a bridge between science and a diversity of other curriculum areas. In higher education, many of our former students have gone on to study biological and other sciences at university; courses have included medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, physiotherapy, nursing, medical physics, environmental sciences, genetics and biotechnology.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

A Level Biology students follow the AQA A Level Biology (7402) course and study 8 main topics:

- 1 – Biological Molecules**
- 2 – Cells**
- 3 – Organisms exchange substances with their environment**
- 4 – Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms**
- 5 – Energy transfers in and between organisms**
- 6 – Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments**
- 7 – Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems**
- 8 – The Control of Gene Expression**

These topics are assessed through 3 papers:

Paper 1 - Topics 1-4, 91 marks, 2 hours, 35% of A Level (76 marks - a mixture of short and long answer questions; 15 marks - extended response questions)

Paper 2 - Topics 5-8, 91 marks, 2 hours, 35% of A Level (76 marks - a mixture of short and long answer questions; 15 marks - comprehension question)

Paper 3 - Topics 1-8, 78 marks, 2 hours, 30% of A Level (38 marks - structured questions, including practical techniques; 15 marks - critical analysis of given experimental data; 25 marks - one essay from a choice of two titles)

Throughout the course students will also complete 12 required practicals that link to the topics listed above.

Although these are not externally assessed themselves, they are internally monitored and centre provisions are moderated by AQA. Students are expected however to have a knowledge of these techniques for the 3 external papers they sit.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Work in lessons includes formal teaching, discussions, and practical investigations. You are most likely to succeed if you have grade 5 in maths and grade 6 in English and science at GCSE and a good spread of other GCSE passes. You need to be prepared to spend about 4 hours per week outside of lessons on assignments, and more in year 13. During this time you will be asked to prepare work, write up notes, research topics and write up reports from investigations.

In addition you will have to learn and revise the work thoroughly as you go along. Recent visits organised during the course have included advanced practical investigations at the Centre for Life, and additional outings to the Farne Islands, Kielder, as well as workshops and lectures at local universities.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Progress is monitored through a series of internal tests, marks for written assignments and required practicals. Formal tests are set by AQA in June of year 13.

CHEMISTRY

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs A White

COURSE:

Chemistry A-level

AWARDING BODY:

OCR

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE CHEMISTRY?

Chemistry is the most asked for A-level for all types of degree courses. It develops a wide range of skills from research to investigation, analysis and interpretation. The career you go into may well require or have a preference for Chemistry to be one of your A-levels, such as Medicine, Finance, Engineering, Pharmacy and many other scientific courses.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

There are four taught modules (1-4) which are delivered in Year 12 and two modules which are covered in more depth (5+6) in Year 13:

- 1 – Development of practical skills in chemistry**
- 2 – Foundations of chemistry**
- 3 – Periodic table and energy**
- 4 – Core organic chemistry**
- 5 – Physical chemistry and transition elements**
- 6 – Organic chemistry and analysis**

In Year 12 students will revisit some key concepts from GCSE Chemistry but develop this understanding to new levels. You will also be introduced to a variety of new concepts including periodic trends, a new model for the atom and electron structure, alcohols and halogenoalkanes, synthesis of chemicals and a variety of analytical techniques. In Year 13 students take their understanding even further by studying the transition elements, fuels cells, organic compounds and more complex analytical techniques.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Chemistry lessons are taught using a variety of different techniques. These include formal teaching, group discussion, independent study and practical investigations. You will be expected to take a significant role in your own learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Students are most likely to be successful on this course if they have already achieved grade 6s in GCSE Science, Maths and English.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

The course is assessed by three written exams. Papers 1 and 2 are 2¼ hours in length and are each worth 37% of the course and are called “Periodic table, elements and physical chemistry” and “Synthesis and analytical techniques”. Paper 1 covers topics 1,2,3 and 5 while Paper 2 covers topics 1,2,4 and 6. There is an additional synoptic paper worth 26% which is 1½ hours long and assesses all parts of the course.

There is also a non-examined practical endorsement which is reported alongside the main examination grade. This endorsement is based on practical investigations which are completed in class during the course.

PHYSICS

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr P Dennis

COURSE:

Physics A-level

AWARDING BODY:

OCR

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE PHYSICS?

We're all born with an urge to understand the world around us. This leads us to ask questions such as 'How does TV work?', 'Why does the sun shine?', 'What is light?', 'What are the ultimate constituents of matter?', 'How did the universe begin?'. If you find that the more answers you discover, the more questions you want to ask, then you are on the road to becoming a physicist. One of the key ideas in physics is that, behind the complexity of the world around us, there is an underlying simplicity and unity in nature. This is often expressed through all-embracing fundamental concepts, such as the principle of energy conservation. These concepts supported by mathematical analysis provide explanations for how things happen. As well as being interesting and useful in its own right, physics forms an important part of Higher Education requirements for engineering degrees, astronomy, astrophysics, maths, electronics, geophysics, meteorology, material science and communications.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

There are four taught modules (1-4) which are delivered in year 12 and two modules which are covered in more depth (5+6) which are taught in year 13:

- 1 - Development of practical skills in physics
- 2 - Foundations of physics
- 3 - Forces and motion
- 4 - Electrons, waves and photons
- 5 - Newtonian world and astrophysics
- 6 - Particles and medical physics

In year 12, students will study the weird and wonderful world of the quantum nature of matter, electrical circuits as well as learning about the principles and applications of mechanics, materials and wave behaviour. Students are also taught the basic foundations of physical quantities, units and the practical skills necessary to complete the course.

In year 13 students study thermal physics, mechanics in more mathematical depth as well as fields, astrophysics and the wonderful and exciting world of the particles that make up the universe.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Physics lessons comprise a variety of learning activities including formal teaching, discussions, practical investigations and problem solving activities. We seek to develop skills such as the ability to interpret scientific data, to be organised, to be thorough and accurate in carrying out experiments and be able to express ideas clearly using correct scientific terminology.

Students are most likely to be successful in A-level Physics if they have already obtained Grade 6s in GCSE Science, Mathematics and English.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

By written exams. All papers access content from the whole course: "Modelling Physics" and "Exploring Physics". There is an additional synoptic paper.

There is also a non-examined practical endorsement which is reported alongside the main examination grade. This endorsement is based on practical investigations which are completed in class during the course.

GEOGRAPHY

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr J Milton

COURSE:

Geography A-level

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE GEOGRAPHY?

The world we live in is changing. Geography allows you to see why and how it is changing.

Geography will appeal to you if:

- you are interested by the world's places, people and environments
- you like asking questions and finding answers
- you are interested in local, regional and global issues
- you have the ability to think independently
- have an interest in exploring human, physical and environmental geographical relationships.

An A level in Geography opens doors! You will find that studying Geography is a brilliant step towards a wider range of HE courses or employment opportunities. Being both a science and a humanities subject, Geography provides you with a wide range of options after the completion of your course.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Area of study 1

Dynamic Landscapes

- Topic 1 – Tectonic Processes and Hazards
- Topic 2 – Landscape Systems, Processes and Change

Area of study 2

Dynamic Places

- Topic 3 – Globalisation
- Topic 4 – Shaping Places

Area of study 3

Physical Systems and Sustainability

- Topic 5: The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity
- Topic 6: The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security

Area of study 4

Human systems and Geopolitics

- Topic 8: Superpowers
- Topic 9: Global Development and Connections - one option:
- Health, Human Rights and Intervention

Coursework: Independent investigation of between 3000-4000 words. You will participate in a minimum of 4 days of fieldwork during which you will collect data for your coursework investigation.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

The course will be examined at the end of Year 13

Paper 1 (30%)

2 hrs 15min exam on Dynamic Landscapes and Physical Systems and Sustainability

Paper 2 (30%)

2 hrs 15min exam on Dynamic Places and Human Systems and Geopolitics.

Paper 3 (20%)

2 hrs 15min exam on a synoptic investigation of a geographical issue.

Unit 4 (20%)

your independent investigation.

HISTORY

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr G Fullard

COURSE:

History A-level

AWARDING BODY:

OCR

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE HISTORY?

The strength of this subject is that it is so wide ranging. No area of human activity is irrelevant to it. Students trained in historical skills have something important to offer society and may themselves better understand the society in which they live. A training in History is designed to foster critical analysis, sharpness of judgement and the ability to present concise and lucid written arguments based on evidence. These qualities are appropriate to a wide range of careers including the Law, Civil Service, Accountancy, Teaching and the Media.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

You will study the following units and topics in the following years:

Unit 1

Britain 1930–1997 (Enquiry topic: Churchill 1930–1951). Essay and document based

Unit 2

Italy and Unification 1789–1896. Essay based

Unit 3

Russia and its Rulers 1855 - 1964. Essay and interpretation based.

Unit 4

Coursework (3,000–4,000 words, 20% of final grade). Independent study of students' choice.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

A variety of teaching styles will be used throughout the course. These will range from group discussion and creative tasks to more formal teacher-led presentation. Note taking and note making are important skills, along with the ability to analyse source documentation. Essay writing has a major role in teacher and external assessment. Students are expected to read widely for all parts of the course. Personal research is a compulsory part of Unit 4.

The department is happy to accept students who have done well at GCSE, but have not studied History since year 9.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

All students will be assessed by 3 exams (one for Unit 1, 2 and 3) at the end of Year 13.

Unit 4 is internally assessed and externally moderated.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES, ETHICS AND PHILOSOPHY

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs K Mills

COURSE:

Religious Studies/
Philosophy A-level

AWARDING BODY:

Eduqas

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE RELIGIOUS STUDIES?

The philosophical and religious development of mankind has shaped the way the individual thinks and acts and the way in which cultures and society have been formed. We explore the greatest intellectual challenges man has to face, an understanding of these challenges helps us in our own development but it also helps us to understand our history, arts and society. The subject can be followed at university level but the qualification is also recognised and respected in many professions.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Component 1: A Study of Religion: Christianity

Written examination: 2 hours

33½% of qualification

Key Questions:

- How historically accurate are the stories of Jesus?
- How do Christians use the bible today?
- Is God male?
- Is 'being loving' the most important thing?
- Should we baptise children?
- Should Christians be rich?

Component 2: Philosophy of Religion

Written examination: 2 hours

33% of qualification

Key Questions:

- Does God exist?
- Why would a loving God allow evil?
- Is religion an illusion?
- What does it mean to be atheist?
- Are miracles real?
- Can human language be used to discuss the divine?

Component 3: Religion and Ethics

Written examination: 2 hours

33% of qualification

Key questions:

- Does 'nature' tell us what's right and wrong?
- Is abortion acceptable?
- Can Christians accept homosexuality and polyamorous relationships?
- Is free will an illusion?
- Should we act according to the greatest good for the most people?

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

A variety of teaching styles will be used throughout the course. These will range from group discussion to the more formal teacher-led presentation. Essay writing has a major role in teacher and external assessment. Students are expected to read widely for all parts of the course. We are happy to accept students who have not followed the GCSE course.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Students will be examined at the end of Year 13 by 3 x 2 hours exams. There is no coursework element to this course.

ART, CRAFT & DESIGN

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs M Johnstone

COURSE:

A-Level Art, Craft & Design

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE ART, CRAFT & DESIGN?

Art, Craft & Design is a broad and exciting course that allows you to explore the world of creativity through both traditional and contemporary approaches. You will work across a range of 2D and 3D processes, developing your practical, technical and creative skills while learning how to think critically about your own work and that of others.

Throughout the course, you will have the chance to experiment with materials and techniques from painting, drawing, printmaking and sculpture to textiles, ceramics, photography and digital design. This variety gives you the freedom to discover what inspires you most and to create personal, imaginative and meaningful work.

The subject is not just about making; it's also about thinking and understanding. You'll explore the cultural, historical and social contexts behind art, craft and design, learning how ideas and visual language shape the world around us. This will help you develop a deeper appreciation of creativity while sharpening your ability to analyse and reflect, which are essential skills in any creative field.

Studying Art, Craft & Design can lead to a wide range of exciting opportunities. Many students go on to degree courses in fine art, fashion, architecture, illustration, graphic design, interior design, animation, film and photography. Others find careers in industries such as advertising, gaming, set design, gallery and museum curation, or product and furniture design. If you are curious, imaginative, adventurous and excited by the idea of shaping the visual world, this course will not only allow you to express yourself but also open the door to a future filled with creative possibilities.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

At A-level, assessment is split across two components that allow you to show both your independence and creativity.

Component 1 – Personal Investigation (60%) – This is the main body of your coursework and gives you the chance to develop a sustained project based on an idea, issue, concept, or theme of your choice. You will explore your theme through practical work, supported by written material (1,000–3,000 words) that reflects your research, influences, and critical understanding. The Personal Investigation allows you to demonstrate how you can develop ideas, experiment with materials, refine techniques, and produce an outcome that is both personal and original.

Component 2 – Externally Set Assignment (40%) – For this component, the exam board provides a paper with eight exciting starting points. You select one and produce a personal, creative response. You will have a preparatory period to explore ideas, record observations, and plan your outcome, followed by a 15-hour

controlled assessment in which you realise your final piece. This component allows you to showcase your ability to work independently, creatively, and under pressure, while bringing together the skills you have developed throughout the course.

Together, these two components assess your ability to think critically, experiment widely, and produce imaginative, high-quality outcomes, skills that are valued in both higher education and creative industries.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

You will be taught to research relevant artists, designers, or movements to inform your ideas and work, and will experiment with materials and techniques to develop originality and technical skill. You will be taught how to reflect critically on your experiments, linking practical decisions to context, and you will use this insight to create outcomes that are personal, well-crafted, and conceptually strong, while continuously evaluating work to ensure it communicates both skill and thoughtful understanding.

BTEC MUSIC

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr P Noble

COURSE:

BTEC Extended Certificate
in Music
(1 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE BTEC MUSIC?

The Pearson BTEC Level 3 National Certificate in Music Performance is intended to be an Applied General qualification. It is for post-16 learners who want to continue their education through applied learning and who aim to progress to higher education and ultimately to employment, possibly in the music sector or the creative sector as a whole. The qualification is equivalent in size of an A Level and is aimed at learners who are interested in music performance and want to study a broad programme of qualifications, sectors and subjects to support progression to higher education. It will be of particular interest to learners who want to develop skills and techniques in rehearsal and performance. It is designed to be taken alongside other Level 3 qualifications. No prior study of the sector is needed, but learners should normally have a range of achievement at level 2, in GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The content of this qualification has been developed in consultation with academics to ensure that it supports progression to higher education. In addition, employers and professional bodies have been consulted to confirm that the content is appropriate and consistent with current practice.

Learners taking this qualification will study one mandatory unit. This is Unit 3: Ensemble Music Performance. Learners choose one optional unit. These have been designed to complement the knowledge and skills developed in music performance and support progression to more specialist creative courses in higher education. They also link with relevant occupational areas. The optional units cover the following areas: composing music, music performance session styles, solo performance and improvising music.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

The styles of external assessment used for qualifications in the music performance suite are: performance – learners prepare for assessment over an extended window and demonstrate skills that generate some non-written evidence. There are also set tasks – learners take the assessment during a defined window and demonstrate understanding through completion of a vocational task. Some external assessments include a period of preparation using set information. External assessments are available once or twice a year.

BTEC PERFORMING ARTS – ACTING SPECIALISM

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs Cowen

COURSE:

BTEC Extended Certificate
in Performing Arts
(1 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE BTEC ACTING?

This course is for people who are passionate about acting and want to further their performing skills.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

You will study 6 units which will be the equivalent to 1 A-level. There are four mandatory units – you will do two in year 12 and two in year 13.

We will then choose another two units from these units

- Drama Improvisation
- Developing Voice for performance
- Movement in performance
- Theatre Directing
- Musical Theatre Techniques
- Acting Styles

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Two of the compulsory units are externally assessed:

Investigating Practitioners Work & Group Performance Workshop which is an assessed written task and filmed practical.

The other four units are internally assessed through filmed practical assessments and lessons, which are also supported by written log books.

BTEC PERFORMING ARTS – DANCE SPECIALISM

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr D Below

COURSE:

BTEC Extended Certificate
in Performance Arts
(Dance)
(1 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE BTEC DANCE?

This course is ideal for students who enjoy dance and performance based activities. Students will get the opportunity to learn about the theoretical aspects of dance, work on their technique, experience different dance styles and study professional works.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The course is made up of 360
Guided Learning hours. 5 units. 2
mandatory. 1 external. 3 optional.

Mandatory units:

1. Group performance workshop -
33%
2. Developing skills and techniques
for performance - 17%

Optional units:

1. Classical Ballet technique
2. Tap dance technique
3. Jazz dance technique
4. Street dance technique
5. Contemporary dance technique
6. Healthy dancer
7. Choreography for live performance
8. Improvisation
9. Movement in performance
10. Physical Theatre techniques

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

A variety of teaching styles will
be used throughout the course.
These will range in style from
formal teacher-led lessons to
individual sessions in composition
and performance skills. You will be
required to write essays based on
the work studied.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

What you will be studying;

Alongside the 2 mandatory units
we will select 3 optional units from
those listed. These are likely to be:

- Contemporary dance technique
- Choreography for live
performances
- Movement in performance

We feel these units will give
students a good variety of theory
and practical and will build upon
knowledge and skills gained in KS4.

For each module you study, you will
be given a grade of either Pass, Merit
or Distinction.

Most of the work will be practical but
there will be some written elements
that will need to be completed.

Students will prepare and present a
show in year 12 and 13.

You will complete some aspects
of the course alongside the Acting
students as there is some course
overlap.

AAQ HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

Overview

Contact for this course:

Mrs McGuigan

COURSE:

AAQ Health & Social Care
(1 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE?

An AAQ in Health and Social Care can progress into further study at university or into the world of work. It can lead into a future career in nursing, child care, teaching social work among many other occupations.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The AAQ in health and social care is made up of 4 units overall. Three mandatory units and 1 optional unit. Two of the mandatory units are assessed through an external exam which are examined at the end of year 12. You will have 2 further resits, if necessary, in Year 13. The remainder two units are coursework-based units that are marked and assessed by your teacher.

Mandatory Units

1 - Human Lifespan and Development

Students examine physical, intellectual, emotional and social development (PIES) across the human lifespan, the interaction between biological and social factors in health and well-being and how health care professionals provide effective care.

2 - Human Biology and Health

Students explore the organisation, structure and normal physiological functioning of the human body, and the effect on health of common disorders of the body systems.

3 - Principles of Health & Social Care

Students focus on the principles that underpin meeting the care and support needs of individuals, which are the foundation of all services within health and social care.
(Coursework)

Optional Units (choose one of the Coursework assessed units):

Unit 4 - Health, Policy & Wellbeing

Unit 5 - Promoting Health Education

Unit 6 - Safe Environments in Health & Social Care

Unit 7 - Health Science

BTEC HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

Overview

Contact for this course:

Mrs McGuigan

COURSE:

BTEC Diploma
(2 A-level equivalent)

BTEC Extended Diploma
(3 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE?

A BTEC in Health and Social Care can progress into further study at university or into the world of work. It can lead into a future career in nursing, child care, teaching, social work among many other occupations.

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS ARE ON OFFER?

	Value	Units	What is studied?
Extended Diploma in Health and Social Care	3 A-levels	13 units over two years	8 core units and 5 optional units 4 externally examined units
National Diploma in Health and Social Care	2 A-levels	8 units over two years	6 mandatory units with 3 externally examined units

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

BTEC Nationals use a combination of assessment styles to give you the knowledge to succeed in the workplace – and have the study skills to continue learning throughout your career. It is a combination of assignments set and assessed by your teachers plus exams and tasks set by Edexcel, the exam board.

COURSE STRUCTURE

National Diploma in Health and Social Care (2 A-levels)

1. Human Lifespan Development (exam)
 2. Working in Health and Social Care (exam)
 4. Enquiries into Current Research in Health and Social Care (exam)
 5. Meeting Individual Care and Support Needs
 6. Work Experience in Health and Social Care
 7. Principles of Safe Practice in Health and Social Care
 8. Promoting Public Health
- PLUS 2 optional units

Extended Diploma in Health and Social Care (3 A-levels)

1. Human Lifespan Development (exam)

2. Working in Health and Social Care (exam)
 3. Anatomy and Physiology for Health and Social Care (exam)
 4. Enquiries into Current Research in Health and Social Care (exam)
 5. Meeting Individual Care and Support Needs
 6. Work Experience in Health and Social Care
 7. Principles of Safe Practice in Health and Social Care
 8. Promoting Public Health
- PLUS 5 optional units

WHAT ARE THE EXAMINATIONS/TASKS LIKE?

The exams for Unit 1: Human Lifespan Development and Unit 2: Working in Health & Social Care will be 90 minutes long in Year 12 and are unseen and taken in exam conditions.

The exam for Unit 4: Enquiries into current research in Health and Social Care is a 3 hours supervised time over the course of 6 hours. There is pre-release material available 4 weeks in advance. Learners use pre-release material and their own research to produce a Research Commentary. This will be completed in year 13.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Miss F Beedle

COURSE:

Physical Education A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE PE A LEVEL?

A-level PE covers a range of subjects from psychology to sports technology and can lead you into career options such as sports centre management, sports science, physiotherapy, PE teacher, fitness trainer, sports nutritionist, sports performer and many more.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students will complete topic areas which encapsulate the factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport. They are Applied Physiology, Skill Acquisition, Sports Psychology, Sport and Society and Technology in Sport.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED

This qualification is linear.

Students will complete two exams each worth 35% of their total A Level grade (105 marks per exam).

Paper 1 covers Applied anatomy and physiology, Skill acquisition & Sport and society.

Paper 2 covers Exercise physiology and biomechanics, Sports psychology, Sport and society and technology in sport.

Students will then be assessed in a practical setting which makes up 30% of the non-exam assessment. This is broken down into two sections:

Section 1 is worth 15%. Here students are assessed as a player/performer or coach in the full context of one activity.

Section 2 is also worth 15%. Here students produce a written or verbal analysis and evaluation of either their own or the performance of another.

Both practical sections will be subject to internal and external moderation.

BTEC SPORT

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr M Davison

COURSE:

BTEC Extended Certificate in Sport
(1 A-Level equivalent)

BTEC Diploma Sport
(2 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

IS THE BTEC IN SPORT THE COURSE FOR YOU?

BTEC sport can lead you into a range of sports related course and careers such as Sports Science, coaching, teaching. It allows you to develop as a sports player as well as understand how the human body works in relation to physical activity. There are careers such as coaching, working in sports nutrition, physiotherapy, PE teaching, sports centre management and many more.

BTEC LEVEL 3 NATIONAL EXTENDED CERTIFICATE IN SPORT

4 Units / How you will be assessed:

- 1: Anatomy and Physiology (Double unit assessed via an External Exam)
2. Fitness Training and Programming for Health, Sport and Well-Being (Double unit assessed via external exam)
3. Professional Development in the Sports Industry (single unit internally assessed coursework)
4. Sports Leadership (single unit internally assessed coursework)

DIPLOMA IN SPORT

9 Units / How will you be assessed

- 1: Anatomy and Physiology (double unit assessed via an external exam)
- 2: Fitness Training and programming for health, sport and well-being (double unit assessed via external exam)
- 3: Professional Development in the Sports Industry (single unit internally assessed coursework)
- 4: Sports leadership (single unit, internally assessed coursework)
- 5: Application of Fitness Testing (double unit internally assessed coursework)
6. Sport Psychology (Double unit, internally assessed)
- 8: Coaching for Performance (double unit internally assessed coursework)
- 22: Investigating Business in Sport and the active leisure industry (double unit assessed via external exam)
- 23: Skill Acquisition (double unit, internally assessed coursework)

FRENCH

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Miss N Hill

COURSE:

French A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE FRENCH?

French is spoken around 300 million people across the world. Being able to speak French can provide you with travel and work opportunities. In fact, according to the British Council's 'Languages for the Future' report, 49% of UK businesses look for employees who can speak French, meaning studying the language will be a huge asset to your career. With a projected 750 million speakers by 2050, being able to speak the French language is a powerful skill to have.

Studying French at A-Level, not only improves your language skills, but it provides you with insights into France's history and culture. If you plan on travelling after school, this knowledge will truly enhance your experience. With France being one of the UK's largest European trading partners, French can provide you with a number of career opportunities. Our previous A-level students have gone on to study a variety of subjects including law, translation and education.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The A level French course is split into 2 main themes: Social issues (such as the changing role of the family, volunteering, diversity and criminality) and Political and artistic trends (including Francophone Music and cinema, voting and immigration).

Alongside these topics, you will also study the film 'La Haine' and the novel 'No et moi'. In year 13 you will complete an individual research project on a topic of your choice, linked to the French speaking world.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

You will be taught using a range of teaching styles to improve your listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. You will be expected to contribute to discussions on contemporary issues and to complete research on a range of topics. You will use authentic materials to improve your comprehension skills.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Paper 1 (50%)

Listening, Reading and Translation

Paper 2 (20%)

Writing exam

Paper 3 (30%)

Speaking exam

GERMAN

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Miss N Hill

COURSE:

German A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE GERMAN?

If you have a natural flair for languages, then you might want to consider studying German at A-Level. In an increasingly globalised world, being able to understand and speak German, even if only to A-Level, can provide many opportunities both academically and career-wise.

German is the most spoken language in the European Union and it is the tenth most widely-spoken language in the world. Not only does the German language provide you with access to German culture, including its music and arts, but it opens up potential business and career opportunities too, particularly in the travel and tourism sector. It's spoken widely in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and the British Council sees German to be a big asset to UK companies, and post-Brexit it's likely to continue to grow in importance.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

You will study aspects of German speaking society such as youth culture; the digital world; immigration; racism and integration. You will also study artistic and political culture. You will study the film 'Goodbye Lenin' and the book 'Der Vorleser' by Bernhard Schlink. In year 2 you will complete an independent research project on a topic of your choice.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

You will be taught using a range of teaching styles to improve your listening, reading, writing and speaking skills. You will be expected to contribute to discussions on contemporary issues and to complete research on a range of topics. You will use authentic materials to improve your comprehension skills.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Paper 1 (50%)

Listening, Reading and Translation

Paper 2 (20%)

Written exam

Paper 3 (30%)

Speaking exam

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr Higgs

COURSE:

Psychology A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE PSYCHOLOGY?

It combines well with many subjects complementing and enhancing them eg: Biology, Maths, English language, Sociology. It is a subject welcomed by many employers, particularly in the caring and service industries. It can lead, via a degree course, to careers as varied as child guidance, educational psychology, occupational psychology, legal psychology etc. It gives a valuable insight into personal development (eg. moral, cognitive, linguistic) and development of behaviour within groups and in society.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Year 12

The psychology is broken down into a number of different topics at A-level

First year

- Social influence
- Memory
- Attachment
- Approaches in psychology
- Biopsychology
- Psychopathology
- Research methods

Second year

Compulsory content

- Issues and debates in psychology – nature v nurture, gender and culture bias, ethical issues.

Optional content

Option one

- Relationships * - Reasons for physical attraction, evolutionary explanations, virtual relationships
- Gender
- Cognition and development

Option two

- Schizophrenia
- Eating behaviour
- Stress

Option three

- Aggression
- Forensic psychology
- Addiction

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

A wide variety of teaching methods will be used. You will be required to actively participate in class discussions as well as work on your own initiative. There will also be opportunities to attend conferences given by leading psychologists and the AQA exam board.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

The exams consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions. At A-level there are three exams, each account for one third of your A-level.

The three exams last 2 hours and are worth 96 marks each. The exams consist of multiple choice, short answer and extended writing questions.

There is no coursework in either year.

SOCIOLOGY

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr Higgs

COURSE:

Sociology A-level

AWARDING BODY:

OCR

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE SOCIOLOGY?

Sociology is an attempt to understand how society works. Through learning sociology, you will learn about how human societies are constructed and where our beliefs and daily routines come from. You will re-examine your assumptions and will never think about people in the same way again. Sociology is accepted by universities as an academic subject and can lead to careers as varied as:

- Social work and caring professions • Criminology • Law • Police
- Teaching and Further Education • Market Research • Civil Service
- Local Government Services • Politics • Journalism

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

Year 12 – Two components

Component 1

Section A: Introducing socialisation, culture and identity.

Section B: Options (choose one of three)

Component 2

Section A: Research methods and researching social inequalities

Section B: Understanding social inequalities

Year 13 – Three components

The first two components are a continuation of year 12. The third component detailed below:

Component 3

SECTION A: GLOBALISATION AND THE DIGITAL SOCIAL WORLD

What is the relationship between globalisation and digital forms of communication?

What is the impact of digital forms of communication in a global context?

This section provides students with the opportunity to consider developments in digital forms of communication within global society.

SECTION B: OPTIONS (CHOOSE ONE OF THREE)

All three options include a global aspect:

- Crime and deviance *(Includes a study of Patterns of crime and deviance as well as explanations and solutions to crime.)
- Education
- Religion, belief and faith

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

In year 13 at A-level there are 3 exams relating to the 3 components above. Component 1 is worth 30% and component 2 and 3 exams are worth 35% each. Component 1 is 1 hour and 30 minutes and component 2 and 3 are two hours and 15 minutes.

There is no coursework in either year.

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mrs K Best

COURSE:

BTEC Extended Certificate
in Business
(1 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE BTEC NATIONAL BUSINESS?

This vocational course is equivalent to one A-level and can be combined with traditional A-level subjects or other vocational A-level subjects. It combines up-to-date industry knowledge with the right balance of the practical, research and behavioural skills learners need to succeed in higher education and in their careers. It gives learners an introduction to and understanding of a wide range of business activities. The course is likely to appeal to those who are interested in a career in business, or wish to achieve an enhanced qualification in this field as a route to higher education.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The Extended Certificate (equivalent to 1 A-level) consists of 4 units: 3 mandatory units and 1 optional.

The 3 mandatory units include 1 internally set assignment, 1 externally set assignment and an external examination.

Extended Certificate mandatory units

Unit 1 (internally set assignment) –
Exploring Business

Unit 2 (externally set assignment) –
Developing a Marketing Campaign

Unit 3 (external examination) –
Personal and Business Finance

Unit 8 (Optional Unit) Recruitment
and Selection Process

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Teaching styles will vary but will focus on developing understanding of the various aspects of business through case studies, links with local organisations within the industry and individual research. Within Unit 3, specific focus will be given to developing exam techniques to prepare students to sit the external finance examination. Within Unit 2, specific focus will be given to developing techniques to prepare students to research and construct a marketing plan.

Entry to the course requires a minimum of 5 GCSEs at 9–4 with English and Maths being desired. Students need not have studied the subject before. A capacity for individual study and an ability to meet deadlines and respond to feedback is an advantage.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

The new BTEC Nationals in Business offer a wider range of assessments including assignments, tasks set and assessed by the exam board and a written exam. This balanced approach means learners can showcase for future employers how they apply their learning to relevant, everyday workplace challenges, and higher education institutions can be confident BTEC-qualified students are well prepared for a higher level of study and assessment methods.

BUSINESS STUDIES

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Miss Morton

COURSE:

Business Studies A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE BUSINESS STUDIES?

The number of new business start-ups in the UK has risen to record levels. 82% of people aged 18-21 have said they are keen to set up a business one day. Even those who are happy to be employed are likely to have between 10 and 15 different jobs over the course of their career. A knowledge of business is becoming more and more relevant in society today, even to just help you understand the world you live in! What's all the fuss about Brexit? Why are shops closing down?

The course provides an excellent working knowledge of the world of business, as well as this develop a range of personal skills allowing you to think critically about issues and make informed decisions; important skills required for employment and progression into higher education. Typical destinations can be degree courses in business, or business with other disciplines such as computing, languages, marketing and human resources, sports management or in management and administration. A-level business studies complements many other A-level subjects. It allows students to develop skills in analysis and evaluation, problem solving and data handling, as well as independent learning. Whilst it is desirable to have GCSE business studies, it is not essential and many students new to the subject go on to achieve high grades.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The course integrates the internal functions of a business through topics such as sales and marketing, finance, operations management, human resources, as well as examining the dynamic external environment within which businesses operate and the effects this can have on business decision making.

The course content covers topics and issues which are relevant in today's society and include contemporary developments such as globalisation, ethics and digital technology.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Business Studies adopts a practical and topical approach, with current case studies and investigative reports being the main vehicles for learning.

The Business Studies Department offers up to date resources via the computer network, internet, magazines and textbooks, which are available for student use.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

A-level assessment involves 3 written papers, incorporating multiple choice data response and case study questions. It focuses on developing topics in terms of business strategy and change.

Each paper lasts 2 hours and comprises a third of the A-level qualification. All papers assess students' quantitative skills. This includes the ability to calculate and interpret data in various formats.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr A Lee

COURSE:

Computer Science A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE COMPUTER SCIENCE?

This is the Digital Age! Computer programmes have all but infiltrated every aspect of our lives. Computer scientists theorise, design, develop, and apply the software and hardware for the programmes we use day in day out. A good grade in 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 of Computer Science, Engineering, Physics or related subjects in higher education. Every industry uses computers so naturally computer scientists can work in any. Problems in science, engineering, health care, and so many other areas can be solved by computers. It's up to the computer scientist to figure out how, and design the software to apply the solution.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

You will study the following topic areas over the two years of the course:

- Fundamentals of programming
- Fundamentals of data structures
- Fundamentals of algorithms
- Theory of computation
- Fundamentals of data representation
- Fundamentals of computer systems
- Fundamentals of computer organisation and architecture
- Consequences of uses of computing
- Fundamentals of communication and networking
- Fundamentals of databases
- Big Data
- Fundamentals of functional programming
- Systematic approach to problem solving
- Non-exam assessment - the computing practical project

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

Computer Science relies upon the practical application of theory, and as a result this quickly becomes a very practical course. A significant amount of theoretical knowledge is required, however it is those students who are able to apply these concepts, and therefore develop more efficient and robust programs, who will achieve the highest grades.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

You will sit two papers and complete a project as part of your assessment on the course.

Paper 1 – On-screen exam (40%)

Students answer a series of short questions and write/adapt/extend programs in an Electronic Answer Document provided.

Paper 2 – Written exam (40%)

Compulsory short-answer and extended-answer questions.

Project (20%)

The non-exam assessment assesses 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.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: PRODUCT DESIGN

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Ms R Newton-Scott

COURSE:

A-level Design and Technology: Product Design (3D Design)

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE DESIGN TECHNOLOGY?

Our Product Design A-Level offers two pathways, Resistance Materials Technology and Graphic Products, each with its own specific content. The structure of the specification allows students to develop a range of skills and outcomes. The specification seeks to develop students' knowledge and understanding of, and skills and application in, designing products. They will also develop their research, analysis, product development, project planning and evaluation skills.

The assessment for this course involves Design and Make coursework activities, and externally assessed examinations. A qualification in this subject will open opportunities to pursue a career in Engineering, Industrial Design, Graphic Design, Architecture, Interior Design, Manufacturing and Motor Vehicle design.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

Paper 1 is 2 hours 30 minutes and looks at Technical principles (the areas it covers are the same as the prospectus you have sent out) 120 marks and is 30% of A-level

Paper 2 is 1 hour and 30 minutes and this is Design and make principles. Questions are a mixture of short answer and extended response questions.

Section A: Product Analysis: 30 marks. Up to 6 short answer questions based on visual stimulus of product(s).

Section B: Commercial manufacture: 50 marks. Mixture of short and extended response questions 80 marks in total and is 20% of A-level

Students need to complete a folder and practical which is 50% and the two examination papers are also 50%

Practical application of technical principles, designing and making principles.

Substantial design and make project is 100 marks and is 50% of A-level. Students need evidence of either a written or digital design portfolio and photographic evidence of the final prototype.

ECONOMICS

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Miss Morton

COURSE:

Economics A-level

AWARDING BODY:

AQA

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE ECONOMICS?

We currently face the uncertainty of changes in the pattern of global trade. We have rising levels of inequality and poverty. We have a housing market failure. We face rising global pollution. Economics allows us to understand these issues, quantify the consequences and evaluate the policy solutions available. It is relevant to us all because it affects us all every day, whether on a macroeconomic level affecting employment and inflation, or on a microeconomic level affecting our personal wellbeing and standards of living. The study of economics is current; it helps us understand the world we live in. It allows students to develop important life skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. A-Level Economics complements many other subjects and is often studied in combination with business, mathematics, humanities, languages and even science.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The course is evenly split between microeconomics and macroeconomics. The former focuses on the decisions and activities of individuals and firms, while the latter focuses on the wider economy and national and global issues.

HOW WILL YOU BE TAUGHT?

A variety of teaching techniques will be used during the course. These will include group discussions, individual or small group presentations in class and more formal teacher-led work. Opportunities also exist to use ICT to investigate economic performance, research concepts and consolidate and apply learning in the management of the virtual economy.

HOW WILL YOU BE ASSESSED?

A-level assessment involves 3 written exam papers combining multiple choice with data response questions and extended writing. Each lasts 2 hours and comprises one third of the A-level qualification.

All papers assess students' quantitative skills in an economic context and allow theoretical knowledge to be applied to both domestic and global contexts. The ability to calculate and interpret data in various formats and an enthusiasm for current affairs is therefore advantageous.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Miss S Tumelty

COURSE:

Level 3 Food & Nutrition
Diploma Course
(1 A-Level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Eduqas

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE FOOD AND NUTRITION?

Food & Nutrition allows students to develop an understanding of food science and nutrition as this is relevant to many industries and job roles. Care providers and nutritionists in hospitals use this knowledge, as do sports coaches and fitness instructors. Hotels and restaurants, food manufacturers and government agencies also use this understanding to develop menus, food products and policies that support healthy eating initiatives. Many employment opportunities within the field of food science and nutrition are available to graduates.

WHAT YOU WILL STUDY?

Meeting Nutritional needs of specific groups

The purpose of this unit is for learners to develop an understanding of the nutritional needs of specific target groups and plan and cook complex dishes to meet their nutritional needs.

Food Safety

The purpose of this unit is to help learners understand the importance of food safety within a kitchen and beyond.

Solving Food production Problems

This unit will help learners understand the problems faced by food manufacturers, hotels, restaurant and other food outlets.

Current issues in Food Science & Nutrition

This unit will help learners to develop an awareness of nutrition and also the science behind food. This will be a great unit to study if you wish to pursue a career in nutrition.

HOW YOU WILL BE ASSESSED?

50% of the units will be internally assessed through experiments and coursework units. There will be external examinations testing students' knowledge and understanding. The internal assessment will involve a set task such as: "A Personal Trainer could introduce learners to one or more of their clients. Learners develop their communication skills by working with the clients to determine their activity levels and diet." Learners are provided with information, including medical information, on groups of people within a care environment. Learners work in groups to develop a generic daily menu that includes all vital nutrients and meets the requirements of all."

AAQ INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Overview

Course Leader and contact for this course:

Mr A Lee

COURSE:

AAQ Information Technology
(1 A-level equivalent)

AWARDING BODY:

Pearson

LENGTH OF COURSE:

2 years

WHY CHOOSE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY?

An AAQ in Information Technology can progress into further study at university or into the world of work. It can lead into a future career in software development, network engineer, IT support specialist among many other occupations.

WHAT WILL YOU STUDY?

The AAQ in IT is made up of 4 units overall, all of which are mandatory units. Two of the units are assessed through an external exam which are examined at the end of year 12. You will have 2 further resits, if necessary, in Year 13. The remaining two units are coursework-based units.

Mandatory Units

1 - Information Technology Systems

Students will study the role of Information Technology (IT) systems and the implications of their use in personal and professional situations. Students will gain knowledge and understanding of issues relating to the use of IT in personal and professional situations.
(Exam - May/June 2026)

2 - Cyber Security and Incident Management

Students will study cyber security threats and vulnerabilities, the methods used to protect organisations against threats and managing security incidents.
(Exam - May/June 2026)

3 - Website Development

Students will investigate fundamental principles in website development. They will design and develop a website in response to a client brief.
(Coursework)

4 - Relational Database Software

Students will examine relational database development principles to understand the importance of data storage and normalisation techniques and apply their skills to design and develop data storage solutions to meet a client's requirements.
(Coursework)

ADDITIONAL STUDIES PROGRAMME

Overview

In order to complement their main study programme and to help build their academic skills, many students choose 1 additional option if they are not studying 4 A-levels.

Whickham Sixth Form

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

COURSE: 1 year ½ A2

COURSE LEADER: Miss K Hall

Students will have the opportunity to focus on an independent topic that is of particular interest to them. Students can choose to produce a 5,000-word report or artefact with an additional minimum 1,000-word report. Each project should lead to students developing an in-depth knowledge and understanding of a particular issue or subject. For example; a student who wants to apply for medicine at university may undertake a project in a particular aspect of medicine, or a student who is interested in computer programming may look to develop their practical skills and knowledge of software and coding. Students will develop key skills including research, referencing and report writing. Assessment of the project is evidenced by the completion of a production log, report and short presentation. The profile of EPQ has raised significantly over the last few years and can help students to really stand out from their peers. It is worth noting that projects may be taken into account by university admission tutors when making decisions between academics of equal standing.

An EPQ is highly recommended if you are studying: - English Language - English Literature - History - RE -Sociology. Very advantageous for universities with points based offers.

CORE MATHS

COURSE: 1 year

COURSE LEADER: Mrs C Harrison

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS: GCSE Mathematics – Grade 5

What is it?

A course for those who want to keep up their valuable mathematics skills but are not planning to take A-level mathematics.

A 1-year level 3 qualification - similar to an AS.

For students with a GCSE Mathematics grade 5 or above.

Why?

Whickham school is one of the only local schools offering the Core Maths qualification.

Core maths is highly recommended if you are studying: - Psychology -BTEC Applied Science -BTEC Engineering - Biology -Chemistry -Physics -Economics and do not study A-level maths

Very advantageous for universities with points based offers.

Resit English and Mathematics

COURSE: 1 year GCSE resit

COURSE LEADER: English: Mrs J James; Mathematics: Mrs C Harrison

The aim for all students will be to resit GCSE English and/or Mathematics to obtain a Grade 4 or higher. Where appropriate students will also study for a Functional Skills qualification at Level 1 or Level 2 as a stepping-stone to achieving more highly in their GCSE qualifications.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

Overview

In addition to their academic studies all students take an enrichment option. These options allow students to develop their skills in other areas to their main academic studies. Some of these options lead to further qualifications while others allow students the chance to do something different to their main studies.

Whickham Sixth Form

OUR ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME WILL VARY EACH YEAR.

EXAMPLES OF CURRENT ACTIVITIES ARE:

- Level 3 Sports Leadership Award
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Work Experience
- Football Academy
- Enrichment Carousel

The enrichment carousel offers a less specialised enrichment offer for those who prefer to experience a broader enrichment pathway. This year the enrichment carousel includes recreational sport, First Aid, Debating, Preparing for overseas travel and RE.

We have a statutory obligation to deliver Religious Education in Sixth Form. This is covered within the Enrichment Programme. Parents have a right to withdraw their child from Religious Education. To do so, please contact their Head of Year.

HOW TO JOIN THE SIXTH FORM

Whickham Sixth Form

SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE MEETINGS

All year 11 students are given an individual support and guidance meeting, to allow them to raise personal queries and make an informed provisional choice of subjects. External candidates will be offered a meeting with the Head of Sixth Form.

JULY INDUCTION DAY

After GCSE examinations students are invited in for a taster day. This programme provides students with the opportunity to experience life as a sixth form student and take part in lessons for the subjects that they have chosen. In addition students will receive a small amount of preparation work to complete over the holidays to help prepare them for the start of year 12.

Please complete an application form, available on our school website.

NOTES

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 sets of three horizontal dashed lines for tracing and writing practice.



Whickham School,
Burnthouse Lane, Whickham
Newcastle upon Tyne NE16 5AR

T: 0191 4960026
sixthform@whickhamschool.org

www.whickhamschool.org

